

**Remarks at a Dinner Hosted by
President Kim in Seoul, South Korea**
February 20, 2002

Mr. President, Madam First Lady, thank you all so very much for your such generous hospitality. Laura and I are honored to be here.

I'm told that in Korea, the color blue stands for elegance and dignity. Through your hospitality, Mr. President, these qualities are in abundance tonight.

Earlier today President Kim and I traveled to the Demilitarized Zone and saw the line where freedom begins and ends. I was reminded there of the tremendous sacrifices paid by both South Koreans and Americans in defending that line. I met with men and women from both our nations who defend that line today on behalf of everybody in this room. As always, their enthusiasm and dedication to duty and freedom and country was inspiring.

At the DMZ, President Kim and I also saw the railway and the road that symbolize our common hopes that families and commerce, culture and ideas may one day travel freely throughout the Peninsula. President Kim has offered the North a better way. He has offered them a vision of reconciliation over rivalry. He has offered them the chance to fulfill new hopes instead of feeding old suspicions. For the sake of all Koreans, I hope—and the American people hope—that the North does not miss this chance.

Mr. President, by your unyielding love for liberty, you have written on the pages of history a story of uncommon courage and determination. Sustained by your strong faith, you endured hardships that most can hardly imagine, all for a simple idea, the idea that freedom belongs to every person, not just every Korean or every American but every Asian and every person on this planet.

As you said in your Nobel lecture, and I quote, "Democracy is the absolute value that makes for human dignity, as well as the only road to sustain economic development and social justice."

President Kim, Laura and I thank you for your friendship and your warm hospitality, and the world thanks you for your leadership and your vision. The American people thank

you and the Korean people for the sympathy and support you have given our Nation during these past difficult months. And most of all, my country thanks South Korea for a half-century of friendship, a friendship that has brought great benefit to both our peoples, a friendship that has now matured into a great alliance for liberty.

My toast tonight is that, may God continue to bless Korea and America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:11 p.m. at the Blue House. In his remarks, he referred to President Kim's wife, Lee Hee-ho. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Kim.

**Remarks to the Troops at
Osan Air Base in Seoul**
February 21, 2002

The President. Thank you very much. Well, thank you for that warm welcome. My fellow Americans, I'm on my way to China, and I hope you don't mind me stopping by to say a few words. I also thought you might want to say hello to a great wife and a wonderful First Lady, my wife, Laura.

We are so delighted to be here. It gives me a chance to bring a message from home. Your family are proud of you, and so is America. You walk in the path of thousands of soldiers who fought for freedom in the Korean war and all who kept the peace for half a century. Many millions of people are safe from harm because you're here. You're a credit to the United States of America, and I want to thank you for that.

I'm proud to be traveling with members of the fabulous team I put together, anchored by our Secretary of State, Colin Powell. We're making a huge difference on the Peninsula, not only because of our military presence but because of our diplomatic presence. We've got a great Ambassador to the Republic of Korea, Tom Hubbard, and his wife, Joan.

One time I was Governor of the great State of Texas. Now I know we're going to keep the peace. [*Laughter*] And I went to Fort Hood and got to meet General Thorpe. I knew him to be a strong man then. I'm sure

glad he's here now. He brings great credit to the United States military. Mr. General, thank you, sir.

It is an honor to be here with General Lance Smith, as well. Thank you for your hospitality. Thank you for putting us—I've got kind of a sweet spot in my heart for fighter pilots. I hope they're behaving well these days. *[Laughter]*

I'm honored to be here with Denny Larsen. And I'm honored to be here with David Clary, as well. I want to thank those from the ROK who are here, the leaders. But most of all, I want to thank my fellow citizens, the members of the United States military, for being strong and steady, to keep the peace.

It is such an honor to be traveling in Asia, representing our country. This is an important journey. We're stopping in the capitals of Japan and South Korea and then, in a couple of hours, in China. All three Governments are lending their support in our war against terror. It gives me a chance to look the leaders in the eye, to thank them on behalf of a grateful nation, for their steady and strong support, as this Nation leads a coalition to defend freedom.

My trip was scheduled here for October, but we changed it after America came under attack. We had to change our plans. But since then, the killers and the Government that sponsored them had to change their plans, too. A few months ago, Al Qaida and the terrorists occupied Afghanistan. Now some of them are in cells in Guantanamo Bay. Not long ago, they were urging their followers to sacrifice their lives. Now they're running for their own. Those who attacked us and those who still want to try to hurt us are beginning to realize they picked the wrong enemy. They thought we were soft. They thought we were so materialistic that we would not be willing to sacrifice. They didn't realize that we're a patient nation, that we're a deliberate nation.

And they're now beginning to realize that we're resolved to find the terrorists, wherever they hide, and rout them out. And as my fellow Americans, you need to know that we won't stop until the threat of global terrorism has been destroyed. We have been called to history. We must not stop. After all, we defend civilization itself. We didn't

ask for this war; we're a peaceful nation. But we will do everything in our power to defend freedom and the universal values that are so important to our Nation and so important to a peaceful world. I made this message clear to our enemy, and the mighty United States military is delivering it.

I'm proud to report America and our allies are committed to this cause. If you haven't been back to America lately, I want to tell you, our Nation is strongly united. This isn't a matter of political parties. We're talking about national purpose. The people of America understand it's going to take a while, but they're ready. We've accepted new responsibilities.

There's a new way of thinking in America. It was defined by flight—the actions on Flight 93, when several people aboard an airplane got the word that that airplane might be headed to the Capitol or the White House, but certainly headed to hurt a fellow American. They were on the telephone with their loved ones. They told them they loved them. They said a prayer. And then they said, "Let's roll."

There is a new spirit of sacrifice in America that understands that we must, in life, serve something greater than ourselves. And we're now called to defend freedom, and our allies understand that. And the United States military understands that, and freedom we will defend with all our might.

And that's what you're doing here on the Korean Peninsula, a free and peaceful nation, and its 47 million people count on you every day. And in this duty, the United States has a steady and courageous partner in the Republic of Korea.

During the years of partnership between our two countries, South Korea has become prosperous, and it has become strong. Its vibrant economy is an example of what free people and free institutions can achieve. And it shows the importance of America's presence in Asia.

The United States is a Pacific nation. History has led us here. Ties of commerce and friendship keep us here. And our friends and allies can be certain that we will always stand beside them. When America says, "We're your friend," we mean it.

We hope for a day when the stability of the Korean Peninsula is built on peaceful reconciliation of North and South. Today, however, the stability of this Peninsula is built on the military might of our great alliance. In our dealings with North Korea, we've laid down a clear marker. We will stand by the people of South Korea. We will maintain our presence here. And as I told the Congress and the world in my State of the Union messages, we will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes to threaten us or our friends or our allies with weapons of mass destruction.

Those of you who are stationed here in Korea and members of our military throughout the world spend every day training and testing and preparing for any mission that may come. That's your responsibility, and you're the best in the world. And as your Commander in Chief, I have responsibilities to you to give clear orders, to set clear objectives, and to make sure you have everything you need to do your job.

So I'm asking Congress to pass more than a \$48 billion increase in our defense budget. It is the largest increase in military spending in a generation. It recognizes defending—the price for defending freedom will be high, but it's necessary to defend freedom. Our most important job is the security of the United States of America and the security of our friends and allies. And we will pay whatever price it takes to defend America.

I'm so grateful many of you have brought your families, who are here. A grateful nation not only thanks those who wear the uniform, but we thank the wives and husbands and sons and daughters and family members who sacrifice along with you. But in order to make sure that sacrifice is not quite such a hill to climb, in the budget that I've requested to Congress, I'm asking for another pay raise for the people who wear the uniform. It is necessary; it is the right course of action—

Audience member. We love you, George!
[Laughter]

The President. —because in the months and years to come, our Nation is going to be asking more of the United States military. And you have my confidence, because you've earned it. You earn it every day, in the difficulties you accept and the dangers

you face. You're each here to serve your country, and your country is grateful. You're here because you believe in America, and America will always believe in you.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:04 a.m. at the 5th Reconnaissance Squadron. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gen. Lance L. Smith, USAF, commander, and Maj. Gen. Dennis R. Larsen, USAF, vice commander, 7th Air Force; and Brig. Gen. David E. Clary, USAF, commander, 51st Fighter Wing.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Jiang Zemin of China in Beijing, China

February 21, 2002

President Jiang. On behalf of the Chinese government and people, I would like to once again extend our warm welcome to you, Mr. President. We have just had a very good discussion about issues of utmost concern, and now I'm prepared to have a continued exchange of views with you on other aspects of the bilateral ties, as well as the international situation.

You will have the floor first.

President Bush. Well, Mr. President, first of all, thank you again for your gracious hospitality. I am so pleased that my wife, Laura, is traveling with me so that she can see the progress of your great country.

I also want to reiterate what I said inside about how thankful our Nation is, my Nation is, for your strong support in our war against terror and how gracious you were with your phone call right after September the 11th, expressing your condolences.

We look forward to finding areas where we can work together, such as energy cooperation—is a chance for us to explore technologies that will enable your country to grow and our country to grow at the same time, work together to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, for example.

I gave a speech in the United States the other day outlining our vision of making sure we have economic growth and, at the same time, employ new technologies that will help us reduce greenhouse gases. And I announced to the country that I look forward