free markets can deliver real benefits to our citizens.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:12 p.m. at the Parque Fundidora. In his remarks, he referred to President Vicente Fox of Mexico and his wife, Marta Sahagun de Fox; and President Fidel Castro of Cuba.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Paul Martin of Canada and an Exchange With Reporters in Monterrey

January 13, 2004

President Bush. The Prime Minister and I just had a very constructive meeting. He's a straightforward fellow. He's easy to talk to. We talked about a lot of issues. We reaffirmed the important relationship between Canada and the United States. It's a vital relationship. It is a relationship that is important for a lot of reasons. The most important reason is that we share the same values of family and human dignity and treating people decently, and I really look forward to working with Prime Minister Martin.

Prime Minister Martin. Well, I can certainly say the same thing. We share a continent, and we share values, and we share a perspective on what's the best thing for our people. And essentially, working together is really the way we are going to do the best thing for our people.

We discussed a number of individual issues, and I think that we made a lot of progress. And so I feel very good about the meeting, and I feel very good about the relationship.

President Bush. We'll answer a couple, two questions a side. We'll start with Lindlaw [Scott Lindlaw, Associated Press].

Iraqi Reconstruction Contracts/Canada-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, thank you. Dr. Rice hinted last week that Canada might be considered in a new round of contracting for Iraq reconstruction. Where exactly does that stand?

And Mr. Prime Minister, you supported your predecessor's decision to abstain from the Iraq war. Is there any reason to think this relationship is going to thaw out now?

President Bush. That assumes there was a freeze. And I didn't feel there was. I understood why people disagreed with the decision I took.

Secondly, yes, when I talked to Prime Minister Martin on our first phone call, I told him that Canada would be given serious consideration for contracting. Here's the—what's going to happen is that, first of all, they've been very strong supporters of the Madrid Conference. They want Iraq to succeed. They want Iraq to be free. They understand the stakes with having a free country in the midst of the Middle East. And Canada right now is eligible for subcontracting bids in the first round of construction projects. In the second round, the second tranche of bidding, Canada will be eligible to bid.

Prime Minister Martin. Yes, essentially, I think that—and I think this really shows how it can work—we had a very good telephone conversation before Christmas, and that subsequently, our officials went to work, and that Canada will be eligible to bid on all of the construction contracts in the next tranche. And we will—at the same time, there are a whole bunch of non-construction contracts, service contracts that are coming out immediately in which we will be entitled to bid. And so I think that—that it actually does show that working together, you can arrive at a reasonable solution.

If you'll forgive me for a second, Mr. President, we have two languages in Canada.

[*At this point, the Prime Minister repeated his remarks in French.*]

President Bush. Do you want to call on a Canadian reporter?

Prime Minister Martin. Sure.

Mad Cow Disease

Q. Mr. President, could you tell us, given the mad cow crisis that's currently affecting both of our countries, how will you work with our Prime Minister to help resolve the issue?

President Bush. This is an issue that's going to require close coordination between our two countries. We've got a lot of beef going across our border. We've got beef on the hoof and beef in the box. And the cattle

industries are very important for our respective provinces and States. And the best way to make sure that we're able to satisfy the consumers in both our countries as well as around the world is, there ought to be very close coordination on regulation, on information, and on the science.

And I'm confident that we'll be able to assure those who buy Canadian and/or U.S. beef that the products they buy are safe. It's just going to require a very close coordination between our Secretaries of Agriculture, which we are committed to doing. As a matter of fact, they'll be meeting, I believe, sometime this week.

Prime Minister Martin. This is a North American industry, and the solutions are science-based. And those science-based solutions are going to be arrived at between the two of us, and that's where the coordination comes in.

President Bush. You know, I personally haven't stopped eating beef. I like to eat beef and will continue eating beef, because I believe the food supply is safe. But we fully understand that we will work together to make sure that we address as many concerns as possible in a scientifically based way.

Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Space Program

Q. Mr. President, thank you. Can America afford a major shift in the space program, to go back to the moon and then on to Mars?

President Bush. Yes, I'll be saying that tomorrow. Thank you for—have you read the speech yet, Steve?

Q. No.

President Bush. Because you know I——

Q. I was hoping to get some excerpts.

President Bush. ——speech at the White House. Yes, I'll lay out the program—I'm going to give a speech tomorrow at our NASA Headquarters about America's approach to space exploration. I really don't want to give you the details because I want you to pay attention to what I have to say. But I will tell you that the spirit is going to be one of continued exploration, is to find—seeking new horizons and investing in a program that is—that meets that objective. And I'll lay it out tomorrow.

Thank you.

Prime Minister Martin. Let me just say, I'm glad to see that we're not the only Government that's afraid of a leak. [*Laughter*]

President Bush. That's right.

Passport Agreement/Deportation

Q. Mr. President, on the passport agreement, does that signal a special status for Canada in terms of U.S. matters of national security? And can you assure Canada that beyond notifying the potential for deporting a Canadian citizen, that it would not deport a Canadian citizen to a third country that might torture them?

President Bush. What I can assure Canada is that we will do everything we can—will do to protect our country from attack. That's one thing I will assure, which should make Canadians very happy to hear, because we've got a lot of Canadians living in the United States, and we've got a lot of Canadians with relatives in the United States.

Secondly, I will assure Canadians that we will work very closely with the Martin Government on issues—passport issues. And one of the things that I promised him is that there will be prior notification prior to any consideration of deportation. We owe it to the Government to be forthcoming and forthright.

Listen, Canada and America have got a special status already. You said "special status"—we've got special status by virtue of the fact that there is significant interchange on an hourly basis between our two countries. I mean, it's a vibrant border; it's an active economic relationship. It is special because we share values. It is special because we share a long border. And the key thing on this issue is to communicate clearly with the authorities, the Canadian authorities, and for me to communicate clearly with my counterpart, the Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Martin. Look, I think that, again, under international law, countries have the right to deport to a third country. And what's really happened here is that there has been a—agreement that consular services will be provided and prior notification. And that is very, very important, and that is—that's pretty unique.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9 a.m. at the Inter-Continental Hotel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration

January 14, 2004

Thanks for the warm welcome. I'm honored to be with the men and women of NASA. I thank those of you who have come in person. I welcome those who are listening by video. This agency and the dedicated professionals who serve it have always reflected the finest values of our country, daring, discipline, ingenuity, and unity in the pursuit of great goals.

America is proud of our space program. The risktakers and visionaries of this agency have expanded human knowledge, have revolutionized our understanding of the universe, and produced technological advances that have benefited all of humanity.

Inspired by all that has come before and guided by clear objectives, today we set a new course for America's space program. We will give NASA a new focus and vision for future exploration. We will build new ships to carry man forward into the universe, to gain a new foothold on the moon, and to prepare for new journeys to worlds beyond our own.

I am comfortable in delegating these new goals to NASA, under the leadership of Sean O'Keefe. He's doing an excellent job. I appreciate Commander Mike Foale's introduction. I'm sorry I couldn't shake his hand. [*Laughter*] Perhaps, Commissioner, you'll bring him by—Administrator, you'll bring him by to the Oval Office when he returns, so I can thank him in person.

I also know he is in space with his colleague, Alexander Kaleri, who happens to be a Russian cosmonaut. I appreciate the joint efforts of the Russians with our country to explore. I want to thank the astronauts who are with us, the courageous spacial entrepreneurs who set such a wonderful example for the young of our country.

And we've got some veterans with us today. I appreciate the astronauts of yesterday who are with us as well, who inspired the astronauts of today to serve our country.

I appreciate so very much the Members of Congress being here. Tom DeLay is here, leading a House delegation. Senator Nelson is here from the Senate. I am honored that you all have come. I appreciate you're interested in the subject. [*Laughter*] It is a subject that's important to this administration. It's a subject that's mighty important to the country and to the world.

Two centuries ago, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark left St. Louis to explore the new lands acquired in the Louisiana Purchase. They made that journey in the spirit of discovery, to learn the potential of vast new territory and to chart a way for others to follow. America has ventured forth into space for the same reasons. We have undertaken space travel because the desire to explore and understand is part of our character.

And that quest has brought tangible benefits that improve our lives in countless ways. The exploration of space has led to advances in weather forecasting, in communications, in computing, search and rescue technology, robotics, and electronics. Our investment in space exploration helped to create our satellite telecommunications network and the Global Positioning System. Medical technologies that help prolong life, such as the imaging processing used in CAT scanners and MRI machines, trace their origins to technology engineered for the use in space.

Our current programs and vehicles for exploring space have brought us far, and they have served us well. The space shuttle has flown more than a hundred missions. It has been used to conduct important research and to increase the sum of human knowledge. Shuttle crews and the scientists and engineers who support them have helped build the International Space Station.

Telescopes, including those in space, have revealed more than 100 planets in the last decade alone. Probes have shown us stunning images of the rings of Saturn and the outer planets of our solar system. Robotic explorers have found evidence of water, a key ingredient for life, on Mars and on the moons of Jupiter. At this very hour, the Mars Exploration Rover Spirit is searching for evidence of life beyond the Earth.

Yet for all these successes, much remains for us to explore and to learn. In the past 30 years, no human being has set foot on another world or ventured farther upward