

Weekly Compilation of  
**Presidential  
Documents**



Monday, April 11, 2005  
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## Contents

### Addresses and Remarks

- See also* Meetings With Foreign Leaders
- Cabinet meeting—566
- Congressional Medal of Honor, posthumous presentation to Sergeant First Class Paul Ray Smith—558
- Death of Pope John Paul II—552
- Radio address—551
- West Virginia
  - Strengthening Social Security in Parkersburg—560
  - Tour of the Bureau of the Public Debt in Parkersburg—560

### Interviews With the News Media

- Exchange with reporters in the Cabinet Room—566
- Interview with reporters aboard Air Force One—570
- News conference with President Yushchenko of Ukraine, April 4—553

### Joint Statements

- President George W. Bush and President Viktor Yushchenko—557

### Meetings With Foreign Leaders

- Ukraine, President Yushchenko—553, 557

### Proclamations

- Cancer Control Month—569
- Honoring the Memory of Pope John Paul II—552
- National D.A.R.E. Day—568
- Pan American Day and Pan American Week—568

### Statements by the President

- Death of Prince Rainier III of Monaco—570
- Iraqi Transitional Government, election of the Presidency Council—570

### Supplementary Materials

- Acts approved by the President—582
- Checklist of White House press releases—582
- Digest of other White House announcements—580
- Nominations submitted to the Senate—581

**Editor's Note:** The President was at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, on April 8, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

## WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

## PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

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Week Ending Friday, April 8, 2005

**The President's Radio Address**

*April 2, 2005*

Good morning. Before I begin today, I would like to say a word about Pope John Paul II. His Holiness is a faithful servant of God and a champion of human dignity and freedom. He is an inspiration to us all. Laura and I join millions of Americans and so many around the world who are praying for the Holy Father.

This week, the members of the independent Commission looking into America's intelligence capabilities presented their report. I asked these men and women to give an unvarnished look at our intelligence about weapons of mass destruction, and they have delivered. I appreciate their hard work. Their recommendations are thoughtful and extremely significant, and their central conclusion is one that I share: America's intelligence community needs fundamental change to enable us to successfully confront the threats of the 21st century.

My administration has already taken steps consistent with the Commission's recommendations. In February, I nominated John Negroponte to be our first Director of National Intelligence. This post was created to help ensure that our intelligence community works as a single, unified enterprise. When Members of Congress return to Washington, I urge them to move quickly on his confirmation because he will have a key role in the continued reform and restructuring of our intelligence capabilities.

This week, I also directed Homeland Security Adviser Fran Townsend to oversee the interagency review of the Commission's findings and ensure that concrete action is taken.

The Commission's report delivers a sharp critique of the way intelligence has been collected and analyzed against some of the most difficult intelligence targets, like Iraq. To win the war on terror, we will correct what needs to be fixed and build on what the Commis-

sion calls "solid intelligence successes." These include the uncovering of Libya's nuclear and missile programs, which led Libya's leader to renounce weapons of mass destruction. In Pakistan, our intelligence helped expose and shut down the world's most dangerous nuclear proliferation network. We need to learn from the successes we've had and apply the lessons elsewhere.

We also acknowledge the hard work and sacrifices of the men and women in our intelligence community. These talented people are on the frontlines in the war on terror. Their work is critical. We must prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass murder that they would use against our people.

The work our intelligence community is doing is also extremely difficult. Every day, dangerous regimes are working to conceal their programs and their possible relationships with terrorists. And the work our intelligence men and women do is, by nature, secret. The American people never hear about many of America's intelligence successes, but I'm aware of them. I'm proud of our efforts of our intelligence workers to defend our country, and the American people should be as well.

The President and his national security team must have intelligence that is timely and accurate. In its report, the Commission points out that America needs to know much more about the weapons programs and intentions of our most dangerous adversaries. The members of the Commission have given useful and important guidance that will help transform our intelligence capabilities for the needs of a dangerous new century, and we will continue to give our intelligence professionals the tools they need and the structure they deserve so they can succeed in their essential work.

It is not possible to guarantee perfect security in our vast free Nation, but at a time when we're at war and our margin for error

is getting smaller, the consequences of underestimating a threat could be tens of thousands of innocent lives. I can assure you that the men and women in our intelligence community are working around the clock and doing everything they can to keep us safe, and my administration will continue to make intelligence reforms that will allow them to identify threats before they fully emerge so we can take action to protect the American people.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:34 a.m. on April 1 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 2. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 1 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya. He also referred to the Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

### **Remarks on the Death of Pope John Paul II**

*April 2, 2005*

Laura and I join people across the Earth in mourning the passing of Pope John Paul II. The Catholic Church has lost its shepherd. The world has lost a champion of human freedom, and a good and faithful servant of God has been called home.

Pope John Paul II left the throne of Saint Peter in the same way he ascended to it, as a witness to the dignity of human life. In his native Poland, that witness launched a democratic revolution that swept Eastern Europe and changed the course of history. Throughout the West, John Paul's witness reminded us of our obligation to build a culture of life in which the strong protect the weak. And during the Pope's final years, his witness was made even more powerful by his daily courage in the face of illness and great suffering.

All Popes belong to the world, but Americans had special reason to love the man from Krakow. In his visits to our country, the Pope spoke of our "providential" Constitution, the self-evident truths about human dignity in

our Declaration, and the "blessings of liberty" that follow from them. "It is these truths," he said, "that have led people all over the world to look to America with hope and respect."

Pope John Paul II was, himself, an inspiration to millions of Americans and to so many more throughout the world. We will always remember the humble, wise, and fearless priest who became one of history's great moral leaders. We're grateful to God for sending such a man, a son of Poland, who became the Bishop of Rome and a hero for the ages.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:02 p.m. in the Cross Hall at the White House. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

### **Proclamation 7881—Honoring the Memory of Pope John Paul II**

*April 2, 2005*

*By the President of the United States  
of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

As a mark of respect for His Holiness Pope John Paul II, I hereby order, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States of America, that the flag of the United States shall be flown at half-staff at the White House and on all public buildings and grounds, at all military posts and naval stations, and on all naval vessels of the Federal Government in the District of Columbia and throughout the United States and its Territories and possessions until sunset on the day of his interment. I also direct that the flag shall be flown at half-staff for the same period at all United States embassies, legations, consular offices, and other facilities abroad, including all military facilities and naval vessels and stations.

**In Witness Whereof**, I have hereunto set my hand this second day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., April 5, 2005]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 6.

### **The President's News Conference With President Viktor Yushchenko of Ukraine**

*April 4, 2005*

**President Bush.** Thank you. It's an honor to stand with a courageous leader of a free Ukraine. Mr. President, you are a friend to our country, and you are an inspiration to all who love liberty. Welcome to America, and we're pleased to welcome your wife as well. We're looking forward to having lunch with you.

President Yushchenko was the first head of state I called after my Inaugural Address. I told him that the Orange Revolution was a powerful example—an example of democracy for people around the world. I was impressed; I know millions of my fellow citizens were impressed by the brave citizens who gathered in Kiev's Independence Square and rightly demanded that their voices be heard. It's an impressive moment, Mr. President, and an important moment. I've oftentimes told our fellow citizens that the world is changing. Freedom is spreading, and I use the Ukraine as an example, along with Afghanistan and Iraq, about a changing world—a world, by the way, changing for the better, because we believe free societies will be peaceful societies.

Mr. President, I appreciate your vision. I want to thank you for our discussion we just had. We discussed a lot of matters. We talked about the neighborhood, of course. We talked about your commitment to fighting corruption, your deep desire to introduce principles of the marketplace in Ukraine. I told the President that our Nation will stand by Ukraine as it strengthens law enforcement, as it fights corruption, as it promotes a free media and civil society organizations. To this end, I've asked Congress to provide \$60 million for new funding to help you in your efforts, Mr. President.

We also agree with your desire to join the WTO, and we'll work with your Government

to join the WTO as well as to lift the Jackson-Vanik trade restrictions that were created in a different era. Secretary Sam Bodman, who is with us here, will be going to the Ukraine to talk about cooperation on energy. We look forward to working with you, Mr. President, as you build progress at home to become a part of Europe, a Europe that is whole, free, and at peace. And at the same time, we'll continue to work with you to help your ties to the North Atlantic Alliance.

Mr. President, I want to thank you for being an active partner in the war on terror. Our statement reflects our common desire to cooperate on law enforcement matters, our desire to have export controls to prevent the spread of dangerous weapons technology, including nuclear materials, MANPADs, and ballistic missiles.

I appreciate Ukraine's strong commitment to a free Iraq. Ukrainian troops helped to protect the Iraqi people during the elections this January. I look forward to cooperating with your nation to help the Iraqis build a peaceful society.

We share a goal to spread freedom to other nations. I mean, after all, the Orange Revolution may have looked like it was only a part of the Ukrainian—the history of Ukraine, but the Orange Revolution represented revolutions elsewhere as well. And I look forward to working with you, Mr. President, in places like Lebanon and Kyrgyzstan. I want to thank you for your conversation on Moldova. I appreciate the discussion we had on—about Belarus.

All in all, Mr. President, we're really thrilled you're here. I know our Congress is looking forward to having you address them next Wednesday. In the meantime, I want to thank you for our frank and open discussion. We wish you all the best, and in America, you've got a strong friend. Welcome.

**President Yushchenko.** Mr. President, dear American friends, for me, for my wife, it is a great honor and privilege to be received here in the White House and to hear the words that are addressed to my country, my nation, my homeland.

Our ideals are simple and eternal: We want democracy and freedom—our apparent European aspirations, which we were discussing from the first days, many days before

the Maidan events when me and my team went into the politics. This is my vision; this is the vision shared by my team. This is something that my father taught me.

The legacy that we inherited is a very difficult country—Ukraine, where the rule of law did not exist and human rights were not observed, where half of the national economy is a shadow. The humiliated profession of journalism, the journalists wanted to speak the truth and stood against the official power; they could pay dearly. Dearly—I mean it—they could pay their lives for it. We're talking about the country where the number one problem remains to be corruption. We're talking about the country where the huge problem remains the problem of poverty. We realize all those challenges. We realize that it's only—the work that has to be done by the Ukrainian power will help cope with the problems that the country inherited.

However, it is very important, Mr. President, to feel that we have partners standing by, that we are not left in solitude in coping with these troubles. Our conversation began with my saying that for Ukraine, it was a very long road to the Oval Office. I do appreciate the attention that you display and the words that you have said.

And I would like to once again reiterate that the ideals of the new Ukraine are democracy, which we perceive as the priority of people's interests in political, economic, and other areas of development. These are freedom of speech that are the oxygen for democracy; this is a market economy which grants equal rights to people; this is the reliable system of social guarantees that secure protection to the weak. Shortly speaking, the ideals for the new Ukraine are the ideals shared by the Western civilization. I fully concur with my American colleague in his saying that freedom is not the gift for America; this is the Godly gift.

Today, Mr. President, we had a very frank and productive discussion on a very broad spectrum of issues. We were talking about the approaches to deepening our bilateral relations, and this conversation is far from finalization, about the role that democratic Ukraine can play in the regional and global stability, the problem of nonproliferation of

weapons of mass destruction and other subjects.

Essentially, on all questions that we raised, we found mutual understanding. I am convinced that relations between our nations are based not only by mutual sympathy but also by the unity of interests and ideals, like the rule of law, protection of fundamental human rights, and respect for people. Majority of my fellow Ukrainians want to see America as their strategic partner, and I am pleased to see that the U.S. President shares this perception, and he has highlighted this support today.

In our joint statement, which we agreed on, based on our negotiations, we have made it clear that Ukraine and the U.S. confirm the new era in the strategic partnership between our nations and the friendship between our peoples. We are looking forward to the effective support from the U.S. administration to the new Government of Ukraine in addressing important issues faced by ourselves, including our accession to WTO by the end of 2005, the lifting of the trade sanctions on Ukrainian-exported goods, Ukraine's accession to European and Euro-Atlantic security alliances.

We have a unique opportunity to write new and historical pages in the chronicle of our relations, to create the new agenda of real and contentful U.S., American strategic partnership. The democratic Ukraine will enhance stability in Europe and worldwide. And strategic partnership with the U.S. will augment the democratic Ukraine. I'm convinced that our two nations will stand by as global partners in order to achieve freedom, security, and prosperity in the 21st century.

I thank you.

**President Bush.** We'll answer two questions a side. Terry Hunt [Associated Press].

### **Iraq**

**Q.** Ukraine and Italy and other allies will withdraw their forces from Iraq. Why should the United States continue to pay most of the cost and suffer most of the casualties when our allies are leaving?

**President Bush.** Our strategy in Iraq is clear, and it's a common strategy that our coalition has agreed to, and that is to train Iraqi soldiers, Iraqi security forces, so that

they can do the hard work of securing their country. And that's what's happening. And I appreciate the contribution that the Ukrainian people have made toward liberating Iraq and helping provide stability in Iraq and providing security for the elections of Iraq.

And the President made clear to me in my first conversation with him that there—that he campaigned on the idea of bringing some troops out. He's fulfilling a campaign pledge. I fully understand that. But he also has said that he's going to cooperate with the coalition in terms further withdrawals, and I appreciate that.

The fundamental question is, is it worth it? And the answer is, absolutely it's worth it for a free Iraq to emerge. We're talking about a part of the world in which, you know, our foreign policy was, let's just hope for the best and tolerate the fact there's no free societies. And what ended up happening was, there was a—tyrants have emerged, tyrants that threatened our security. And so not only was the action worth it, the action is worth it to make sure that democracy exists, and because democracies will yield peace, and that's what we want.

And so we're going to continue to press forward with a strategy that supports the elected Government of Iraq. Today I spoke to the new Speaker of the Transitional Assembly. I wished him all the best. I thanked him for stepping up to take a leadership role. I look forward to working with the new President and Prime Minister. And I look forward to continuing to implement a strategy that will help Iraqis self-govern. And we're making progress toward that goal. And I want to thank the Ukrainians for their support.

You want to call somebody?

#### **NATO and EU Membership for Ukraine**

**Q.** Mr. President, did you hear a clear position of Ukraine concerning its participation in NATO? And is America ready to support Ukraine in joining the Membership Action Plan this year? Thank you.

**President Bush.** Thank you very much. Well, you know, the first time I met the President was at NATO, during my latest trip to Europe. And my conversation with him there was the same as I had here, and that is there is a way forward in order to become

a partner of the United States and other nations in NATO. It is a path, and we want to help Ukraine get on that path as quickly as possible. It is not a given. In other words, there are things that the Ukrainian Government must do in order to satisfy the requirements to be considered for NATO.

And we want to help—the whole purpose of this meeting and the purpose of the previous meeting was to help the Ukrainian Government to understand that which is necessary to do in order to become more likely accepted into NATO. And that's what we want to do. We want to help in this process. And I think it's—I'm a supporter of the idea of Ukraine becoming a member of NATO. I think it's important.

I also know that Ukraine wants to join the EU, and there's things that have to do with the EU. But I do want to assure the Ukrainian people that you don't have to choose between the EU and friendship with the United States. That's not a choice the United States Government will make our friends make. You can be both a member of the EU and a friend of the United States. And so we want to help your Government make the difficult decisions and difficult choices necessary to become available for membership in NATO.

Steve Holland [Reuters].

#### **Pope John Paul II**

**Q.** Thank you. How do you think this Pope has affected America's spiritual and political life? And how much weight did you give to his opposition to the Iraq war?

**President Bush.** First, Laura and I are looking forward to leading a delegation to honor the Holy Father. He will go down in history as a—he will show people that one man can make a difference in people's lives. He was a courageous person. He was a moral person. He was a Godly person. And he's had huge influence, Steve, not only amongst, for example, young people in America but around the world. One of his great legacies will be the influence he had on the young.

He spoke to the poor. He spoke to morality. And of course, he was a man of peace. And he didn't like war, and I fully understood that, and I appreciated the conversations I had with the Holy Father on the subject.

I remember going to Castel Gandolfo—Laura and I were there, and I can remember him taking us out on the balcony of this fabulous palace overlooking a magnificent lake and talking about his views of the world. It was a moment I'll never forget during my Presidency.

And so the world will miss him. And it is my great honor, on behalf of our country, to express our gratitude to the Almighty for such a man. And of course, we look forward to the majesty of celebrating such a significant human life.

One more.

#### ***Ukraine's Role in Iraq/Syrian Withdrawal From Lebanon***

**Q.** I have a question for both Presidents, but primarily for Mr. Yushchenko. What will be the American-Ukrainian cooperation in Iraq after the withdrawal of Ukrainian troops? And could you please give some details?

**President Yushchenko.** First of all, I would like to indicate that Iraq is a zone of Ukrainian interest, and therefore, when this question was debated in the Ukrainian Parliament, the majority of the Parliament members spoke in favor of this type of Ukrainian presence in the country.

Another point, which I'm most pleased to indicate, is, in my opinion, the Ukrainian contingent has demonstrated its peace-making mission in a very effective manner. Over the short period of time that our military contingent has been deployed there, we have retrained three battalions of the national armed forces of Iraq, two companies. We have examined in our hospital about 5,000 local citizens. Due to the securing stability in this region, we returned about 1,500 people to their jobs because it has become much safer to travel to their workplaces.

Beginning from the 9th of January, in our region there is not a single incident in our area, and we therefore believe that it is precisely in this region where the works aimed at restoration of the infrastructure of the province where we had deployed, because there is no water nor other amenities, elementary amenities. And there now these restoration works could be commenced. This will be a very vivid example of how success

can be ensured by pursuing peacemaking policy.

We stand for—we remain arguing that Ukraine is committed to pursuing training—retraining programs for the national guard of Iraq to the armed forces of Iraq. We are prepared to share the experience and the material on a mutually beneficial basis to make sure that this order remains. It is my deep conviction that momentum has been created when Ukraine and diplomats, businesspeople, and politicians must do what Ukrainian peacemakers started.

Thank you.

**President Bush.** Yes. As to what happens over time, that's going to depend on the Iraqi Government. We're dealing with an elected Government. And they will make the decision as to the security relationship; they'll make the decision as to how the country rewards contracts for reconstruction. This is a free country, and in free countries, Governments get to decide—sovereign Governments decide their future. And so we look forward to working with the new Government. As you know, it's a process. The Transitional Assembly will be writing a constitution, and when the constitution is written, it'll be ratified. And upon ratification, there will be another election.

And so we look forward to working with the Interim Government, and we look forward to working with the Government that gets elected in December, all aimed at helping Iraq develop into a freestanding, peaceful country, which is in the interests of our children and grandchildren, by the way.

I also want to say something about Lebanon. Syria—I appreciate the fact that Syria has expressed its intent to fully leave the country. That only—that not only means troops but it means security forces, as far as I'm concerned. When they say, "We're going to leave the country," we expect troops and security forces to leave. And secondly, it's important for this election to take place on time. And we look forward to continuing to work with our friends and allies to make sure Lebanon is truly free.

Mr. President, thank you, sir. Let's go have lunch. Appreciate it.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:51 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, President Bush referred to Kateryna Yushchenko, wife of President Yushchenko; and Hajim al-Hasani, Speaker, Iraqi Transitional National Assembly. President Yushchenko spoke in Ukrainian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

**Joint Statement by President  
George W. Bush and President  
Viktor Yushchenko**

*April 4, 2005*

***A New Century Agenda for the  
Ukrainian-American Strategic  
Partnership***

Today, the United States and Ukraine affirm a new era of strategic partnership between our nations and friendship between our peoples. We commit our nations to working together to advance freedom and security grounded in democratic principles and institutions, which form the foundation of our relationship.

We salute the people of Ukraine who claimed their right to elect freely their leadership. Their brave stand was a victory for democracy inspiring those throughout the world who yearn for freedom and dignity in the face of tyranny, isolation and oppression. The territorial integrity, security, and political and economic transformation of Ukraine are essential to building a Europe whole, free and at peace. We will work together to strengthen democratic institutions in Ukraine and to advance freedom in Europe, its neighborhood and beyond.

We will work to defeat terrorism wherever it occurs and to advance economic development, democratic reforms and peaceful settlement of regional disputes. We are grateful to the men and women of those nations who have served and sacrificed for Iraqi freedom. Today, we pledge ourselves anew to assist the Iraqi people to secure liberty, peace and prosperity, and we join our efforts to assist Iraq in its economic reconstruction. Fear and resentment, the breeding ground of terrorism, must be replaced with freedom and hope.

We also commit to work together to back reform, democracy, tolerance and respect for

all communities, and peaceful resolution of conflicts in Georgia and Moldova, and to support the advance of freedom in countries such as Belarus and Cuba. Citizens in our open societies value the freedom to practice their faiths, and we are committed to promoting religious tolerance globally.

As Ukraine undertakes far-reaching reform at home, it can count on the United States for support. We applaud Ukraine's commitment to curb corruption, promote the rule of law and improve the business climate. Progress on reforms will allow Ukraine to realize its aspirations to move closer to, and ultimately join European, Euro-Atlantic and international institutions.

We will further integrate Ukraine into the world economy and promote investment and trade between our two countries. As a first step, the Ukrainian Government seeks expeditious U.S. recognition as a market economy. We agree to continue our close cooperation to ensure a process that recognizes the evolution of Ukraine's economy.

We are committed to working together to achieve Ukraine's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO). For its part, the Ukrainian Government will seek to secure, on an urgent basis, approval of legislation and enact regulations that will facilitate accession and contribute to lasting economic reform, including in agriculture, manufacturing, services and the protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights. The United States and Ukraine are committed to working together to complete our bilateral negotiations for Ukraine's accession to the WTO in 2005. We will also cooperate on the outstanding multilateral work that must be concluded for Ukraine's WTO accession. We also support immediately ending application of Jackson-Vanik to Ukraine.

The United States supports Ukraine's NATO aspirations and is prepared to help Ukraine achieve its goals by providing assistance with challenging reforms. The United States supports an offer of an Intensified Dialogue on membership issues with Ukraine at the meeting of Alliance Foreign Ministers in Vilnius, Lithuania later this month. Our cooperation will also deepen through the U.S.-led, largest-ever NATO

trust fund to destroy obsolete and excess weaponry.

We are initiating an energy dialogue to cooperate in the restructuring and reform of Ukraine's energy sector to encourage investment, diversify Ukraine's energy supplies, reduce its energy dependence, bolster commercial competition in Eurasian energy sectors and promote nuclear safety. To advance this dialogue, we are establishing an Energy consultative mechanism between our Energy Ministries. United States Secretary of Energy Bodman will travel to Ukraine in the near future to initiate the consultative mechanism and to promote our energy and nonproliferation cooperation.

Building on our cooperation through the G-8 Global Partnership, the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program and the Proliferation Security Initiative, we pledge to begin a new chapter in the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. We will deepen our cooperation on nonproliferation, export controls, border security and law enforcement to deter, detect, interdict, investigate and prosecute illicit trafficking of these weapons and related materials; enhance the security of nuclear and radiological sources; and dispose of spent nuclear fuel. We also agree on the importance of addressing the growing threat posed by the proliferation of ballistic missiles. In this regard, we will explore how we can work together on missile defense, including beginning negotiations on a framework to facilitate such cooperation and closer industry-to-industry collaboration.

The security and stability of nations increasingly depends on the health, well-being and prosperity of their citizens. We therefore commit to cooperate on a broad agenda of social and humanitarian issues, including halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and TB; fighting the scourge of organized crime, trafficking in persons and child pornography; and completing the Chernobyl Shelter Implementation Plan. To help complete the Chernobyl Shelter, the United States will provide an additional \$45 million to the Shelter Fund. Ukraine will also provide an additional financial contribution and facilitate prompt completion of the Shelter. U.S. assistance to Ukraine will particularly focus on

solidifying democratic advances through anti-corruption and rule of law programs, media and NGO development, nonpartisan party and election monitor training and other steps to improve electoral institutions and practices.

We also support a bold expansion of contact between our societies. To this end, Ukraine will eliminate visa requirements for Americans, and the United States will reduce visa fees for Ukrainians. We aim to enhance citizen exchanges, training opportunities and cooperation between business communities of both countries.

We commit our two nations to stand together as global partners for freedom, security and prosperity in the 21st century.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

### **Remarks on Presenting Posthumously the Congressional Medal of Honor to Sergeant First Class Paul Ray Smith**

*April 4, 2005*

Good afternoon, and welcome to the White House. Today is a special occasion: We are here to pay tribute to a soldier whose service illustrates the highest ideals of leadership and love of our country.

Sergeant First Class Paul Ray Smith of Florida gave his life for these ideals in a deadly battle outside Baghdad. It is my great privilege to recognize his extraordinary sacrifice by awarding Sergeant Smith the Medal of Honor.

I appreciate Secretary Don Rumsfeld joining us today; Secretary Jim Nicholson of the Department of Veterans Affairs; Senator Carl Levin, Senator Bill Nelson, Senator Mel Martinez, Senator Johnny Isakson, and Congressman Ike Skelton. Thank you all for joining us.

I appreciate Secretary Francis Harvey, Secretary of the Army; General Dick Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; General Pete Pace, Vice Chairman; General Pete Schoomaker, Chief of the Army.

I want to thank the Medal of Honor recipients who have joined us today: John Baker,

Barney Barnum, Bernie Fisher, Al Rascon, and Brian Thacker. Honored you all are here.

I appreciate the family members who have joined us today. Thank you all for coming: Birgit Smith, his wife; Jessica Smith; David Smith; Janice Pvirre, the mom; Donald Pvirre, stepfather; and all the other family members who have joined us. Welcome.

I appreciate Chaplain David Hicks for his invocation. I want to thank Lieutenant Colonel Tom Smith for joining us, who was Paul Smith's commander. I particularly want to welcome soldiers from the 3d Infantry Division, Paul's unit in Iraq.

The Medal of Honor is the highest award for bravery a President can bestow. It is given for gallantry above and beyond the call of duty in the face of enemy attack. Since World War II, more than half of those who have been awarded this medal gave their lives in the action that earned it. Sergeant Paul Smith belongs to this select group.

The story of Paul Smith is a story of a boy transformed into a man and a leader. His friends and family will tell you that he joined the Army in 1989 after finishing high school. When he joined the Army, he was a typical young American. He liked sports; he liked fast cars; and he liked to stay out late with his friends, pursuits that occasionally earned him what the Army calls "extra duty"—*[laughter]*—scrubbing floors.

Two things would change Paul's life and lead him to the selfless heroism we honor today. The first would come when he was stationed in Germany and fell for a woman named Birgit Bacher. It turns out that Paul had a romantic streak in him: On the first night he met her, Paul appeared outside Birgit's window singing "You've Lost That Loving Feeling." *[Laughter]* In 1992, the two married, and soon a young soldier became a devoted family man who played tee-ball with his son and taught his daughter how to change the oil in his Jeep Cherokee.

Second great change in Paul's life would come when he shipped off to Saudi Arabia to fight in the first gulf war. There the young combat engineer learned that his training had a purpose and could save lives on the battlefield. Paul returned from that war determined that other soldiers would benefit from the lessons he had learned.

Paul earned his sergeant's stripes and became known as a stickler for detail. Sergeant Smith's seriousness wasn't always appreciated by the greener troops under his direction. Those greener troops oftentimes found themselves to do tasks over and over again, until they got it right. Specialist Michael Seaman, who is with us today, says, "He was hard in training because he knew we had to be hard in battle." Specialist Seaman will also tell you that he and others are alive today because of Sergeant Smith's discipline.

That discipline would be put to the task in a small courtyard less than a mile from the Baghdad airport. Sergeant Smith was leading about three dozen men who were using a courtyard next to a watchtower to build a temporary jail for captured enemy prisoners. As they were cleaning the courtyard, they were surprised by about a hundred of Saddam Hussein's Republican Guard.

With complete disregard for his own life and under constant enemy fire, Sergeant Smith rallied his men and led a counter-attack. Seeing that his wounded men were in danger of being overrun and that enemy fire from the watchtower had pinned them down, Sergeant Smith manned a 50-caliber machine gun atop a damaged armored vehicle. From a completely exposed position, he killed as many as 50 enemy soldiers as he protected his men.

Sergeant Smith's leadership saved the men in the courtyard, and he prevented an enemy attack on the aid station just up the road. Sergeant Smith continued to fire and took a—until he took a fatal round to the head. His actions in that courtyard saved the lives of more than 100 American soldiers.

Scripture tells us, as the general said, "that a man has no greater love than to lay down his life for his friends." And that is exactly the responsibility Paul Smith believed the sergeant's stripes on his sleeve had given him. In a letter he wrote to his parents but never mailed, he said that he was prepared to "give all that I am to ensure that all my boys make it home."

On this day 2 years ago, Sergeant Smith gave his all for his men. Five days later, Baghdad fell, and the Iraqi people were liberated. And today we bestow upon Sergeant Smith the first Medal of Honor in the war on terror.

He's also the first to be awarded this new Medal of Honor flag, authorized by the United States Congress. We count ourselves blessed to have soldiers like Sergeant Smith, who put their lives on the line to advance the cause of freedom and protect the American people.

Like every one of the men and women in uniform who have served in Operation Iraqi Freedom, Sergeant Paul Smith was a volunteer. We thank his family for the father, husband, and son and brother who can never be replaced. We recall with appreciation the fellow soldiers whose lives he saved and the many more he inspired. And we express our gratitude for a new generation of Americans, every bit as selfless and dedicated to liberty as any that has gone on before, a dedication exemplified by the sacrifice and valor of Sergeant First Class Paul Ray Smith.

And now if his family would join me, please. Lieutenant Commander, please read the citation.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:07 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Paul Ray Smith's son, David A. Smith, and daughter, Jessica M. Smith; and Maj. Gen. David Hicks, USA, Army Chief of Chaplains. Following the President's remarks, Lt. Cmdr. Keith B. Davids, Navy Aide to the President, read the citation.

### Remarks Following a Tour of the Bureau of the Public Debt in Parkersburg, West Virginia

April 5, 2005

**The President.** See, what's interesting is a lot of people believe that the Social Security trust is—the Government takes a person's money, invests it, and then pays it back to them upon retirement. It doesn't work that way.

**Susan Chapman.** That's right. That's exactly right.

**The President.** This is what exists. And it's very important, then, to make sure that in the future that there's real assets for retirees.

But I want to thank you all for having me come. I want to thank all the workers here for representing the mighty United States.

I'm proud to work with you. I thank you for what you do. And my message here in town is that we have an obligation to take the system that Franklin Roosevelt created and make it work for a younger generation of Americans. I'm looking forward to working with Congress to do that. That's what the American people expect. They expect us to modernize the system.

Anyway, thanks for having us.

**Ms. Chapman.** Well, thank you for coming. We're proud to have you visit us.

**The President.** Thanks.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 a.m. Participating in the tour was Susan Chapman, Director, Division of Federal Investments, Bureau of the Public Debt. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

### Remarks on Strengthening Social Security in Parkersburg

April 5, 2005

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thank you all. It is nice to be back in Parkersburg. Thanks for having me. It just seems like yesterday that I was here. [Laughter] It's great to be back in West Virginia as well. I'm struck by the—every time I come here I'm struck by the beauty of this State. And of course, you put on a beautiful day, for which I'm grateful.

One of these days I'm going to bring my mountain bike. I love to exercise. I'm doing it to make sure that I do the job you expect me to do, and I'm doing it to set an example as well. I think people need to get out all around our country, walk every day or ride your mountain bike every day, get a little exercise every day, stay fit and healthy.

Speaking about staying fit and healthy, that's what we need to make sure we do for our Social Security system too. I'm here to remind the good folks of West Virginia that we have a problem, and we have a duty to renew one of great—America's great institutions, and that's the Social Security system.

I've now traveled to 20 States to talk about Social Security, 20 States in 2 months, all

aimed at making sure that the American people understand the situation with Social Security. And more and more Americans understand there is a problem, and I hear from more and more Americans that they expect those of us who are honored to serve in Washington to fix the problem.

I have just come from the Bureau of Public Debt. I want to thank Van Zeck, Keith Rake, and Susan Chapman. Susan was the tour guide there at the Bureau of Public Debt. I went there because I'm trying to make a point about the Social Security trust. You see, a lot of people in America think there's a trust, in this sense, that we take your money through payroll taxes, and then we hold it for you, and then when you retire, we give it back to you. But that's not the way it works.

There is no trust fund, just IOUs that I saw firsthand, that future generations will pay. They will pay for them in either higher taxes or reduced benefits or cuts to other critical Government programs.

The office here in Parkersburg stores those IOUs. They're stacked in a filing cabinet. Imagine, the retirement security for future generations is sitting in a filing cabinet. It's time to strengthen and modernize Social Security for future generations with growing assets that you can control, that you call your own, assets that the Government cannot take away.

I'm sorry that Laura is not traveling with me today. She's doing great. She and I will be taking off tomorrow morning to pay our country's respects to a great world leader in His Holiness. He shows that one man can make an enormous difference. And I look forward to honoring the memory of Pope John Paul II. So she's packing her bags. [Laughter]

I want to thank the President of West Virginia University at Parkersburg. Madam President, I'm sorry I missed your inauguration. [Laughter] But thank you for serving. Dr. Marie Gnage is with us. I appreciate you letting us use this facility.

Before coming out here, I had the honor of saying hello to a lot of folks who are involved with the community college system of West Virginia. I'm a strong believer in the community college system around our country, because I understand that the commu-

nity college system is a—provides a great opportunity for many of our young and for many of our workers to gain the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century. The community college system provides a wonderful opportunity for States and communities to say to potential employers, we have got a fantastic asset in our midst to make sure that the workers can fill the jobs that you desire. And so for those of you involved in the community college system around the State of West Virginia, thanks for being here and thanks for what you're doing.

I want to thank the secretary of State, Betty Ireland, for joining us. I'm proud you're here, Madam Secretary. Thanks for taking time. I want to thank Mayor Jimmy Colombo for joining us. Mr. Mayor—there he is. Thank you, Jimmy. I appreciate the way the mayor approaches his office. He doesn't care whether I'm a Republican or Democrat or independent; he just—he's a hospitable fellow. [Laughter] Every time I come to this part of the world, he says, "Welcome." And I appreciate you, Mr. Mayor, and I appreciate you being here today. Thanks for coming.

I want to thank all the State and local officials for joining us today. When I landed, I met June Roberts. She's a volunteer with the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program. We call it RSVP. They exist all around the country. In 2001, she founded Senior Stitchers. Listen to what these good folks do: They prepare sewing and craft projects, including wheelchair pads, blankets for local child service agencies, senior centers, and hospitals. These are good folks. They're taking time out of their lives. June and her buddies—I think she said there's eight or nine of them—take time out of their day to volunteer to help make somebody's life better.

Let me tell you one way you can help the good folks in Parkersburg. A way to serve our country is to find somebody who hurts, take time out of your life, surround them with love, feed the hungry, find shelter for the homeless, listen to that universal call to love a neighbor just like you'd like to be loved yourself, and you'll be serving America.

So where is June? I think June is here somewhere. June, thanks for coming. Thank you for setting such a good example.

On my trips around this country, I have made it as clear as I possibly can that the Government will keep its promise to those who have retired or near retirement, and that's very important for a lot of people to hear. I understand how important the Social Security check is to a lot of our citizens. A lot of people depend on that Social Security check. And therefore, I understand that when it comes time to talking about making sure the system is strong for a younger generation, sometimes the message can get confused. In other words, when a senior hears the President talking about Social Security, he or she may be concerned about whether or not that check that they're getting today is going to continue to come tomorrow. I understand that.

And I can understand why people are sometimes confused because there's a lot of propaganda in the mix. In other words, people are saying things that simply aren't true. They're saying, "Well, if you try to reform the system for a younger generation of Americans, then you may not get your check."

I'm here to tell you, those who've retired are going to get their check. Those who are near retirement are going to get their check. The system will not change in any way for people who have been born prior to 1950. And I'm going to keep saying it over and over again.

The problem is that the Government is making promises to younger Americans that it cannot keep, and that's important for folks to hear. You see, Social Security was designed as a pay-as-you-go system, not as a trust system. Pay-as-you-go, the—you know, the workers will pay into Social Security through the payroll taxes, and then it immediately gets paid out. It gets paid out to pay for benefits, and if there's any money left over, it pays for a lot of other Government programs. What goes in, goes out. Right now, more money is coming into the Social Security system than going out. And that's how we help fund the programs. A lot of people in West Virginia don't understand that, that the system is a pay-as-you-go system. And this works fine, so long as you got enough workers paying for the benefits of those who've retired.

In 1950, there were 16 workers paying into the system for every beneficiary. In other words, the Government promised you your retirement check, and there's 16 people paying for that check. That kind of keeps the load relatively light. Today, there are three workers paying for each beneficiary. In other words, one of the things that's happened for the Social Security system that people must understand is that there are fewer people paying into the system per beneficiary. In a relatively short order, there will be two workers paying into the system for every beneficiary.

Now, that's just only half of the equation. And here's the other half: Americans are living longer and enjoying longer retirements. Life expectancy has increased. They're collecting benefits for longer periods of time. In other words, if you've retired and you're living longer, the system must pay your benefits longer—fewer people paying into the system, and people are living longer, collecting their benefits longer. So you're beginning to get a sense to where the bind is coming.

And not only that, there's a lot of us who are getting ready to retire. We are called the baby boomers. There's a big bulge of baby boomers, when you look at the charts. I know; I'm one. As a matter of fact, my retirement age—or when I become eligible for retirement benefits is 2008. That's when I turn 62. It's quite a convenient date in my case. [Laughter] And to compound the issue even further, a lot of people running for office in the past have said, "Vote for me; I will increase your Social Security benefits." And so my generation has been promised greater benefits than the previous generation. So you've got a lot of people living longer, getting greater benefits, with fewer people paying into the system.

And when I start drawing out and when my generation starts drawing out of the system instead of paying in the system, the stresses on the system will really begin to grow. And that's important for you to understand. In other words, when you start thinking about whether or not the system is solvent for younger Americans, think about this: In each passing year, we'll have fewer workers paying even higher benefits to a larger

number of retirees, and therein lies the problem.

Social Security is going to be fine for those of you who have received your check. It's going to be fine for people who have retired or who will retire and your birth date is prior to 1950. You're—nothing is going to change. The system is in good shape for you. It is not going to be fine for younger workers coming up. In 2017, the Social Security system will go into the red. That means more money will be going out of the system than coming in. In other words, baby boomers will be retiring, start to living longer, greater benefits promised to us, and the pay-as-you-go system goes negative. More money will be going out than coming in through payroll taxes. And every year after that, the shortfall gets worse. In other words, it's an accelerating problem.

As a matter of fact, according to the Social Security trustees, waiting just one year adds \$600 billion to the cost of fixing Social Security. The longer we wait, the more the problem becomes severe. In 2027, there will be \$200 billion going out more than coming in. Somebody is going to have to pay for that. Somewhere there's got to be a give in the system. We have a real problem.

The good news is more and more Americans are beginning to understand we have a real problem. And more and more Americans who are receiving a Social Security check are being reassured that nothing will change. And when that happens, there's a fundamental question that's being asked. A lot of grandparents are now starting to ask, "What are you going to do for my grandchildren?" I believe this is a generational issue. This is an issue where, once folks understand nothing is going to change and they understand we have a problem, the logical question to people like me and others in Washington, DC, is, "How are you going to take care of my grandchildren?" It's a natural inclination for grandparents to start worrying about their grandchildren. And it's a legitimate concern.

I met with Betty Earl coming in. She's lived in Parkersburg for about 40 years—or the area for 40 years. She has two daughters in their thirties. She doesn't think the Social Security system will be there when they re-

tire. She represents the attitude of a lot of folks, now that this issue is becoming clarified. She said, "It doesn't take an Einstein to see where Social Security is headed." And she doesn't want Congress to wait until Social Security goes bust before starting to fix it.

I appreciate that understanding. I appreciate Betty Earl. I doubt she's got a Ph.D. in economics. Maybe she does. But it doesn't retire—doesn't require much education and brilliance to figure out we've got a serious problem, when you think about the math: More people living longer, with greater benefits, and fewer people paying into the system.

And so Betty wants to know, like a lot of other people want to know, "What are you going to do about it?" And I'm here to tell you, I'm willing to listen to any idea. This isn't a Republican problem or a Democrat problem; this is a problem for the United States of America. And I think now is the time for people in Congress to stop playing politics with the issue and come to the table with how they think it ought to be fixed.

I recently traveled the country on some stops with former Democrat Congressman Tim Penny, a Democrat from Minnesota, who has some good ideas. As a matter of fact, I mentioned his name, I think, in my State of the Union Address. I mentioned former President Clinton's name in the State of the Union Address, because when he was President, he put forward some interesting ideas as what we ought to consider as to how to fix this issue permanently. He spoke of increasing the retirement age. Then he talked about tying Social Security benefits to prices rather than wages.

In 2001, I put together a Commission in anticipation of Social Security becoming a greater issue. As a matter of fact, I campaigned on the issue in 2000. And I asked the Democratic—former Democrat Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan of New York to chair the Commission. He's a thoughtful fellow. He—I put Republicans and Democrats on the Commission. I said, "Why don't you all come together and make some recommendations," which they did, all aimed at strengthening Social Security for a younger generation and permanently fixing the problem.

And there's some basic principles that ought to guide our efforts. First, we should not raise the payroll tax rates, in order to make sure that—the reason I say that is that it would cost our economy jobs. One of the things, when we put policy in place, we ought to make sure that policy encourages economic vitality and growth and that we're stimulating the small-business sector of our economy. We must make sure that Social Security continues to provide dignity and peace of mind for low-income Americans. In other words, the system ought to be structured so low-income Americans are—have got dignity in retirement.

Americans must reject temporary measures. In other words, you'll hear people in Washington say, "Well, we got a 75-year fix, for example." You know, in 1983, the issue came to focus, and President Reagan and Speaker Foley as well as other Republicans and Democrats set aside their partisan differences and said, "Look, we have an obligation to act on behalf of the country." And they came together and put what they thought was a 75-year fix to the problem. The problem is that the 75-year fix wasn't a 75-year fix, because here we are, 22 years later, talking about it again. See, that's a misnomer.

What was—I like the spirit of them coming together, trying to work it out. But they didn't permanently solve the problem. See, the job of the President is to fix problems, not pass them on to future Presidents and future Congresses.

And so I'm going to continue to call upon Congress and say, "One, I'm going to work with you. I'm interested in your ideas, and when we get together, let's permanently fix the problem. Let's do our duty. Let's do that which the American people expect of us."

The Senate, I thought, passed an interesting resolution the other day. On a 100-to-nothing vote, they called for a permanent fix. That was constructive. [*Laughter*] That was step one. [*Laughter*] Step two is, now let's just follow through and deliver one.

As we make Social Security permanently solvent for a younger generation—senior citizens are receiving their check today, going to get their check, nothing will change. People, baby boomers, like me, are—born prior to 1950, the system is strong enough to take

care of us. We must worry about a younger generation of Americans. And as we work to make the system permanently reformed, we need to make it a better deal for our younger workers too. And here's an idea that I think people ought to consider.

I think people ought to have a—given an opportunity to have more control over their own retirement funds, the chance to tap into the power of compound interest, the ability, if they so choose, to watch their money grow in an account, a savings account of bonds and stocks. That's why I proposed that Congress consider allowing younger workers to set aside part of their Social Security contributions in a voluntary personal retirement account.

A voluntary account—you notice I keep saying "voluntary." I mean, doesn't it make sense for Government to say to a younger worker, "If you so choose, you should be allowed to take this option"? Nobody is saying, "You must take the option," or "you can't take the option." What we're saying is, "If you decide to, you should be allowed the opportunity to invest about a third of your payroll taxes in a conservative mix of bonds and stocks." The money would grow over time. It could provide a better rate of return than anything the current Social Security system can provide. And that's important. It's that difference between what the current system provides and what you can earn in a conservative mix that makes a big difference about what you have when it comes time for you to retire.

A younger worker earning an average of \$35,000 a year over a career could retire with a nest egg, under this plan, of nearly a quarter million dollars, a nice addition to that worker's Social Security check. You see, the savings account is in addition to, a part of the retirement plan, not the retirement plan; it's a part of a Social Security retirement plan.

Since 1983, the last time Congress tried to reform stock investments—tried to reform, the stock investments on average have returned more than a thousand percent. That's how your money grows. Notice I said "conservative mix." You can't take your money and put it in the lottery or take it to the track. I mean, there's a conservative mix. When I say "conservative mix," I mean

conservative mix. But a conservative mix will get you a better return on your money than the current system. And it's that differential, that rate differential which grows over time to enable a younger worker who only makes 35,000 over his or her lifetime to end up with a nest egg of \$250,000 as part of a retirement package. And that's your money.

Again, I repeat, younger workers can choose to join this if they want to. You know, a lot of folks say, "Well, you know, the investment may be too difficult." But just think about what's changing in America today. Mayor, when you and I were coming up, they didn't talk much about 401(k)s. The 401(k) now is available for a lot of workers. A lot of workers are watching their own money grow through a 401(k) account. They understand what the investment world is like. I don't remember, when I was growing up, worrying about the solvency of the Social Security system. I hear from a lot of younger folks; a lot of your grandchildren are saying, "What are you going to do about it, Mr. President," and, "By the way, just give me a chance to make decisions for myself. Give me a chance to build up hard assets, instead of paper assets in a file cabinet."

We've got to make sure that there are strict guidelines. We've got to make sure the earnings aren't eaten up by hidden Wall Street fees. We'll make sure the good options to protect investment from market swings on the eve of retirement. There are ways to make sure the system works. You're not going to be able to empty all your account out when you retire; it's going to be a part of a retirement plan.

But this concept isn't new, and this is what people must understand. You see, we've had what's called the Thrift Savings Plan for Federal employees and Members of Congress for a long period of time. And you know what the Thrift Savings Plan says? It says Members of Congress, United States Senators, people who work in Washington or elsewhere for the Federal Government can set aside some of their own money as part of their retirement plan in a conservative mix of bonds and stocks.

I found that to be really interesting. You see, it's pretty interesting that Congress a while ago thought this was a good idea, to

allow their money to grow at a decent rate of return in a conservative mix of bonds and stocks. And it seems to make sense to me that if it's all right for the United States Congress and the United States Senate to give people the option of watching their own money grow, then it ought to be good enough for workers all across the United States.

I just talked to Drew Kefeli. He's a single dad. He became interested in Social Security reform because of his 16-month-old daughter. Interestingly enough, he named his daughter Jenna. [Laughter] The guy has got great taste. [Laughter] He likes the idea of personal accounts because he wants to build, to leave something to Jenna. Under the present system, the Government will keep the money he's put into Social Security if he dies before he can collect.

Think about the system today. I met with widows whose husband predeceased them, and he might not have been 62 years old when he died, and there she is, with maybe family members and nothing but a small amount of money for burial. Yet, all the money that the person put in the system is just kind of—it's not around. Or you take a spouse who's been working all his or her life, and both spouses worked, which is very common in America today, both contributing to the Social Security system. One dies early, and then the remaining spouse gets to keep their survivor benefits or his or her own retirement benefits but not both. In other words, one of the two have been contributing to the system, and they get nothing for the contribution.

See, if you're allowed to set aside some of your money, like Drew wants to do, into your own asset base, if a tragedy strikes early it will give you an asset to leave to somebody you love. It's your money. You get to decide what to do with it. As Drew said, he said the personal account would give him greater peace of mind about Jenna's future. I like that idea. I like the idea of making sure inheritance is not just a privilege limited to the wealthy. I like the idea of encouraging an ownership society where a mother or father, as a result of hard work, can set aside money, if he or she chooses, in a personal account that he or she can leave to whomever she wants or whomever he wants. I think it's

healthy for a society to have assets passed on from one generation to the next.

The American Dream is built on the independence and dignity that come from ownership. Ownership shouldn't be restricted in America. We want more people owning their own home, and that's happening all across our country. Do you realize more minority families own a home today than ever before in our Nation's history? And that's important. I want more people owning their own business. I love the idea of people saying to me, "Mr. President, I'm proud of my business. I started my own business." And I think it makes sense to have people being able to own and manage their own money, a part of their own money in the Social Security system. After all, the payroll taxes are contributed. That's not Government money. That's your money. And the Government ought to give you—be wise enough to let you manage some of it.

I'm going to continue to discuss this issue around the country. It's an important issue. Once the grandmoms and granddads understand that they're going to get their check, a lot of them are going to start saying to the elected officials, "What are you going to do about my grandchildren?"

Franklin Roosevelt did a good thing when he created the Social Security system. It's worked. But the math has changed. A lot of people are getting ready to retire. They're going to live longer, receive greater benefits, and fewer people paying in the system. The longer we wait, the more costly it's going to be to a future generation of Americans. And now is the time to act, because your retirement security is a lot more important than partisan politics.

Thanks for letting me come by. God bless. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:14 a.m. at West Virginia University at Parkersburg. In his remarks, he referred to Van Zeck, Commissioner, D. Keith Rake, Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Public Debt, and Susan Chapman, Director of the Division of Federal Investments, Bureau of the Public Debt; West Virginia Secretary of State Betty Ireland; and Mayor Jimmy Colombo of Parkersburg, WV.

## Remarks Following a Cabinet Meeting and an Exchange With Reporters

April 5, 2005

**The President.** Just concluded our second Cabinet meeting of the second term. I want to thank my Cabinet officials for doing such a fine job. I appreciate your hard work, and thank you for your dedication to the country.

Tomorrow I will be leaving for Rome, leading a delegation to attend the services for His Holiness Pope John Paul II. What a great man. It will be my honor to represent our country at a ceremony marking a remarkable life, a person who stood for freedom and human dignity.

I also urge the Congress to successfully conclude budget negotiations. The House passed a budget resolution; the Senate has passed a resolution. We look forward to working with the leadership to successfully conclude those negotiations. It's important we get a budget, a budget which will show the American people that we will spend their money wisely, a budget that shows that we know how to set priorities—winning the war on terror, protecting our homeland—a budget that says we can cut the deficit in half in 5 years, and a budget that will encourage economic growth and vitality.

I appreciate the fact that it looks like that we're going to get a solid cap on discretionary spending, one that we agree with. It's also important for the Senators and the Members of the House of Representatives to understand that a good, solid budget that helps us meet objectives is one that deals with mandatory spending items. And we've presented some meaningful, realistic, commonsense reforms on the mandatory spending side.

And so, as Congress returns, I look forward to working with them to get a good, solid budget. It's important for the country.

Now I'll answer a few questions. Jennifer [Jennifer Loven, Associated Press].

### Terrorist Attack at Iraq's Abu Ghraib Prison

**Q.** Yes, sir. Al Qaida has claimed—[*inaudible*—]responsibility for the attack on Abu Ghraib prison. Is this a sign that they're becoming more sophisticated in Iraq?

**The President.** No, I think it's a sign that they're still deadly, that these people will kill. They kill innocent life. Their strategy hasn't really changed. Their strategy has been one to kill as many innocent people as they possibly can, in the hopes that it shakes our confidence and shakes our will and, equally importantly, shakes the will and confidence of those brave souls who are helping lead this new country—or lead this new democracy.

And we are—we're after them. And equally importantly, the Iraqi citizens are after them now. More and more citizens understand that these terrorists like Al Qaida and Zarqawi don't have their interests at heart. They don't believe in democracy, these killers. They believe in a society in which people aren't going to be free to practice their religion or free to speak in the public square.

And so I think the American people ought to take heart to know that we have now more allies in defeating these few, and those allies are the Iraqi citizens. And perhaps the most notable step that the Iraqi citizens took toward complete defiance of the point of view of Zarqawi, who is an Al Qaida type, was when they went to the polls.

Adam [Adam Entous, Reuters].

#### **Israeli West Bank Settlements**

**Q.** Mr. President, Prime Minister Sharon has said he intends to expand the largest Jewish settlement in the West Bank. Other officials say no construction is imminent. Are you satisfied? And what will you tell Sharon when you see him, about the settlements?

**The President.** Our position is very clear that the roadmap is important, and the roadmap calls for no expansion of the settlements. I'm optimistic we can achieve a peace in the Holy Land. I'm optimistic because I firmly believe that Ariel Sharon wants to have a peaceful partner, wants there to be a democracy in the Palestinian Territories, and I believe President Abbas wants the same thing. And there's a lot of hard work to be done, but we're making progress. And I look forward to meeting the Prime Minister in Crawford to continue to work with the parties to advance peace.

Carl [Carl Cameron, FOX News].

#### **Federal Deficit/Strengthening Social Security**

**Q.** Thank you, Mr. President. You mentioned the deficit. Insofar as the deficit has been going up, can you talk about how that affects both the budget resolution talks on the Hill and what it does to your pitch for Social Security reform in terms of complicating the message and the criticism you've gotten, particularly from Democrats?

**The President.** Well, one of the things that people must understand on Social Security is there is a huge unfunded liability of trillions of dollars. In other words, because baby boomers like me are getting ready to retire and we're living longer and we're getting greater benefits, there is a significant obligation by the Government. And the fundamental question is, will Congress have the will to take on this very important issue and solve this problem now, before that significant obligation becomes more significant?

Now, we're dealing with the deficit by presenting a good, lean budget that sets priorities. I want to thank Josh Bolten of the OMB, and I want to thank all my Cabinet Secretaries for having worked with the OMB to deliver to Congress a budget that will work on behalf of the American people. And now it's up to Congress. It's up to Congress to show the American people that we have the capacity to de-fund programs which don't work and fund programs which do work.

And I'm looking forward to working with Members of both the House and the Senate. It's going to be an interesting set of negotiations. But we're firm in our belief that we can cut this deficit in half over a 5-year period of time, grow this economy, and meet our primary objective, which is defending America.

Listen, thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:14 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel; and President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

**Proclamation 7882—Pan American Day and Pan American Week, 2005**

*April 5, 2005*

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

Leaders across the Americas understand that the hope for peace in our world depends on the unity of free nations. Each year, the people of the United States observe Pan American Day and Pan American Week to honor our shared commitment to freedom, prosperity, and security. We are working with our partners in the Western Hemisphere to advance our common interests and values so that we can build a brighter future for our citizens.

The idea of regional solidarity and inter-American cooperation, first envisioned in 1826 by Simon Bolivar, became a reality in 1890 when the First International Conference of American States concluded its meetings in Washington, D.C. There, President Benjamin Harrison praised the efforts of the countries in attendance for their desire to work together as American States. Through the years, these efforts, shared values, and mutual respect have strengthened this partnership.

Across our hemisphere, social, economic, military, and political cooperation are widespread. Last year, trade officials of five Central American nations and the Dominican Republic signed the Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement with the United States. I urge the Congress to ratify this agreement, which will eliminate tariffs and trade barriers and expand regional opportunities.

My Administration remains committed to the Inter-American Democratic Charter to advance democracy and defend freedom across our region. Our Nation's continued support of democratic institutions, constitutional processes, and basic liberties gives hope and strength to those struggling in our hemisphere and around the world to preserve the rule of law and their God-given rights.

The democratic nations of the Western Hemisphere believe in the rights and dignity

of every person, and we believe that liberty is worth defending. In the spirit of Pan American cooperation, we will continue to work to strengthen ties among our nations and further democracy, peace, and prosperity.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 14, 2005, as Pan American Day and April 10 through April 16, 2005, as Pan American Week. I urge the Governors of the 50 States, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the officials of other areas under the flag of the United States of America to honor these observances with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:54 a.m., April 6, 2005]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 7.

**Proclamation 7883—National D.A.R.E. Day, 2005**

*April 5, 2005*

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

Across America, law enforcement officers, volunteers, parents, and teachers are helping to send the right message to our Nation's youth about illegal drugs and violence through the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) Program. On National D.A.R.E. Day, we express our gratitude for the important work of these individuals and reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that every child has an opportunity for a bright and hopeful future.

For over two decades, D.A.R.E. programs have taught our Nation's young people about

the dangers of drug use and encouraged them to lead productive, drug-free, and violence-free lives. Police officers and all those involved in D.A.R.E. help save lives by opening the lines of communication between law enforcement and our young people to better enable them to make the right choices. In a culture in which bad influences and temptations are all too present, these soldiers in the armies of compassion are fostering a culture of responsibility among young people.

My Administration will continue to stand with families and communities to combat the dangers of drugs and violence. In my State of the Union Address, I announced a new initiative called Helping America's Youth to help ensure a successful future for young Americans. Led by First Lady Laura Bush, this initiative is educating parents and communities on the importance of positive youth development and is supporting organizations, including faith-based and community groups, who are helping young people to overcome the risks they face. We also support random student drug testing as a prevention tool, and we are helping educate young people about the dangers of illicit drug use through the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign and Drug-Free Communities Program.

The decisions our children make today will affect their health and character for the rest of their lives. By giving them the tools they need to make the right choices, D.A.R.E. programs help prepare our Nation's young people for the promising future our Nation holds for each of them.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 14, 2005, as National D.A.R.E. Day. I call upon Americans, particularly our youth, to help fight drug use in our communities, and I urge our citizens to show their appreciation for the law enforcement officials, volunteers, teachers, health care professionals, and all those who dedicate themselves to helping our children avoid drugs and violence.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the

Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:54 a.m., April 6, 2005]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 7.

### **Proclamation 7884—Cancer Control Month, 2005**

*April 5, 2005*

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

We are making great gains in the fight against cancer. Advances in prevention, early detection, and treatment are reducing cancer rates and increasing the likelihood of survival. Despite this progress, cancer remains the second leading cause of death in America. During Cancer Control Month, we continue to work to learn more about cancer prevention and detection, promote efforts to find better treatments and a cure, and support cancer patients, survivors, and their families.

A healthy lifestyle can lower the risk of developing certain types of cancer. This year, the Department of Health and Human Services released new *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005*, which emphasize reducing caloric intake, eating healthy foods, and increasing physical activity. I encourage all Americans to follow these guidelines, to use sunscreen and limit exposure to the sun, and to avoid tobacco and alcohol abuse. I also urge citizens to talk with their doctors about their cancer risk and to get regular check-ups and preventive screenings. Detecting cancer early increases survival rates and saves lives.

There are nearly 9.8 million cancer survivors in the United States today because of advances in health care. Aggressive funding will lead scientists to earlier diagnoses and improved treatments for lung, colorectal, and other cancers. My Administration proposed more than \$5.6 billion for cancer prevention, treatment, and research through the National Institutes of Health in my fiscal year 2006

budget. These funds will help scientists learn more about this devastating disease and offer new hope for countless Americans and their families.

As we observe this month, we honor cancer survivors for their inspiring examples of courage, steadfast strength, and willingness to share their stories and experiences with others. We recognize the families, friends, and loved ones who support and encourage those living with cancer. And we remain grateful to our scientists and medical professionals, who make America's health care system the best in the world. Together, we can help all our citizens live healthier, longer lives.

In 1938, the Congress of the United States passed a joint resolution (52 Stat. 148; 36 U.S.C. 103) as amended, requesting the President to issue an annual proclamation declaring April as "Cancer Control Month."

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim April 2005 as Cancer Control Month. I encourage citizens, government agencies, private businesses, nonprofit organizations, and other interested groups to join in activities that raise awareness about how all Americans can prevent and control cancer.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., April 7, 2005]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 6, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on April 8.

### **Statement on the Election of the Presidency Council of the Iraqi Transitional Government**

*April 6, 2005*

Iraq's Transitional National Assembly took a momentous step forward in Iraq's transition to democracy today, voting by an overwhelming majority to elect the Presidency

Council of the Iraqi Transitional Government.

I congratulate Iraq's next President, Jalal Talabani, and its next Deputy Presidents, Adil Abd al-Mahdi and Ghazi al-Ujayl al-Yawr, on this historic occasion. These individuals will be formally sworn in tomorrow and will move quickly to name a Prime Minister who will work during the coming days to select a Council of Ministers. The new Iraqi Government will then begin its important work of writing a new constitution, continuing to train Iraqi security forces, delivering basic services, and advancing Iraq's transformation from dictatorship to democracy.

The Iraqi people have shown their commitment to democracy, and we, in turn, are committed to Iraq. We look forward to working with this new Government, and we congratulate all Iraqis on this historic day.

### **Statement on the Death of Prince Rainier III of Monaco**

*April 6, 2005*

Laura and I join Americans across the country in mourning the loss of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III of Monaco. He will be remembered as a respected leader who secured the prosperity of Monaco's people. Monaco and the United States have long had a special bond of friendship. We extend our deepest condolences to His Serene Highness Prince Albert, to the Grimaldi family, and to all the people of Monaco.

### **Interview With Reporters Aboard Air Force One**

*April 8, 2005*

#### **Pope John Paul II's Funeral**

**The President.** Listen, were you there in person?

**Q.** Yes.

**The President.** One, I'm really glad I came. There was never any question I would come. Last night we hosted a reception at the Embassy for many of the leaders of the Catholic Church at home, and they were very grateful that I came and Laura came and

Dad came and President Clinton came and Condi came as well as others. And I told them, to a person, that it's such an honor to represent our country at a ceremony honoring a truly great man who is and will always be a great historical figure.

I knew the ceremony today would be majestic, but I didn't realize how moved I would be by the service, itself, by the beautiful music. I was struck—as an aside—struck by the fact that the sound was so clear in this huge facility. It was as if we were inside the cathedral listening, and the voices were so pure. I thought the homily was really good. We were given an English version, fortunately—if you haven't read it, maybe you've seen it? Yes. Beautiful. Beautiful. Beautifully done.

I was struck by the response of the crowd. And I think it's interesting to note the moments where the crowd responded. One in particular is when His Eminence spoke to His Holiness' relationship to the young of the world, and there was a great outpouring of enthusiasm for that line. And then I think the thing that struck all our delegation most intensely was the final scene of the plain-looking casket—one of three, by the way, lead, wood, and wood—being carried and held up for the seal to be seen, and then the sun pouring out. This will be one of the highlights of my Presidency, to have been at this great ceremony.

So off we go to home now.

### **Pope John Paul II's Legacy**

**Q.** Your predecessor suggested that the Pope would leave a mixed legacy, even though he was a great man. Since you differed with him on the war to such a great degree, do you also think it will be a mixed legacy?

**The President.** I think Pope John Paul II will have a clear legacy of peace, compassion, and a strong legacy of setting a clear moral tone.

### **Upcoming Meeting With Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon**

**Q.** You're going to see Prime Minister Sharon soon. There's been some talk in Israel that maybe you're not going to raise this issue

of this latest settlement expansion. Are you going to do that?

**The President.** I've raised the issue of settlement expansions publicly. I mean, it was upon the prompting of your question. You bet. What I say publicly, I say privately. And that is, the roadmap has clear obligations on settlements and that we expect the Prime Minister to adhere to those roadmap obligations. And the roadmap has got obligations for the Palestinians. We have a great opportunity—"we," the world, has a great opportunity to help a democracy grow—begin and grow, starting in the Gaza.

The Prime Minister of Israel has decided to pull out of Gaza. As you know, I applauded that decision at the White House, with him standing by my side. And I think now is the time to focus the world's attention on what is possible. And we've already started that process of realizing the possible by having General Ward work with the Palestinians to streamline and coordinate Palestinian security forces so that, upon the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza, there is a security presence that will protect people.

We've got to do more. We've got to make sure that an economy can flourish there.

**Q.** So you're going to try to talk him out of this latest settlement expansion he's talking about?

**The President.** My position is clear, and I will—I stated, obviously, now the second time in a brief period of time, and I will say so privately as well.

I think you need to know what the successful strategy will be. And that is there is more than just security in Gaza. We need to have institution-building, and there needs to be an international effort that encourages and fosters economic vitality so that a government which does emerge in Gaza will be able to better speak to the hopes of those who live in the Gaza. And success in the Gaza will make success on the West Bank easier. And so one of our—I will be talking to the Prime Minister about the need to work with the Palestinian Government, President Abbas, to facilitate success, to enhance success.

Let me make sure I go back to the first answer on His Holiness. I said—I think my answer was, is that—what did I say?

### **Pope John Paul II's Legacy**

**Q.** I asked if you thought it was a mixed message, and you said, "I think John Paul II will have a clear legacy of peace."

**The President.** A clear and excellent legacy, if you don't mind adding the word "excellent."

**Q.** Clear and excellent.

**The President.** Yes. In other words, a strong legacy. I wanted to make sure there was a proper adjective to the legacy I thought he left behind. It was more than just "clear."

**Press Secretary Scott McClellan.** You said "strong," too, in that answer.

**The President.** Okay.

**Q.** Yes, you said "strong legacy of setting a clear moral tone."

**The President.** Fine. Okay, good.

### **Democracy in the Middle East**

**Q.** Getting back to the Middle East for a moment, there have been hopeful signs in the region lately. But some in the region think that some of our allies there, particularly Saudi Arabia and Egypt, still are not doing enough to help foster democracy in their own countries. Do you think they're doing enough, or are you encouraging them to—

**The President.** We will continue to encourage democracy. But I also have said many times that it is important for those of us who live in a democratic society to remember two things: One, our own road to democracy was a little bumpy; we have a Constitution and a Declaration of Independence but, nevertheless, had slavery for a long period of time, for example. And secondly, that we shouldn't expect others to adapt that which we think—we shouldn't try to impose our democracy on other nations. What we should say is, "We'll work with you to develop a democracy which adapts to your own cultures and your own religions and your own habits."

I'm fully aware that there is work to be done. But I think it's also our job to encourage those nations and, at the same time, recognize that all nations are not starting at the same spot in order to achieve democracy. I mean, Iraq, it's very important for us in Iraq to recognize that we—we transferred sovereignty 10 months ago. Remember we all traveled to NATO—to the NATO summit?

And it may seem like an eternity to you all—[laughter]—but 10 months in the greater scheme of things is a short period of time. And nevertheless, during that short period of time, the Iraqis have voted, and today they've announced their Prime Minister. The Government will be up and running, the Government Assembly there, to write a constitution. In other words, things are happening quite rapidly, which is positive.

But nevertheless, there is a certain—there's got to be a certain realism about how fast things can possibly happen, given where different nations have started from.

Now, I will continue to press forward on encouraging democracy and reform in every nation, because I believe that is the ultimate strategy to defeat the terrorists. In the short run, we'll continue to find them and work with nations to find them and share intelligence to find them, bring them to justice. In the long term, the spread of freedom and democracy—democracies reflecting the nature of the people and the history of those countries will mean that generations will more likely grow up in peace.

### **Pope John Paul II's Funeral**

**Q.** When you sat there surrounded by that incredibly—array of world leaders and looked forward to the kind of spread of democracy you're talking about, is there something about just that assemblage there? Who did you talk to? Who did you see? And did it strike you that this was a remarkable ability to pull together such disparate people?

**The President.** I was most attentive to the ceremony, itself, and was amazed by the size of the crowd. We came walking out of the grand stairway, and it was a very inspiring sight.

**Q.** And the flags.

**The President.** And the flags and the statues and just—yes, the bishops and the archbishops and different leaders of the churches right across the way from me. Of course, the cardinals—you know, a handful of whom I know, have gotten to know quite well and admire greatly, by the way. So that was pretty well my focus there.

When I first got there—when Laura and I first got there, we shook hands with the folks around us. Obviously, Jacques and

Madam Chirac were right next door; I spent some time visiting with them. But everybody there was—there wasn't much chitchat. There was intense focus on the ceremony.

**Q.** But what it represented, to have that many people—

**The President.** No, I understand. I believe that is part of the power of Pope John Paul II. And he was such a believer in freedom. I saw Lech Walesa, for example. I was struck by the number of Polish flags that were in the crowd.

You know what was really interesting? There were some signs urging that His Holiness be made a saint.

**Q.** Now!

**The President.** “Now,” yes—“*subito*.” You know, I really didn't reflect that much on the politics of the moment during the ceremony. I was more—I thought a lot about Pope John Paul II. I mean, here's a person who has shown that a single individual can make a big difference in history and that, in my judgment, he received his great power and strength from the Almighty.

**Q.** Just to follow up on that, Mr. President, a couple questions about the Pope. One, I noticed at one point you had your glasses on, and you were following along—I'm not sure if you were looking at the homily at that point or maybe, did you have one of those guides that—

**The President.** I did. It's hard to follow—my Spanish is not very good—[laughter]—nevertheless, it is decent enough to pick up sounds that then can help me follow the Italian.

**Q.** Had you ever been to a Latin mass before? I imagine you've been to an English mass.

**The President.** No, never been to a Latin mass.

**Q.** The other question was, we never had a chance to—you talked about a lot about what struck you from this ceremony. We never got a chance to talk to you about, by contrast, how you were struck by the wake, if you will, when you went through the other night. How do the two ceremonies—you know, different kinds of emotions in the two?

**The President.** I felt—I mean, obviously, we were surrounded by a crowd at the wake, but I felt—when I was kneeling there, I

felt—I'm trying to think of the right word—“alone” isn't the right word, because I was aware of people, but felt much more in touch with a spirit. I really did. I was very much—felt at peace there and was prayerful. And at the other ceremony, it was probably just because of all the sights and sounds and majesty and colors that, you know, I felt more like a spectator than a participant, but more of a spectator.

**Q.** You knew him personally, I mean, to kneel there and see his body after you've met with him so many times and had—I mean, that must have been quite powerful and—

**The President.** My relationship with Pope John Paul II was a very good relationship. He was such a gentle man, and at the end of his life he made his points to me with his eyes. The last visit, as you know, he was pretty physically—he was struggling, and yet his eyes twinkled, just real clear. Much of the communications was done by paperwork, which—

**Q.** Did he speak English?

**The President.** Some, but it was hard to really understand him because he was struggling. That's why it's really interesting for people to note that there was a lot of testimony—and in my remarks, I tried to witness that as well—that his struggle at the end of his life and the dignity with which he struggled was a clear example of Christ's influence in his life.

I was honored to see that firsthand. He's one of the great vigorous leaders—mountain climber, educator, instructor—who then had to struggle using the very tools that enabled him to be a vigorous teacher, outdoorsman, freedom fighter, and yet, nevertheless, he still could communicate clearly through eyes which were, you know, crystal clear. And I remember the Castel Gandolfo, when Laura and I went to visit him. And he took us out on the balcony. The Castel overlooks this fantastic lake; it's a spectacular lake. And he was much more conversant then. I think it might have been my first trip?

**Q.** It was 2001.

**The President.** Yes. Right before or after Genoa, the G-8 in Genoa. And he had a sparkle; he really wanted to show us this beautiful setting. I would define Pope John Paul II as a clear thinker who was like a rock. And

tides of moral relativism kind of washed around him, but he stood strong as a rock. And that's why millions—one of the reasons why millions came to admire and love him.

I was asked by some of the leadership of the Church, was I surprised at the turnout? I said, "Not at all, because millions from all religions, millions of Catholics and millions of others admired his strength and his purpose and his moral clarity."

### **Pope John Paul II's Physical Struggle**

**Q.** How did the Pope struggle with his health at the end of his life and his example throughout his life strengthen your own faith?

**The President.** Well, you know, it is as—clear example of Christ's influence in a person's life that he maintained such a kind of hopeful, optimistic, clear point of view amidst struggles—in his case, physical struggles. And that's—a lot of Christians gain great strength and confidence from seeing His Holiness in the last stages of life.

**Q.** Do you think that will help you in the months and years ahead, in your own life?

**The President.** Well, I think all of us get touched in different ways if you're on a faith journey—we're all affected differently. But yes, I think my relationship with—and Pope John Paul II's example will serve—will be a moment in my life that will strengthen my faith and my belief—not just me, more significantly, millions of people whose life he touched. I think we might have witnessed—I don't know—perhaps the largest funeral in the history of mankind. I'm not sure if that's true or not; somebody said that might be true.

But there's a reason why the largest crowd ever to come and pay homage to a human happened, and it's because of the man's character, his views, his positions, his leadership capacity, his ability to relate to all people, his deep compassion, his love of peace. There's a reason why. Again, I repeat, I was honored to be one of many there, and I know you all were as well.

Besides the pomp and the majesty and the colors, there was a spirit that was an integral part of the ceremony. For me, the spirit was also at the wake, but more personal at the wake. That was a personal moment.

### **President's Faith**

**Q.** If there was ever a moment where you ever had any doubts in your own faith, what out of the past public things would strengthen your resolve and firm up your relationship with your God?

**The President.** I think a walk in faith constantly confronts doubt, as faith becomes more mature. And you constantly confront, you know, questions. My faith is strong. The Bible talks about, you've got to constantly stay in touch with the Word of God in order to help you on the walk. But the Lord works in mysterious ways, and during all our life's journeys, we're enabled to see the Lord at work if our eyes are open and our hearts are open. And today—you can analyze, and you can look at the coffin being held, with the sun shining on it, anyway you want. I happen to feel it was a special moment that was part of a special ceremony for a special person. And it helped strengthen my faith. And you can have your faith strengthened on—you can have your faith strengthened when you stand up at a faith-based initiative and see someone standing up and testify to what their love has done to help a child or how a child's life has been helped.

My faith gets strengthened when I went to the school the other day and saw the mentoring relationship between a young professional woman and a young kid who's going to go to the SEED School where there's a 95-percent chance that kid is going to go to college. And that helps strengthen my faith. So there's, you know, ways—whether the moment be majestic or whether the moment be a part of just an average—your average moment in life, you can find ways to strengthen your faith. And it's necessary to do so, in my judgment. There is a—it's called a "walk." It's not called a "moment" or a "respite"; it's a "walk." It's a constant maturing of an understanding of a—and today's ceremony, I bet you, for millions of people was a reaffirmation for many and a way to make sure doubts don't seep into your soul.

### **Pope John Paul II's Successor**

**Q.** Given that, how difficult do you think that it will be finding a successor to fill his shoes?

**The President.** Look, I'm interested in working with whoever the successor is. And I think that, as Cardinal McCarrick said at the ceremony on Saturday, the day His Holiness died, asked for prayers as he began his journey as one of the electors, as a cardinal. You know, I'm not going to prejudge the selection process.

**Q.** Are there any qualities that you're specifically looking for?

**The President.** I'm not a part of the selection process. I will be a President representing a great nation in dealing with a great institution with which we have diplomatic relations.

**Q.** It's got to be a tough act to follow, though.

#### ***President's Meeting With Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi***

**Q.** Can you tell us a little bit about your dinner with Prime Minister Berlusconi? Did you talk, particularly, on Iraq? Did the subject come up, in terms of the intelligence officer who was killed by Americans?

**The President.** Yes, it did come up, and I expressed my regret once again and assured him that the investigation would be conducted in an aboveboard, transparent way.

**Q.** Did he say it had been a problem for him in keeping the support that there is in Italy for having troops in Iraq?

**The President.** No, he reaffirmed his commitment to—which he has given in the past—that we've got to make sure we complete the mission, that we help Iraqis to fight off the few. He knows what I know, that the sooner that gets done, the sooner our troops will be able to come home.

But he's also aware that what we don't want to do is leave prematurely, so that we don't complete our job. And the new Government is just about to be stood up; we look forward to working with the new Government on a lot of things and a lot of fronts. But on the security front, it's to make sure we're in sync with our training schedules, make sure that the chain of command within the military and between the civilian government and the military are strong and capable and will endure.

We've been waiting for this new Government so that we can then strategize. And as

soon as the Government is sworn in, the appropriate folks, we can get Zal confirmed quickly, get him out there—of course, we have a good, strong Deputy Chief of Mission there now, upon swearing in—of course, I will be in contact with the Prime Minister. I've already spoke to the President. And General Casey, as well as the Charge—I mean, the Deputy Chief of Mission will be in touch with; Condi will be touch with her counterpart; Secretary Rumsfeld will be in touch with his counterpart as we strategize as to how to move forward.

As we strategize on tactics, on how to implement the strategy—which is clear—which is, we want to train you and make you as efficient as possible as quickly as possible, so that all of us can begin to, you know, as I say, bring our troops home with the honor they've earned.

**Q.** Italy is going to pull out 3,000 troops, I think, by the fall. Will you be able to absorb that?

**The President.** I don't know why you say that. I'm not sure why you said what you just said.

**Q.** I thought that was the number of troops Italy had in Iraq, and I—

**The President.** They've got 3,300 now, and you said they're going to pull 3,000 out by the fall?

**Q.** Well, I guess—I don't—

**The President.** Okay. What I did hear was, is that the Prime Minister wants to work to make sure we complete the mission. But I'm not sure where that came from.

**Q.** Do you think he'll leave troops in if, in fact, enough haven't been trained?

**The President.** I think we'll work to complete the training mission of the Iraqis. And it's important we do it and get it right. The amazing thing is, is that if you really think about what's happened in the 10-month period, in spite of some very difficult days and in spite of some tragedy, loss of life, this country is—there is a democracy emerging in this country. And it was really kicked off by the huge vote of over 8 million people.

But no, we'll work with all our coalition, continue to make sure we stay in touch with all our—I had breakfast with Tony Blair this morning, speaking about coalition. You know,

I stay in regular contact with the Prime Minister.

**Representative Tom DeLay**

**Q.** Can I ask you about Tom DeLay, the statement he made in the wake of the Schiavo case, that judges were out of control and should be held accountable. What did you think about those?

**The President.** I believe in an independent judiciary. I believe in proper checks and balances. And we'll continue to put judges on the bench who strictly and faithfully interpret the Constitution.

**Foreign and Domestic Priorities/Social Security Reform**

**Q.** Mr. President, I know you're not—you've said—you've often said you're not consumed by polls, but a fair amount has been written lately about your approval ratings, which in some polls are at sort of a low point. Some polls—

**The President.** Some of them were going up the other day.

**Q.** Okay. Well, some say that—

**The President.** You can find them going up, and you can find them going down. [Laughter]

**Q.** In general, what—

**The President.** You can pretty much find out what you want in polls, is my point. [Laughter]

**Q.** What about the theory that your Presidency is moving from one dominated by foreign policy to one of domestic policy? Ironically, now that some of things are settling down in Iraq and Afghanistan and you're facing tough issues like Social Security, it's a little tougher road to hoe. What are your thoughts?

**The President.** My thoughts are the President has always got to balance foreign policy and domestic policy, and I will—I did so in the first term. As you might remember, we were confronted with a recession, and I felt we needed to reform schools, and at the same time, I had to fight the war on terror. We're continuing to fight the war on terror. The war on terror goes on, and that's the important thing for me to continue to remind our fellow citizens. By the way, we will work to defeat the enemy by, you know, making sure

our troops are well framed up, prepared, ready to move quickly. It's part of the transformation process that the Secretary is leading. And to make sure our intelligence services mesh and work closely together, I'm looking forward to getting John Negroponte confirmed as quickly as possible, so we can deal with this crucial aspect.

But there's also, obviously, a domestic component. There was a domestic component in the first term. There is a domestic component in the second term. I might remind you that at points during the tax debate, I can remember people had declared that tax relief was dead on arrival. Occasionally, somebody would say something that was not very positive about the process, and people would all of a sudden assume that nothing was going to get done. So I'm accustomed to, you know, the process of getting a piece of legislation out. And I'm very optimistic that when it's all said and done, the legislators will understand that the American people recognize there's a problem in Social Security and expect something to be done. And I look forward to being a part of that.

I had laid out a timetable to make it clear to the American people my views about the problems inherent in Social Security. And I think we're making progress. I think slowly but surely, the American people are coming to realize there is a serious problem with Social Security—not if you've retired. And that's the other aspect of making sure we succeed in the Social Security debate, is to make sure seniors know they're going to get their checks. And we've got work to do on that.

**Q.** Still think it will pass this year?

**The President.** I certainly hope so, because now is the time to fix the problem. Every year we wait costs billions of dollars more. And I fully realize some people would rather me not be discussing this issue. The job of the President is to set an agenda that deals with problems. And sometimes—sometimes the legislature doesn't want to deal with the problem.

But I'm going to continue to remind all of us in Government that when we see a problem, we have an obligation to do something about it, no matter what some may

think are the short-term political consequences. I happen to believe that not dealing with the problem will create political consequences when the public realizes how serious the problem is. If you don't deal with the problem or you go home and say, "I'm not dealing with the problem," there will be a political consequence.

I've learned that lesson, as a Governor and President, that the people expect and respect people for setting agenda items and staying focused on achieving a solution to the problem. And I've set an agenda. I set an agenda on energy. We need an energy bill. You know, we've been talking about energy for 4 years. Now, I fully realize an energy bill reflects a longer-term strategy. But we need to—we need to do a lot of things.

Eventually what we're going to have to do is change our habits, change the types of automobiles we drive. I believe we will have a zero-emission coal-fired electricity plant. I saw the—when we went to Cleveland—or Columbus, we saw the technology involved with that. But Congress needs to get me an energy bill. And it seems like to me, with the price of gasoline where it is, that ought to be enough this time to cause people to get moving on the bill. But I'll continue to push it.

We need to get a budget. We passed—I put a pretty good budget, a real good budget. It helps cut the budget in half—the deficit in half over a 5-year period of time. Now they need to get their differences worked out and get it to my desk. I'll be a part of that process as well.

And then, eventually, we're going to have this tax relief commission come forward. In other words, I have an obligation to set agenda items. And when I set one, I will continue to work it and remind people that we have a duty to deal with these problems.

I like the debate, by the way, as an aside. I'm enjoying this. I'm enjoying—

**Q.** Even if a lot of—

**The President.** —because I feel I got elected for a reason. My nature is such that, if I came to Washington and saw a problem and didn't deal with it, I wouldn't feel very good about myself. I want it to be said that George W. Bush got elected and did what he said he was going to do, for starters.

You covered my campaigns. Every speech, I talked about Social Security. And I started talking about Social Security in the year 2000, because I recognized a problem coming down the road. And it is a serious problem, particularly if you're a younger American. You have no problem if you're receiving a Social Security check. I do not care—and I'm going to say it like you've heard me say it—it doesn't matter what the propagandists say, people are going to get their checks. You might remember the ads that they ran against me when I was running for office that said, "If George W. gets elected, you're not going to get your check." I'm sure you guys analyzed those and realized that upon election, people got their checks, which might say something about those who ran the ads, right? Well, they're saying it again. They're trying to frighten seniors in order to stop people from coming together.

Now, in 2001, something that has lost a little bit of the focus of those covering this issue, I called together the Moynihan Commission, and I think it might be wise for people who analyze this issue to refresh their memory about the Moynihan Commission, because the Moynihan Commission, made up of equally Democrats and Republicans, came up with some interesting ideas to solve this problem.

**Q.** How deeply have you had to draw down on that political credit that you felt you had?

**The President.** I think you get—I think you earn capital, you know? I think—

**Q.** Are you spending any?

**The President.** I'm spending a lot—every time I go out. [*Laughter*] But you earn capital by spending capital; that's what the people expect. We've got trips—I'll be keeping—going out, reminding people that there is a problem.

And one of these days, we'll be able to look back and say, "You know, we were successful convincing the American people there was a problem, and we were successful reminding seniors that you're not going to have your check taken away from you." And then all of a sudden, it becomes a true generational issue, because the grandparents receiving the checks, they're going to start asking, "Now that I'm secure, what are you going to do for my grandkid," because the

grandchildren are going to pay an enormous price. You heard those experts sit up there and say that if nothing happens it is likely younger workers are going to have to pay an 18-percent payroll tax.

Now, I was born prior to 1950. But if I were my daughter hearing somebody predict that at some point in time she's paying an 18-percent payroll tax, I'd be suggesting to the old man—me—that I get something done. And that's what we're doing. We're working hard to get it done.

**Q.** Are you surprised that it's taken this much work, this long—

**The President.** No.

**Q.** —to make progress on this, because, you know—

**The President.** No. And this is a difficult issue. I've heard Members say—I'm not going to tell you who they are nor what party they're from; I wish you hadn't have brought this up. We hear the talk out of Capitol Hill saying, "Oh, darn, I wish the President had just focused only on the budget or maybe the energy bill." There are a lot of people who would rather not talk about this issue. I understand that. Again, I don't think that's part of my job description, avoid issues because it may be politically difficult. I think my job description is, if you see a problem, talk about it and work with members of both political parties to come up with a solution.

And there's beginning to be some talk on Capitol Hill. But I'm not the least bit surprised, because it is a tough issue for Members, for people who've got, you know, a relatively short-term horizon, 2-year horizon. They're worried about—some of them are worried about elections. Some of them in both the House and the Senate—from both parties, by the way—are thinking longer term. And they're beginning to talk some ideas, and that's constructive.

You know, I remember I was telling President Clinton, I remember watching one of his townhall meetings in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on this very subject. And I thought it was a very impressive presentation. By the way, a lot of the language happens to be pretty close to some of the townhall meetings we've had.

But, no, I'm not surprised people want to avoid this issue.

### **Travel With Former Presidents Bush and Clinton**

**Q.** What has it been like spending time with the former Presidents for 3 days? That's the longest time—

**The President.** It's fun. Oh, it's great. You know, we share war stories, you know, a lot of talking, a lot of interesting experiences about different world leaders that we may all have met—or all three of us met, just different experiences that, you know, my dad might have had or President Clinton might have had.

There is a lot of interest, obviously, with former Presidents about, you know, policy, so I had them sit in on our policy briefings this morning with Condi and Steve and the CIA fellow traveling with us—not this morning, yesterday and the day before, on Air Force One. And then yesterday at the Embassy, I wanted to include them in. And you know, we had a—these CIA briefings a lot of time prompt policy discussions, you know, how is this process going. Steve and Condi, now that she's here—both of them were able to bring Dad and President Clinton up to date on our strategy in dealing with a particular issue. It's interesting to get their points of view about their experiences in particular countries. It was fun. It was really a lot of fun. I was honored they came.

**Q.** Are you worried about them spending so much time together, those two? [*Laughter*]

**The President.** Well, you heard my grid-iron speech. [*Laughter*]

Listen, thank you all. Hope you enjoyed the experience as much as I did. Absolutely fascinating.

By the way, I think when you discuss religion—on doubt, there is no doubt in my mind there is a living God and no doubt in my mind that the Lord, Christ, was sent by the Almighty. No doubt in my mind about that. When I'm talking about doubts, I'm talking about the doubts that an individual struggles with in his or her life. That's important for you to make sure you get that part of the dialog correct, if you don't mind.

**Q.** Thank you.

**The President.** Got it? Everybody got it correct? All right.

**Q.** Thank you.

**Weekend Plans**

**Q.** What are your plans this weekend?

**The President.** Like Stretch [Richard Keil, Bloomberg News], I'm on the injured reserve list from running, so I'll be mountain biking. I think Cat McKinnon is going come up from Austin. Oh, yes. And I'll be fishing. I'll be finishing my book, "Peter the Great," by Robert K. Massie. Some of you old-timers have probably already read it. I'm just now—have you read it?

**Q.** Getting ready for the next Russia trip.

**The President.** Have you read it?

**Q.** No.

**Q.** I like when you said "old-timer," and you looked at Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters]. [Laughter]

**The President.** He probably had read it, and I wasn't going to look at Ann [Ann Compton, ABC News], of course, I'm too polite. [Laughter]

We'll have briefings. Condi is coming to spend the night; Hadley will be spending a night there. We'll start briefing the Sharon visit Sunday night. And then we'll obviously greet the Prime Minister and then head off to Fort Hood on Tuesday morning and work on that speech probably Monday evening.

Looking forward to getting back down there again. I may do a little cedar work—depends on how sleepy the crew is.

**Q.** I'll be fishing, just down the Bosque River.

**The President.** Really?

**Q.** Yes. I'm sleeping at the Side Oats Ranch tonight.

**The President.** Tell them hi. Middle Fork has got some water in it.

**Q.** They do.

**The President.** The Middle Fork comes down to my place.

**Q.** Does it come down to you from his, or goes the other way?

**The President.** I think it comes down, doesn't it? Yes, I think he's west of me, so it's coming down toward Waco. The Middle Fork feeds into the Brazos.

Consider yourself lucky you get to go down to Texas.

**Q.** I'm delighted.

**The President.** You're not grouching about it, are you?

**Q.** Oh, no, no, no. I'm sorry I missed Easter. I was at home for that.

**The President.** It may be—I hope—I haven't heard, but it may be that the wildflowers, are they out yet? They say there is going to be a spectacular bluebonnet season this year; I mean spectacular.

**2005 NCAA Women's Basketball Champions Baylor Lady Bears**

**Q.** Is that in honor of the Baylor women's basketball team?

**The President.** I called, as a matter of fact, on the airplane flying to Rome, I called the coach, Kim Mulkey-Robertson, a fine person. I had met her before when she brought—you all saw her, at least if you were on the pool, right? Let's see—anyway, she was with the Midway girls softball team when they came out, the national champs softball team. Her daughter is a player on it, and so she came out with the parents. But she was one excited lady. And she did a heck of a job.

**Q.** Blew them out.

**The President.** They've got a great team. I'm looking forward to welcoming them to the White House.

NOTE: The interview began at 8:29 a.m. en route from Rome, Italy, to the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX. In his remarks, the President referred to Lt. Gen. William E. Ward, USA, Senior U.S. Security Coordinator, Department of State; President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority; Prime Minister Ibrahim Jafari and President Jalal Talabani of the Iraqi Transitional Government; President Jacques Chirac of France and his wife, Bernadette; former President Lech Walesa of Poland; Theodore E. Cardinal McCarrick, Archbishop of Washington; U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad, nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Iraq; James Jeffrey, Deputy Chief of Mission, U.S. Embassy in Iraq; Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; John D. Negroponte, nominee to be Director of National Intelligence; National Security Adviser Stephen J. Hadley; and Kim Mulkey-Robertson, head coach, Baylor University's women's basketball team. He also referred to the President's Advisory Panel on Federal Tax Reform and the President's Commission to Strengthen Social Security (Moynihan Commission). A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

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## **Digest of Other White House Announcements**

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The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

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### ***April 2***

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Residence, the President had a telephone conversation with White House Chief of Staff Andrew H. Card, Jr., who informed him of the death of Pope John Paul II.

### ***April 3***

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush went to the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, where they watched a performance of the play "Mister Roberts." Later, they went to the Cathedral of Saint Matthew the Apostle, where they attended a memorial mass for Pope John Paul II.

### ***April 4***

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. He also had a telephone conversation with Speaker Hajim al-Hasani of the Iraqi Transitional National Assembly to congratulate him on his April 3 election.

In the afternoon, in the Red Room, the President and Mrs. Bush had lunch with President Viktor Yushchenko of Ukraine and his wife, Kateryna Yushchenko.

### ***April 5***

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Parkersburg, WV, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer June Roberts.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

Later in the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, and U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad. Later, Secretary Rice announced the President's intention to nomi-

nate Ambassador Khalilzad to be U.S. Ambassador to Iraq.

The President announced that the delegation accompanying him and Mrs. Bush to the funeral mass of Pope John Paul II on April 8 will include: former President George Bush; former President William J. Clinton; and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

### ***April 6***

In the morning, the President and his delegation to the funeral mass of Pope John Paul II traveled to Rome, Italy. While en route aboard Air Force One, the President had a telephone conversation with President Jalal Talabani of the Iraqi Transitional Government to congratulate him on his election earlier in the day and to discuss Iraq-U.S. relations. He then had a telephone conversation with Amir Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani of Qatar to express his condolences on the recent terrorist attacks in Qatar.

Later in the morning, in the conference room aboard Air Force One, the President, former President Bush, and former President Clinton had an intelligence briefing. Later, the President had a telephone conversation with head coach Kim Mulkey-Robertson of Baylor University's women's basketball team to congratulate her on the team's April 5 NCAA championship.

In the afternoon, upon arrival in Rome, the President and his delegation went to Vatican City, where they attended the public viewing for Pope John Paul II, who lay in state in Saint Peter's Basilica.

During the day, the President received a briefing from National Security Adviser Stephen J. Hadley on the helicopter crash in Kabul, Afghanistan, that killed American troops earlier in the day.

The President announced his intention to nominate Maria Cino to be Deputy Secretary of Transportation.

### ***April 7***

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, at the Quirinale Palace in Rome, the President and his delegation paid a courtesy call on President Carlo Azeglio Ciampi of Italy.

In the evening, at Villa Taverna, the U.S. Ambassador to Italy's residence in Rome, the President and Mrs. Bush hosted a reception for American cardinals, archbishops, and bishops of the Catholic Church.

Later in the evening, the President and his delegation, with the exception of Mrs. Bush, had dinner with Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy at the Prime Minister's residence.

#### **April 8**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, at Saint Peter's Square in Vatican City, he and his delegation attended the funeral mass of Pope John Paul II.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Paul Kagame of Rwanda to the White House on April 15.

The President announced his intention to nominate Emil M. Skodon to be Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam.

The President announced his intention to nominate Eduardo Aguirre to be Ambassador to Spain and to Andorra.

The President announced his intention to appoint Robert B. Stephan as Assistant Secretary for Infrastructure Protection and to designate him as Acting Under Secretary for Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection at the Department of Homeland Security.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the Board of Trustees of the Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation: E. Gordon Gee; Valentino F. DiGiorgio III; Kimberly A. Owens; and M. Joyce Van Schaack.

The President announced his intention to appoint George R. Nethercutt, Jr., as Chairman of the U.S. Section of the U.S. and Canada Permanent Joint Board on Defense.

The President announced his intention to appoint Ruth Sharp Altshuler as a member of the Library of Congress Trust Fund Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint Stephen Malcom Gillis and Con Gia

Pham as members of the Board of Directors of the Vietnam Education Foundation.

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### **Nominations Submitted to the Senate**

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The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

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#### **Submitted April 4**

Rachel Brand,  
of Iowa, to be an Assistant Attorney General,  
vice Daniel J. Bryant, resigned.

Ellen G. Engleman Conners,  
of Indiana, to be Chairman of the National  
Transportation Safety Board for a term of 2  
years (reappointment).

Suzanne C. DeFrancis,  
of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of  
Health and Human Services, vice Kevin  
Keane.

Michael Dolan,  
of New York, to be a member of the Board  
of Directors of the Corporation for National  
and Community Service for a term expiring  
October 6, 2009, vice Marc Racicot, term  
expired.

Robert M. Duncan,  
of Kentucky, to be a member of the Board  
of Directors of the Corporation for National  
and Community Service for a term expiring  
June 10, 2009, vice Juanita Sims Doty, term  
expired.

Alice S. Fisher,  
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Attorney Gen-  
eral, vice Christopher A. Wray.

Kenneth J. Krieg,  
of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of Defense  
for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics,  
vice Edward C. Aldridge, resigned.

Sean Ian McCormack, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Public Affairs), vice Richard A. Boucher.

Philip J. Perry, of Virginia, to be General Counsel, Department of Homeland Security, vice Joe D. Whitley, resigned.

Mark V. Rosenker, of Maryland, to be a member of the National Transportation Safety Board for a term expiring December 31, 2010 (reappointment).

David A. Sampson, of Texas, to be Deputy Secretary of Commerce, vice Theodore William Kassinger, resigned.

Regina B. Schofield, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Attorney General, vice Deborah J. Daniels.

Linda M. Springer, of Pennsylvania, to be Director of the Office of Personnel Management for a term of 4 years, vice Kay Coles James, resigned.

***Withdrawn April 4***

Claude M. Kicklighter, of Georgia, to be a member of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (new position), which was sent to the Senate on March 15, 2005.

***Submitted April 6***

Maria Cino, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Transportation, vice Kirk Van Tine.

Timothy D. Adams, of Virginia, to be an Under Secretary of the Treasury, vice John B. Taylor.

***Submitted April 7***

Gordon England, of Texas, to be Deputy Secretary of Defense, vice Paul D. Wolfowitz.

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**Checklist  
of White House Press Releases**

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The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

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***Released April 2***

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

***Released April 4***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

***Released April 5***

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Announcement of the delegation accompanying the President and First Lady to the funeral of Pope John Paul II

***Released April 6***

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

***Released April 7***

Statement by the Press Secretary: 1994 Rwanda Genocide

***Released April 8***

Statement by the Press Secretary: President To Welcome President of Rwanda to White House

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**Acts Approved  
by the President**

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NOTE: No acts approved by the President were received by the Office of the Federal Register during the period covered by this issue.