Week Ending Friday, March 15, 2002

Remarks on Signing the Job Creation and Worker Assistance Act of 2002

March 9, 2002

Good morning. I'm speaking to you live from the Rose Garden, where I'm about to sign legislation that will give short-term help to workers who have lost their jobs and provides long-term stimulus to create more jobs across our country.

I want to thank the Vice President. I want to thank Speaker Hastert, Senator Daschle, Senator Lott, Members of the Congress for joining me today as I sign this important piece of legislation. Many contributed to the success of this bill, but none more than the Speaker, and Chairman Bill Thomas.

Also here today are working men and women, small-business people who make this economy run. We're seeing some encouraging signs in the economy, but we can't stand by and simply hope for continued recovery. We must work for it. We must make sure that our recovery continues and gains momentum. We want a recovery that is broad enough and strong enough to provide jobs for all our citizens.

The terrorist attacks of September the 11th were also an attack on our economy, and a lot of people lost their jobs. Since then, many laid-off workers have been relying on unemployment benefits, which normally end after 26 weeks. The bill I sign this morning will allow the extension of jobless benefits by another 13 weeks, and even longer in States with high unemployment rates. This will allow those who lost their jobs in the recession or in the aftermath of the September the 11th attacks more time to pay their bills and support their families while they look for work.

And in order for people to find jobs, businesses need to be hiring. So this new law will provide tax incentives for companies to expand and create jobs by investing in plant and equipment. This measure will mean more job opportunities for workers in every part of our country, especially in manufacturing and in high tech and for those who work for small businesses. This bill will also stimulate economic growth by extending net operating loss rules and by granting some alternative minimum tax relief.

The city of New York suffered a great tragedy on September the 11th and still faces major economic consequences. The bill I sign into law today provides over $5 billion in tax relief to aid in the recovery of lower Manhattan by helping businesses to get back on their feet so they can start hiring again. The people of New York have shown great courage, perseverance, and America stands with them.

This Monday marks 6 months since the attack on America. For the families of the victims, these have been 6 months of sorrow, and America will never forget their loss.

In our war on terror, these have been 6 months of determined action. We have destroyed terrorist camps. We've disrupted terrorist finances. We've toppled a terrorist regime and brought thousands of terrorists to justice. We are strengthening our Nation's defenses against attack. And today we are acting to help workers. We're acting to create jobs, and we're acting to strengthen our economy.

Thank you all for coming, and it is now my honor to sign this important piece of legislation.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House, and his remarks were broadcast live and served as his weekly radio address. H.R. 3090, approved March 9, was assigned Public Law No. 107–147.

Remarks on the Six-Month Anniversary of the September 11th Attacks

March 11, 2002

Diplomatic representatives of the coalition of nations; Members of the Congress, the Cabinet, the Supreme Court; members of the American Armed Forces; military coalition members from around the world; distinguished guests; and ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the White House.

We have come together to mark a terrible day, to reaffirm a just and vital cause, and to thank the many nations that share our resolve and will share our common victory.

Six months separate us from September the 11th. Yet, for the families of the lost, each day brings new pain; each day requires new courage. Your grace and strength have been an example to our Nation. America will not forget the lives that were taken and the justice their death requires.

We face an enemy of ruthless ambition, unconstrained by law or morality. The terrorists despise other religions and have defiled their own. And they are determined to expand the scale and scope of their murder. The terror that targeted New York and Washington could next strike any center of civilization. Against such an enemy, there is no immunity, and there can be no neutrality.

Many nations and many families have lived in the shadows of terrorism for decades, enduring years of mindless and merciless killing. September the 11th was not the beginning of global terror, but it was the beginning of the world's concerted response. History will know that day not only as a day of tragedy but as a day of decision when the civilized world was stirred to anger and to action. And the terrorists will remember September 11th as the day their reckoning began.

A mighty coalition of civilized nations is now defending our common security. Terrorist assets have been frozen. Terrorist front groups have been exposed. A terrorist regime has been toppled from power. Terrorist plots have been unraveled from Spain to Singapore. And thousands of terrorists have been brought to justice, are in prison, or are running for fear of their lives.

With us today are representatives from many of our partners in this great work, and we're proud to display their flags at the White House this morning. From the contributions these nations have made—some well known, others not—I am honored to extend the deepest gratitude of the people of the United States.

The power and vitality of our coalition have been proven in Afghanistan. More than half of the forces now assisting the heroic Afghan fighters or providing security in Kabul are from countries other than the United States. There are many examples of commitment. Our good ally, France, has deployed nearly one-fourth of its navy to support Operation Enduring Freedom, and Great Britain has sent its largest naval task force in 20 years. British and American special operations forces have fought beside teams from Australia and Canada, Norway, Denmark and Germany. In total, 17 nations have forces deployed in the region. And we could not have done our work without critical support from countries, particularly, like Pakistan and Uzbekistan. Japanese destroyers are refueling coalition ships in the Indian Ocean. The Turkish air force has refueled American planes. Afghans are receiving treatment in hospitals built by Russians, Jordanians, Spanish, and have received supplies and help from South Korea.

Nations in our coalition have shared in the responsibilities and sacrifices of our cause. On the day before September the 11th, I met with Prime Minister John Howard of Australia, who spoke of the common beliefs and shared affection of our two countries. We could not have known that bond was about to be proven again in war, and we could not have known its human cost. Last month, Sergeant Andrew Russell of the Australian Special Air Service died in Afghanistan. He left behind his wife, Kylie, and their daughter, Leisa, just 11 days old. Friends said of Sergeant Russell, "You could rely on him never to let you down."

This young man and many like him have not let us down. Each life taken from us is a terrible loss. We have lost young people from Germany and Denmark and Afghanistan and America. We mourn each one. And