

Weekly Compilation of  
**Presidential  
Documents**



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## WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

## PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Week Ending Friday, June 24, 2005

**Notice—Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Risk of Nuclear Proliferation Created by the Accumulation of Weapons-Usable Fissile Material in the Territory of the Russian Federation**

*June 17, 2005*

On June 21, 2000, the President issued Executive Order 13159 (the “Order”) blocking property and interests in property of the Government of the Russian Federation that are in the United States, that hereafter come within the United States, or that are or hereinafter come within the possession or control of United States persons that are directly related to the implementation of the Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Russian Federation Concerning the Disposition of Highly Enriched Uranium Extracted from Nuclear Weapons, dated February 18, 1993, and related contracts and agreements (collectively, the “HEU Agreements”). The HEU Agreements allow for the downblending of highly enriched uranium derived from nuclear weapons to low enriched uranium for peaceful commercial purposes. The Order invoked the authority, *inter alia*, of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*, and declared a national emergency to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States posed by the risk of nuclear proliferation created by the accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation.

The national emergency declared on June 21, 2000, must continue beyond June 21, 2005, to provide continued protection from attachment, judgment, decree, lien, execution, garnishment, or other judicial process

for the property and interests in property of the Government of the Russian Federation that are directly related to the implementation of the HEU Agreements and subject to U.S. jurisdiction. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing for 1 year the national emergency with respect to weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation. This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
June 17, 2005.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:40 a.m., June 17, 2005]

NOTE: This notice was published in the *Federal Register* on June 20. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Risk of Nuclear Proliferation Created by the Accumulation of Weapons-Usable Fissile Material in the Territory of the Russian Federation**

*June 17, 2005*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the

emergency declared with respect to the accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation is to continue beyond June 21, 2005. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on June 18, 2004 (69 *FR* 34047).

It remains a major national security goal of the United States to ensure that fissile material removed from Russian nuclear weapons pursuant to various arms control and disarmament agreements is dedicated to peaceful uses, subject to transparency measures, and protected from diversion to activities of proliferation concern. The accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to the accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation and maintain in force these emergency authorities to respond to this threat.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
June 17, 2005.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

### **The President's Radio Address**

*June 18, 2005*

Good morning. Today, we face two issues of vital importance for all Americans, growing our economy and protecting our citizens from those who wish to do us harm. So in the weeks ahead, I will continue to focus on ways to ensure that our Government takes the side of working families and that America prevails in the war on terror. As we take the steps necessary to achieve these goals, we will make our future one of peace and prosperity.

Today, we have good reason to be optimistic about our economy. More Americans are working today than at any time in our history. More Americans own their homes than at any time in our history. More Ameri-

cans are going to college and own their own businesses than at any time in our history. And a new economic report shows that inflation is in check. Our policies have put us on the track to growth, but leaders in Washington must not become complacent. We need to work together to ensure that opportunity reaches every corner of our great country.

Delivering opportunity means allowing families to keep more of the money they earn. So we enacted the largest tax relief in a generation. That is only a beginning. You need a reformed Tax Code that is simple, fair, and easy to understand and rewards your hard work and entrepreneurial spirit. And Congress needs to do its part by making the tax relief we passed permanent and burying the death tax forever.

Delivering opportunity also means adapting to the needs of a new century. In this new century, American prosperity will increasingly depend on our ability to sell our goods and services overseas, so we need to pass initiatives like the Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement to create a level playing field for American farmers and small businesses. In this new century, Americans require a reliable and affordable supply of energy. I proposed a comprehensive energy policy to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. In this new century, Americans need to know that if they work hard their whole lives, they will retire with dignity, so we're working to save Social Security to ensure that the next generation of retirees will be as secure in their retirement as today's generation.

As we work to deliver opportunity at home, we're also keeping you safe from threats from abroad. We went to war because we were attacked, and we are at war today because there are still people out there who want to harm our country and hurt our citizens. Some may disagree with my decision to remove Saddam Hussein from power, but all of us can agree that the world's terrorists have now made Iraq a central front in the war on terror. These foreign terrorists violently oppose the rise of a free and democratic Iraq, because they know that when we replace despair and hatred with liberty and

hope, they lose their recruiting grounds for terror.

Our troops are fighting these terrorists in Iraq so you will not have to face them here at home. We mourn every one of these brave men and women who have given his or her life for our liberty. The terrorists know they cannot defeat our troops, so they seek to weaken our Nation's resolve. They know there is no room for them in a free and democratic Middle East, so the terrorists and insurgents are trying to get us to retreat. Their goal is to get us to leave before Iraqis have had a chance to show the region what a Government that is elected and truly accountable to its citizens can do for its people.

Time and again, the Iraqi people have defied the skeptics who claim they are not up to the job of building a free society. Nearly a year ago, Iraqis showed they were ready to resume sovereignty. A few months ago, Iraqis showed they could hold free elections. This week, Iraqis have worked on an agreement to expand their constitutional drafting committee to ensure that all communities are represented in the process. I am confident that Iraqis will continue to defy the skeptics if they build a new Iraq that represents the diversity of their nation and assumes greater responsibility for their own security. And when they do, our troops can come home with the honor they have earned.

This mission isn't easy, and it will not be accomplished overnight. We're fighting a ruthless enemy that relishes the killing of innocent men, women, and children. By making their stand in Iraq, the terrorists have made Iraq a vital test for the future security of our country and the free world. We will settle for nothing less than victory.

I'll continue to act to keep our people safe from harm and our future bright. Together we will do what Americans have always done, build a better and more peaceful world for our children and grandchildren.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:39 a.m. on June 17 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 18. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 18 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to former President Saddam

Hussein of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

## The President's News Conference With European Union Leaders

June 20, 2005

**President Bush.** Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks for coming. There will be opening statements from the three leaders, and then we'll take two questions from the American side, two questions from the European side.

I want to appreciate Council President Juncker and Commission President Barroso, the High Representative Solana and the delegation for coming to the White House today. I've really enjoyed our conversation and enjoyed our lunch. We've covered a lot of topics, and they're important topics.

During the conversation, our talks reminded me about the importance of our partnership and the fact that this partnership is based on common values and shared aspirations, a partnership that really has helped build a Europe that is whole, free, and at peace. The United States continues to support a strong European Union as a partner in spreading freedom and democracy and security and prosperity throughout the world. My message to these leaders and these friends was that we want a Europe strong so we can work together to achieve important objectives and important goals.

One of those important objectives and important goals is the advance of freedom in order to spread peace. We talked about the Middle East. We support the vision of two democratic states, Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace.

We talked about Iraq. This week in Brussels, the EU and the U.S. are cohosting a conference of over 80 countries and international organizations to build support for a free and prosperous Iraq. And I want to thank the leaders for that important initiative. I think it's an important signal for people to hear loud and clear that there may have been past differences over Iraq, but as we move forward, there is a need for the world to work together so that Iraq's democracy will succeed.

We talked about Afghanistan, and I appreciate the contributions of EU member nations to—efforts of—within Afghanistan. After all, 23 members of the EU are contributing troops in Afghanistan, and 12 members of the EU are contributing troops in Iraq, and we appreciate those contributions.

We talked about the broader Middle East. We talked about the need for us to continually support democratic movements. We talked about the Ukraine and Georgia as well as the Balkans. The point is, is that we understand that democratic nations are nations that are—will answer to the hopes and aspirations of their people, and democratic nations are nations that will help us keep the peace.

We talked about terrorism. We talked about visas. We talked about the need to continue to share information to make sure that we cut off money flows to terrorist groups and prevent terrorist organizations from obtaining weapons of mass destruction.

We talked about Iran, and I complimented the EU, complimented Mr. Solana as well as the Foreign Ministers from Great Britain and Germany and France for sending a clear message to the leadership in Iran that we're not going to tolerate the development of a nuclear weapon.

We talked about our collaborative efforts in Darfur. The EU and NATO are working together to help deploy AU peacekeepers in Darfur. And I want to thank the leadership here.

We talked about our economies. There's about a trillion dollars' worth of trade that takes place on an annual basis between the EU and the United States, and that's important. It's important for people working here in the United States and people working in Europe to understand that trade helps keep—people keep a job. And I recognize that when there's that much trade, there's going to be disputes. But we'll work those disputes out for the sake of our respective countries.

We're committed to the Doha Round of the WTO. We're committed to trade that is fair and free. We spent a lot of time talking about China and how to make sure that China understands there are WTO rules that must be adhered to and that China should work to do something with her currency so

that the trade between our respective countries is fair. That's all we want. We just want there to be a level playing field. The people in Europe can compete and the people in the United States can compete if we have fair rules and fair trade. And so we talked about how we can work together to make sure that the world trades more freely and more fairly for the sake of our peoples.

All in all, we've had a great discussion. And I'm proud to welcome these two men here to the podium here in the East Room of the White House. I want to thank you for coming. I want to thank you for your friendship.

Which one wants to go first? The oldest guy. [*Laughter*]

**President Jean-Claude Juncker.** As the Commission—as the Commission is slow in decisions, I'll take the floor immediately. [*Laughter*]

President Barroso and myself, we were pleased with the meeting we had with President Bush, the Vice President, and a certain number of Secretaries. We informed our strongest ally of recent developments and events in the European Union. We explained in detail what the real meaning of the French “no” and the Dutch “no” in the recent constitution referenda really are about. We were informing the President on the budgetary issue. As you know, we were unable during the recent European summit to agree on the so-called financial prospectus for the period 2007–2013.

We made clear in our frank and open and friendly talks with the President that the European is not at its knees but that the European Union is playing the role it has on the international scene, that we feel strongly committed to the relations we have established with partners throughout the world and mainly with the U.S., the U.S. being not only a strategic partner but the most important partner we have, not only as far as political strength relations are concerned but also as far as heart relations are concerned, that the European Union will table its decisions after the next coming months and probably years on the Nice Treaty, which is in place and which allows the European Union to function in a proper way and not as proper way as the constitution would have allowed us to do, but the European Union is there.

We were discussing, which was of quite huge importance, economic reform in the European Union. We adopted a few months ago, in March, the midterm review, the Lisbon Strategy. This is a huge program of economic and social reforms. It's clearly paving the way for a more competitive Europe, for a Europe taking its part in the world's economic development. We were discussing a certain number of monetary issues concerning both the U.S. and the European Union, discussing our relations with other trade partners in the world and with other monetary players in the world.

In fact, the visit we paid to President Bush at the end of the Luxembourg's Presidency of the Council is a happy conclusion of the 6 months, Luxembourg's period. In Europe, we had the pleasure for having President Bush with us in Europe on the 22d of February. This was a huge signal the President was sending to Europe. It was in the course of that meeting that, in fact, both the President and myself, we decided to call for this Iraq conference, which will take place the other day in Brussels.

Although some of us had some differences and divergences with the U.S. when it came to Iraq, this—the fact that we are co-organizing and co-sharing this very important Iraq conference is showing that when it comes to substance, when it comes to progress, when it comes to democracy, to freedom, and to liberty, both the U.S. and the European Union are cooperating closely together and working in the same direction.

So it was an excellent moment.

**President Bush.** Thank you, sir.

Mr. President.

**President Jose Manuel Durao Barroso.** Thank you. Thank you very much. It was indeed a pleasure for me, for President Juncker, for all the European Union team to be here. We remember the very successful visit of President Bush to Brussels recently, to the European institutions. We really believe the world is a better place when Europe and the United States work well together, and we can show results. We have been together promoting democracy, for instance, in Ukraine and in Lebanon, cohosting now the international conference on Iraq. We will continue our close cooperation on Iran and

the Middle East, and we will make sure that the Doha Round is a success.

Today we also adopted important decisions concerning, for instance, the economic cooperation. We have decided to go even further in our economic relations. Let me tell you that, per a day, our trade is around \$1.8 billion. It shows how important our relation is. We will act together decisively to enhance our economic integration, namely in the field of regulatory environment. We believe a regulatory environment, as much as close as possible, is good for the economy of our space.

The European Union is and will remain a very strong and reliable partner for the United States. It's true that we have complex systems in Europe. We are now 25 countries. Very soon we will be 27, about 500 million of people. And we went through a very important enlargement, that it was, indeed, the reunification of Europe, 25, and very soon 27, countries that were very recently divided and now are together, sharing their sovereignty.

So it's no surprise that in this process, some problems may occur. But the European Union is there. We are on business. We are deciding. We are taking decisions every day, internally and externally, and we are committed to this very close relation with the United States.

Let me just underline two points that are very important also in our relation that we will be going on discussing in Gleneagles in the next G-8 summit in Scotland, is the cooperation in terms of environment. We are looking forward—our dialog in United States about climate change, new technologies to face those challenges, energy efficiency, energy security—we adopted an important statement on that—and also development, what we can do together for Africa and for the developing world.

We also adopted a common statement on Africa that shows our commitment. I think this is a real problem, and this is a task of a generation. We are, together, promoting democracy and freedom, but every day, 25,000 people die because they don't have enough to eat or they don't have clean water to drink. This is really a shame for our generation, and you cannot accept it as a kind of a natural order of things. It's not natural.

Now nobody thinks that slavery is natural, but it was natural for centuries—we could live with slavery. How can we go on living with people dying because they don't have the basic needs? There are enough resources in the world. There are enough resources in the world. What we need is political will and good organization.

And when I say good organization, I say good organization on the donors community but also on them, on the African leaders, on the third world leaders, that they can also work with us for better governance, for the rule of law, for accountability in their societies, and transparency in their societies. And I hope that this year we can take all advantage of this year with a high-level event in September in New York, with all—the Gleneagles summit and other occasions so that the United States and Europe will be in front running this battle against absolute poverty and also for freedom and democracy around the world.

Thank you.

**President Bush.** Thank you, Jose.

Couple of questions. Tom [Tom Raum, Associated Press].

#### ***Nomination of United Nations Ambassador***

**Q.** Mr. President, by all accounts, the votes just aren't there to end the filibuster against your nomination of John Bolton to go to the U.N. Your Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, wouldn't rule out a recess appointment. There is a recess coming up. Where do you go from here? And would a recess appointment give Mr. Bolton enough time to do the kind of changes at the U.N. that you are looking for?

**President Bush.** I think Mr. Bolton ought to get an up-or-down vote on the Senate floor. That's my call to the Senate. I nominated John Bolton to be the Ambassador to the United Nations for a reason. I'm sharing this now with my friends here. The American people know why I nominated him, because the U.N. needs reform, and I thought it made sense to send a reformer to the United Nations. The U.N. is an important organization, and the American people, I think, will take—will understand how important it is when the U.N. is reformed and is held to

account. And so we want more accountability and transparency and less bureaucracy, and John Bolton will help achieve that mission. And so I think it's time for the Senate to give him an up-or-down vote, now. And I'm not sure if they've made the decision to have that vote. I think tomorrow there is going to be an up-or-down vote, if I'm not mistaken, Tom.

**Q.** Tonight.

**President Bush.** Tonight? Tonight. Yes. Well, put him in. If they're interested in reforming the United Nations, they ought to approve John Bolton.

Do you want to call on somebody?

#### ***European Union-U.S. Relations***

**Q.** Mr. President, you spoke of common values were with Europe and the United States, and a strong Europe. Would you say that today, after the two summits between the European Union and the United States, that the partnership has even become again a friendship between Europe and the United States, and how do you see the role of the Luxembourg Presidency in that issue?

**President Bush.** Well, I appreciate that. First, the relations with Europe are important relations, and they've—because we do share values. And they're universal values. They're not American values or European values; they're universal values. And those values, being universal, ought to be applied everywhere. And that's human rights, human dignity, rule of law, transparency when it comes to government, decency. And obviously, if the EU and the U.S. speak with one voice on these issues, it's more likely to hear—people will hear it.

I think the friendship between our respective countries in the EU are strong. Obviously, there's been a difference of opinion recently on certain issues, but that doesn't prevent the American people from holding the good folks of Luxembourg or Portugal in high esteem. There's a lot of traffic between our country, a lot of tourism, a lot of trade, a lot of commerce between individual countries within the EU and the United States. And that's because of mutual respect and the desire for people to get to know the world better.

In terms of your Prime Minister, he's an interesting guy. [Laughter] He's a lot of fun to be around. He promotes serious business in a way that endears himself to people. And so I think his Presidency has been an important Presidency for the EU during difficult times, and he's handled it well. And I was going to say he's a piece of work, but that might not translate too well. Is that all right, if I call you a "piece of work"? [Laughter]

**President Juncker.** Okay.

**President Bush.** He's done a good job, and I value his friendship. I think—I know it's really important for people at our—when we sit down at the table, to have a friendship, so we can discuss things in a frank way, in an honest way, without fear of being able to tell people what's on our mind. That's the best way to get things done, and Jean-Claude certainly has been that way, as has Jose.

Adam [Adam Entous, Reuters].

### **Iraq**

**Q.** Mr. President, we were told that you planned to sharpen your focus on Iraq. Why did this become necessary? And given the recent surge in violence, do you agree with Vice President Dick Cheney's assessment that the insurgency is in its last throes?

**President Bush.** Adam, I think about Iraq every day—every single day—because I understand we have troops in harm's way, and I understand how dangerous it is there. And the reason it's dangerous is because there's these coldblooded killers that will kill Americans or kill innocent Iraqis in order to try to drive us out of Iraq. I spoke to our commanders today—Commander Abizaid today and will be speaking to General Casey here this week, getting an assessment as to how we're proceeding, if we're making progress toward the goal, which is, on the one hand, a political process moving forward in Iraq, and on the other hand, the Iraqis capable of defending themselves. And the report from the field is that while it's tough, more and more Iraqis are becoming battle-hardened and trained to defend themselves. And that's exactly the strategy that's going to work. And it is going to work. And we will complete this mission for the sake of world peace.

And you just heard the EU is willing to host this conference with the United States in order to help this new democracy move forward. And the reason why is many countries understand that freedom in the heart of the Middle East will make this world more peaceful.

And so, you know, I think about this every day—every single day—and will continue thinking about it, because I understand we've got kids in harm's way. And I worry about their families, and I—obviously, any time there's a death, I grieve. But I want those families to know, one, we're not going to leave them—not going to allow their mission to go in vain, and two, we will complete the mission and the world will be better off for it.

**Q.** Mr. President, many in Europe—

**President Bush.** You're offending people here, we got two other—[laughter]—

### **Detainees of the War on Terror**

**Q.** Mr. President, many in Europe are worrying that with the fight against terrorism the commitment of the United States to human rights is not as big as it used to be—that has not only to do with Guantanamo but also with the secret prisons where the CIA holds terror suspects. My question is, what will happen to these people who are held in these secret prisons by the CIA? Will they ever see a judge? Or is your thinking that with some terror suspects, the rule of law should not apply or does not have to have applied?

**President Bush.** First of all, I appreciate that question, and I understand we—those of us who espouse freedom have an obligation and those who espouse human rights have an obligation to live that—to those—to live up to those words. And I believe we are in Guantanamo. I mean, after all, there's 24-hour inspections by the International Red Cross. You're welcome to go down yourself—maybe you have—and taking a look at the conditions. I urge members of our press corps to go down to Guantanamo and see how they're treated and to see—and to look at the facts. That's all I ask people to do. There have been, I think, about 800 or so that have been detained there. These are

people picked up off the battlefield in Afghanistan. They weren't wearing uniforms. They weren't state sponsored, but they were there to kill.

And so the fundamental question facing our Government was, what do you do with these people? And so we said that they don't apply under the Geneva Convention, but they'll be treated in accord with the Geneva Convention.

And so I would urge you to go down and take a look at Guantanamo. About 200 or so have been released back to their countries. There needs to be a way forward on the other 500 that are there. We're now waiting for a Federal court to decide whether or not they can be tried in a military court, where they'll have rights, of course, or in the civilian courts. We're just waiting for our judicial process to move the process along.

Make no mistake, however, that many of those folks being detained—in humane conditions, I might add—are dangerous people. Some have been released to their previous countries, and they got out, and they went on to the battlefield again. And I have an obligation, as do all of us who are holding office, to protect our people. That's a solemn obligation we all have. And I believe we're meeting that obligation in a humane way.

As well as—we've got some in custody—Khalid Sheik Mohammed is a classic example, the mastermind of the September the 11th attack that killed over 3,000 of our citizens. And he is being detained because we think he could possibly give us information that might not only protect us but protect citizens in Europe. And at some point in time, he'll be dealt with, but right now, we think it's best that he be kept in custody.

We want to learn as much as we can in this new kind of war about the intention and about the methods and about how these people operate. And they're dangerous, and they're still around, and they'll kill in a moment's notice.

In the long run, the best way to protect ourselves is to spread freedom and human rights and democracy. And—but if you've got questions about Guantanamo, I seriously suggest you go down there and take a look. And—seriously, take an objective look as to how these folks are treated and what has hap-

pened to them in the past, and when the courts make the decision they make, we'll act accordingly.

Thank you. I appreciate that. Thank you all very much for coming.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 1:11 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. The President met with Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker of Luxembourg, in his capacity as President of the European Council; and President Jose Manuel Durao Barroso of the European Commission. The President referred to Secretary General Javier Solana of the European Council; Gen. John P. Abizaid, USA, combatant commander, U.S. Central Command; Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; and Khalid Sheik Mohammed, senior Al Qaida leader responsible for planning the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack, who was captured in Pakistan on March 1, 2003.

### **Joint Statement by the United States and the European Union Working Together To Promote Peace, Prosperity and Progress in the Middle East**

*June 20, 2005*

At our Summit in Dromoland last year, the United States and the European Union pledged our support to the governments and the peoples of the Middle East who have expressed their determination to meet the challenges of modernization, to advance political, social and economic progress, to strengthen democracy, and to respect and promote human rights. We offered this support in a spirit of partnership as well as respect and friendship.

Since then, we have strengthened our dialogue on our respective efforts towards promoting progress and stability in the Broader Middle East and the Mediterranean.

At the June 2004 Summit, we reaffirmed our commitment to a just, comprehensive, and lasting settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and our common vision of the co-existence of two states, Palestine and Israel, by the creation of an independent, democratic, and viable Palestinian state with contiguity in the West Bank living side by side with Israel and its neighbors in peace and security.

Since then, we have witnessed the successful election of a new leader by the Palestinian people. We are now at a moment of opportunity, and, with our partners in the region, we must seize it. In order to achieve and maintain a lasting peace, we recognize the importance of building a climate of mutual trust and cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians.

We endorse the May 9, 2005, declaration of the Quartet. We stress the importance of a complete and peaceful Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and parts of the northern West Bank in a manner consistent with the road map. We urge the parties to respect their commitments and to refrain from unilateral actions that could prejudge final status issues. We further pledge our full support to the mission of the Quartet's Special Envoy for Gaza Disengagement James Wolfensohn, and we will work with him and the parties to promote viable economic and social development.

We support the holding of free, fair, and transparent multi-party legislative elections in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, under the scrutiny of international observers and with full freedom of movement for candidates and voters, as another vital step forward on the path towards building a reformed and accountable Palestinian Authority.

We desire that the Israeli and Palestinian people live in a secure and stable environment. We affirm our support for the mission of General William Ward and will pursue in close coordination our respective efforts to assist the Palestinian security forces. As is required under the roadmap, there must be effective action against terrorism, dismantling of terrorist infrastructure, a freeze on all settlement activity, and dismantling of outposts.

The United States and the European Union share the objective of a peaceful, secure, democratic, and prosperous broader Middle East and Mediterranean region. With close to €3 billion annually in grants and loans from the EU and approximately \$2.2 billion in assistance and loan guarantees from the U.S., we are the major donors of assistance to the region.

Through our respective efforts, we seek to promote, in close cooperation with our partners, human rights and democracy, increased access to education and economic opportunities through modern and open societies, closer integration within the region and with the global economy. Our ongoing cooperation to promote peace throughout the region will help our partners to reap the full benefit of their efforts and our support.

We welcome the accomplishments of the Barcelona Process which were reviewed at the 7th Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference in Luxembourg ahead of the 10th anniversary leaders meeting in November, as well as the U.S. Middle East Partnership Initiative, launched in 2002. We reaffirm our support for the G8's Broader Middle East and North Africa initiative. We welcome in particular the establishment of the Forum for the Future and look forward to its next meeting in Bahrain this autumn.

We have instructed our respective experts on the region to intensify their cooperation in order to strengthen further our support for reform and democratic development.

We welcome the successful elections that have recently taken place in Afghanistan, the Palestinian Territories, Iraq and Lebanon.

While notable progress has been made in a number of countries, significant challenges remain. We welcome the amendment to the Egyptian constitution as progress towards a more broadly-based representative government and encourage the Government of Egypt to play a leadership role by opening its forthcoming elections to international observers. In these, as in all other elections, we stress the importance of freedom of speech, freedom of association and unfettered access to the media, for all candidates.

We share the goal of a peaceful, united and stable Iraq and will continue our cooperative efforts towards this end. The confirmation of the Iraqi Transitional Government following the successful election in January represents an important landmark in the political reconstruction of Iraq. We condemn the terrorist acts of forces seeking to disrupt the lives of the Iraqi people and the political transition process.

Two days from today, at the request of the Iraqi Transitional Government, we will co-

host a conference of nations to express international support for Iraq's political transformation, economic recovery, and reconstruction, and strengthening of public order and the rule of law, in accordance with UNSCR 1546 (2004). We have worked closely together to prepare for this important event and we will pursue these efforts in following up the Conference. Working with the Iraqi authorities, the UN, and other relevant actors, we will seek to contribute to the constitutional process and to support the elections which will take place on the basis of the new Constitution.

We recognize the withdrawal of Syrian military personnel from Lebanon as a positive first step toward Syria's compliance with UN Security Council Resolution 1559. We remain insistent that Resolution 1559 be implemented in its entirety, including the disarming of all militias, and the complete and full withdrawal of all Syrian intelligence operatives, as well as an end to interference in Lebanon's internal affairs. We reaffirm our full support for the United Nations' efforts towards these ends.

We urge full cooperation by all parties with the independent international commission of enquiry of the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri, established by UNSCR 1595 (2005).

We welcome the events that have taken place this year in Lebanon in furtherance of the democratic process, including the recent elections. We recognize the inherent difficulties facing the new government and remain committed to working with the people of Lebanon to strengthen democratic institutions and promote peace and stability.

Once the Lebanese government has defined its reform agenda and should it so request, we will consider convening an international conference to consolidate support for the Lebanese people and the new government.

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

**Joint Statement by the European Union and the United States Working Together To Promote Democracy and Support Freedom, the Rule of Law and Human Rights Worldwide**

*June 20, 2005*

The European Union and the United States believe that the spread of accountable and representative government, the rule of law, and respect for human rights as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are a strategic priority as well as a moral necessity. We will continue to work together to advance these priorities around the world.

The work of the United Nations is central both to democracy and human rights. We welcome the proposals put forward by Kofi Annan to renew the UN's commitment and enhance its effectiveness in these areas. Specifically, we value the UN Secretary General's initiatives for reforming the UN human rights mechanisms and for creating a Peacebuilding Commission. We pledge to support the establishment of the UN Democracy Fund to assist countries in strengthening civil society and democratic institutions.

We express our admiration and pledge our support for all those engaged in the defense of freedom, democracy and human rights, in many cases at great personal risk.

We are encouraged by the efforts of many governments to open their societies and political systems. Recognizing that democratic reform is a process that deserves our support, we promise our solidarity and support to those promoting democracy around the world, be it in Ukraine, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Iraq, Afghanistan, or elsewhere. We will continue to support pluralism and the development of civil society, and will encourage the political participation of women and minorities.

Free and fair elections are central to democracy. We congratulate the many thousands of citizens who have participated in organizing and observing elections in their own countries and abroad. We pledge to support

the work of the United Nations in assisting in the organization of elections and will work together in multilateral fora to further strengthen international election standards and to spread the implementation of objective and fair election assessment mechanisms. We support the principles of impartially-conducted and transparent election administration and observation and commend the efforts undertaken by various regional organizations such as the OSCE or civil society in this context. We will continue to support the holding of free and fair elections in countries undergoing or desiring democratic transitions, including in Afghanistan, Haiti, DRC, Iraq, and in the Palestinian territories.

Democracy is not just a matter of elections; it must be anchored in democratic institutions, separation of powers, human rights, the rule of law, tolerance, good governance, and justice. Our assistance to third countries increasingly takes into account the need to sustain democracy in all these dimensions.

We have worked closely to create a Europe whole, free, and at peace; both the EU and NATO have played an important part in this, and continue to do so. We are confident that the reform process in the Balkans will further the region's successful integration into Europe. The European Neighborhood Policy and U.S. support for democratic and economic transitions will contribute further to stability, prosperity and partnership. We will in particular continue to coordinate our efforts to promote democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights in Belarus.

We are witnessing a growing desire for reform in the Middle East and welcome recent democratic developments. Democratic elections in the Palestinian territories, Iraq, and Lebanon have successfully taken place. We recognize the importance of transparent and fair elections and the need to expand freedom and opportunity across the region. We reaffirm our commitments made at Dromoland and Sea Island, and our support for the Forum for the Future and other elements of the G-8 BMENA Initiative. Recognizing that the threat of conflict can undermine democratic reforms, we commit ourselves to support those who are working for

the resolution of conflicts, in the Middle East and elsewhere.

We have both encouraged the growth of democratic institutions in many countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. We acknowledge the important contributions by regional and multilateral organizations, as well as initiatives such as the Community of Democracies, to promote democracy and respect for fundamental human rights.

We recognize that differences in history, culture and society mean that the paths taken towards democracy and the rule of law will be different and that the systems of government that result will be varied, reflecting local traditions and preferences. Democracy, while it is based on universal values, will not be uniform. However, the desire for justice, freedom, human rights, and accountable and representative government is universal. In the long term, only systems responsive to the wishes of the people they govern can achieve political stability.

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

### **Joint Statement by the European Union and United States on the Joint Program of Work on the Nonproliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction**

*June 20, 2005*

Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their delivery systems continue to be a preeminent threat to international peace and security. This global challenge needs to be tackled individually and collectively, and requires an effective global response. We are fully committed to support in that respect the important role of the United Nations Security Council and other key UN institutions.

The United States and the European Union are steadfast partners in the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and will undertake several new initiatives to strengthen our cooperation and coordination in this important arena, even as we enhance our ongoing efforts.

**Building Global Support for Nonproliferation:** The European Union and the United States will enhance information sharing, discuss assessments of proliferation risks, and work together to broaden global support for and participation in nonproliferation endeavors. We will increase transparency about our nonproliferation dialogues with other countries to ensure, to the extent possible consistency in our nonproliferation messages.

We reaffirm our willingness to work together to implement and strengthen key arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties, agreements and commitments that ban the proliferation of WMD and their delivery systems. In particular we underline the importance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention. We will increase our effort to promote, individually or, where appropriate, jointly, the universalisation of these Treaties and Conventions and the adherence to the Hague Code of Conduct against the proliferation of ballistic missiles.

**Reinforcing the NPT:** The EU and the US reaffirm that the NPT is central to preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. The EU and the US stress the urgency to maintain the authority and the integrity of the Treaty. To that end, the EU and the U.S. recommit to fulfill our obligations under the Treaty while working together in order to strengthen it. We will evaluate lessons learned from the 2005 Review Conference and continue to stress the importance of compliance with and universal adherence to the NPT.

**Recognizing the Importance of the Biological Threat:** The EU and the US will work together in advance of the upcoming BTWC-Review Conference in 2006, in order to strengthen the Biological Weapons and Toxin Weapons Convention.

**Promoting Full Implementation of UNSCR 1540:** We will coordinate efforts to assist and enhance the work being done by the UNSCR 1540 Committee, and compliance with the resolution. We will work together to respond, where possible, to assistance requests from States seeking to implement the requirements set by the UNSC Resolution 1540 and in particular, to put in

place national legal regulatory, and enforcement measures against proliferation.

**Establishing a Dialogue on Compliance and Verification:** The European Union and the United States renew their call on all States to comply with their arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation agreements and commitments. We will seek to ensure, through regular exchanges, strict implementation of compliance with these agreements and commitments. We will continue to support the multilateral institutions charged with verifying activities under relevant treaties and agreements. We will ask our experts to discuss issues of compliance and verification in order to identify areas of possible cooperation and joint undertaking.

**Strengthening the IAEA:** The U.S. and the EU welcome the steps taken earlier this month by the Board of Governors of the IAEA that created a new Committee on Safeguards and Verification, which will enhance the IAEA's effectiveness and strengthen its ability to ensure that nations comply with their NPT safeguards obligations. We will work together to ensure all States conclude a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an Additional Protocol with the IAEA. We agree that the Additional Protocol should become a standard for nuclear cooperation and non-proliferation.

**Advancing the Proliferation Security Initiative:** As we enhance our own capabilities, laws and regulations to improve our readiness for interdiction actions, we pledge to strengthen the Proliferation Security Initiative and encourage PSI countries to support enhanced cooperation against proliferation networks, including tracking and halting financial transactions related to proliferation.

**Global Partnership:** The U.S. and the EU reaffirm our commitment to the Global Partnership Initiative Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. We will assess ongoing and emerging threats and coordinate our nonproliferation cooperation, including with other participating states, to focus resources on priority concerns and to make the most effective use of our resources.

**Enhancing Nuclear Security:** We intend to expand and deepen cooperation to enhance

the security of nuclear and radiological materials. We welcome the establishment of the Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI) and will cooperate closely to implement this important new initiative, including by exploring opportunities under the GTRI to reduce the threat posed by radiological dispersal devices and by identifying specific radiological threat reduction projects that could be implemented.

**Ensuring Radioactive Source Security:** We remain concerned by the risks posed by the potential use of radioactive sources for terrorist purposes. We will work towards having effective controls applied by the end of 2005 in accordance with the IAEA Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources. We will support IAEA efforts to assist countries that need such assistance to establish effective and sustainable controls.

**Rationalizing Multilateral Disarmament Work:** We will continue to cooperate in order to overcome the stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament and pursue reforming of the UN General Assembly's First Committee on disarmament and international security. These initiatives are part of our broader efforts to streamline and make the multilateral disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation machinery more responsive.

The U.S. and the EU take special note of the Conference to Consider and Adopt Amendments to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) that will take place at the IAEA, July 4–8 2005, and we urge all States Parties to the CPPNM to attend and fully support adoption of an amended Convention.

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

### **Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Phan Van Khai of Vietnam**

*June 21, 2005*

**President Bush.** There will be two opening statements this morning. Mr. Prime Minister, welcome. I want to thank you for the constructive visit we just had. We discussed a wide range of subjects. We discussed our economic relations. And I noted that the Vi-

etnamese economy is growing quite substantially. We talked about our desire for Vietnam to join the WTO. We talked about security issues and a mutual desire to coordinate in the war on terror.

We talked about humanitarian issues. As the Prime Minister noted, the United States is supporting the fight against HIV/AIDS in Vietnam, and he gave me a report on the progress about our mutual desire to help those who suffer with HIV/AIDS. We signed a landmark agreement that will make it easier for people to worship freely in Vietnam.

And finally, I want to thank the Prime Minister for his Government's willingness to continue to work on the—on finding the remains of those who lost their lives in Vietnam. It's very comforting to many families here in America to understand that the Government is providing information to help close a sad chapter in their lives.

And finally, the Prime Minister graciously invited me to Vietnam. I will be going in 2006. I'm looking forward to my trip. I'm also looking forward to the APEC Summit that Vietnam will be hosting.

Mr. Prime Minister, welcome.

**Prime Minister Khai.** Thank you very much Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen.

At the invitation of President George W. Bush, it gives me the great pleasure and honor as the first Vietnamese Prime Minister to pay an official visit to the United States. And this event, in itself, shows that Vietnam-U.S. relations have in fact entered a new stage of development. My visit to America this time coincides with the 10th anniversary of the establishment of our diplomatic relations.

During the talks that I had with Mr. President, Mr. President and I were pleased to note the significant developments in the two countries' relations, including the good progress made in addressing the various issues left over by the past as well as the various steps to be taken to expand our relations in the future.

Mr. President and I also shared the view that proceeding from the interest of the two countries and given the new developments in the region and the world, the two countries' relationship should be enhanced. And

we should aim to build a friendly relationship, constructive partnership, a comprehensive cooperation on a long-term and stable basis as well as on the basis of equality, mutual respect and benefits.

We believe that America can find in Vietnam a potential cooperation partner. We have a population of 80 million people, which means a huge market for American businesses. And these people are also very hard working, creative, and dynamic. And they are now working very hard to achieve the goal of building Vietnam into a strong country with wealthy people and a democratic and advanced society.

Vietnam is also actively integrating itself into the world economy and wishes to be a friend and reliable partner of all countries in the international community. I also highly appreciate Mr. President's strong support for Vietnam's early WTO accession, and we agreed that Vietnam's accession will be in the benefits of both countries, and we agree to continue with our bilateral negotiations with the aim of concluding those very soon.

Mr. President and I also agreed that there remain differences between our two countries due to the different conditions that we have—the different histories and cultures. But we also agreed that we should work together through constructive dialog based upon mutual respect to reduce those differences in order to improve our bilateral relations.

On international issues, Mr. President and I exchanged views on the recent developments in Asia and the Pacific, which we are both concerned about. And we also agreed on the needs to improve the effectiveness of APEC for which the 2006 APEC Summit in Vietnam will be an important milestone.

I am also delighted that President Bush has accepted my invitation to visit Vietnam and to attend the 2006 APEC Summit, and we also welcome your support for the organization of this summit.

I am fully confident that my visit to America this time will help uplift the relationship between our two countries to a new height, and may I finally wish America prosperity and happiness to her people.

I thank you very much for your time.

**President Bush.** Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:01 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Prime Minister Khai spoke in Vietnamese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

### **Joint Statement Between the United States of America and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam**

*June 21, 2005*

President George W. Bush welcomed Prime Minister Phan Van Khai to the White House today to discuss ways to strengthen bilateral ties on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and Vietnam. The President and Prime Minister expressed satisfaction with progress to date and affirmed that U.S.-Vietnam relations are characterized by mutual respect, growing economic and commercial ties, shared interests in regional peace, prosperity, and security in Southeast Asia and the Asia Pacific region, and increasing cooperation on a range of common concerns. Both leaders reaffirmed their intention to continue dialogue on issues on which differences remain.

The President and Prime Minister underscored the two countries' common interest in further strengthening bilateral cooperation in the context of a stable and durable partnership. To this end, the President and Prime Minister stated their intention to bring bilateral relations to a higher plane by developing a friendly, constructive, and multi-faceted cooperative partnership on the basis of equality, mutual respect, and mutual benefit. In that spirit, the two leaders agreed to encourage greater contact between their countries' respective executive and legislative branches, commercial and scientific communities, militaries, and citizens and to encourage more cultural and educational exchanges, in particular through the Vietnam Education Foundation. They further agreed to strengthen bilateral and multilateral cooperation on transnational issues, including the global fight against terrorism, transnational crime, narcotics, and trafficking in persons and to deepen cooperation on health and humanitarian issues, including the prevention of

pandemics, especially of HIV/AIDS and Avian Influenza.

The President and Prime Minister applauded the success of our 2001 Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) in accelerating two-way trade, and they reaffirmed their governments' determination to implement fully the commitments made under that agreement. President Bush expressed strong support for Vietnam's accession to the World Trade Organization. The two leaders welcomed the substantial progress achieved on the complete range of issues in the recent bilateral negotiations regarding the obligations of membership and agreed to intensify efforts to resolve remaining issues. They also agreed to work together to promote favorable conditions for increased U.S. investment in Vietnam.

President Bush expressed appreciation for Vietnam's ongoing cooperation in our joint humanitarian effort to achieve the fullest possible accounting for Americans who remain missing in action from the war, especially through Joint Field Activities that have identified and repatriated the remains of more than 520 U.S. soldiers. The Prime Minister reaffirmed Vietnam's willingness to continue its close cooperation on this matter by carrying out newly agreed measures. The two leaders agreed to continue cooperation to address a range of issues that remain from the war.

The Prime Minister briefed the President on Vietnam's determination to further economic, social, and legal reforms. The two leaders agreed on the importance of continuing an open and candid dialogue on issues of common concern, including human-rights practices and conditions for religious believers and ethnic minorities. The President welcomed Vietnam's efforts to date and encouraged further progress.

The President and the Prime Minister attached great importance to the efforts of Vietnamese-Americans and Vietnamese residing in the United States in promoting friendly and cooperative relations between the two countries. The Prime Minister welcomed their contributions in strengthening Vietnam's economic and social development, and he discussed his government's efforts to encourage and facilitate visits and investment.

The President welcomed these efforts and reiterated the U.S. government's support for Vietnam's security and territorial integrity.

The President and Prime Minister shared a vision of peace, prosperity, and security in Southeast Asia and the Asia-Pacific region, and they agreed to cooperate bilaterally and multilaterally to promote these goals. The President underscored the United States Government's support for peace, stability, and cooperation in Southeast Asia and for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), of which Vietnam is an active member. The two leaders noted the central role of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in supporting trade and investment liberalization and in promoting cooperative efforts to strengthen regional security. The President congratulated Vietnam on its decision to host the APEC Summit in Hanoi in 2006 and pledged to work closely with Vietnam and other member economies to make the Summit a great success. Prime Minister Phan Van Khai welcomed President Bush's expression of support and invited the President to pay an official visit to Vietnam in conjunction with his attendance at the 2006 APEC Summit.

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

**Remarks at a Swearing-In Ceremony  
for Ben S. Bernanke as the Chairman  
of the Council of Economic Advisers**  
*June 21, 2005*

**The President.** Good morning. Thank you all for coming. I'm pleased to congratulate a distinguished economist and public servant, Ben Bernanke, on becoming the new Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers. Congratulations. I'm also honored to have Ben's wife, Anna, and his two children, Alyssa and Joel, with us; thank you all for coming.

Ben has taught advanced economics at some of our Nation's top universities for over two decades. And for nearly 3 years, he has done an outstanding job as a member of the Federal Reserve Board of Governors. He's a talented, visionary thinker. I'll look forward to his advice. I'll look forward to his counsel.

And there's no doubt in my mind he will be an outstanding Chairman of the CEA.

Ben follows three others who have done a superb job as Chairmen of my Council of Economic Advisers: Harvey Rosen—there he is—[laughter]—Greg Mankiw, and Glenn Hubbard. I'm grateful to have had such able and dedicated counselors. I thank them for their service.

I appreciate the Director of the OMB and member of my Cabinet who has joined us today, Josh Bolten. I want to thank my friend Al Hubbard, the Director of the National Economic Council, with whom Ben will be working closely.

I'm most grateful, and I know Ben is as well—is that the Chairman of the Federal Reserve, Mr. Alan Greenspan, has joined us today—welcome—as well as Roger Ferguson, the Vice Chairman of the Fed. I appreciate you all coming.

I want to thank Ned Gramlich, a Governor of the Federal Reserve; Susan Bies, a Governor of the Federal Reserve. I want to thank the staff of the Council of Economic Advisers who have joined us today. You're fixing to work for a good man.

Ben will lead the CEA at an important time for our economy. Today, Americans have many reasons to be optimistic about our economic future. After all, our economy is growing faster than that of any other major industrialized nation. Over the last 2 years, we've added more than 3.5 million new jobs. The unemployment rate is down to 5.1 percent. That is lower than the average rate of the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s. More Americans are working today than ever before. Small businesses are flourishing. Families are taking home more of what they earn, and more people own their homes than ever before.

We've got to build on those achievements to make sure we have lasting prosperity in America. I look forward to Ben's advice as we continue to advance a progrowth, projobs agenda. By making our economy more flexible, more innovative, and more competitive, we'll keep America the economic leader of the world.

Our agenda for a stronger economy begins with allowing families to keep more of the money they earn. To get the economy grow-

ing again after the September the 11th attacks, we enacted the largest tax relief in a generation. In order to make sure that that tax relief continues to work on behalf of entrepreneurs and small businesses and families, Congress needs to make that tax relief permanent. We also need a reformed Tax Code that is simple and fair and easy to understand. I'm looking forward to Ben's advice on the definition of a good, reformed Tax Code.

To keep America the economic leader of the world, we must recognize that the money we spend belongs to the taxpayers, not to the Government. We'll insist on a budget that tames the spending appetite of the Federal Government and stays on track to cut the deficit in half by 2009.

To keep America the economic leader of the world, we must free our small businesses from needless regulations and protect honest job creators from junk lawsuits. Congress needs to pass the asbestos liability bill—now. And this year we also need to pass medical liability. To keep health care more affordable and accessible, we've got to work to pass association health plans and continue to expand health savings accounts. To ensure America's future prosperity, we'll continue to insist upon high results and measuring achievements so that every child can learn to read and write and add and subtract.

To keep America the economic leader of the world, we will strengthen the institutions that underpin our society. Americans need to know that if they work hard their whole lives, they'll be able to retire with confidence and peace of mind, so we're working to save Social Security for a younger generation of workers. We want to make sure the next generation of retirees will be as secure in their retirement as today's retirees.

Americans will require a reliable and affordable energy supply if we want to be the leader of the world, and so that's why I proposed a comprehensive energy policy 4 years ago to reduce our dependence upon foreign oil. Now is the time for the United States Congress to get an energy bill on my desk that will allow us to diversify away from the hydrocarbon society in which we live.

In this new century, American prosperity will increasingly depend on our ability to sell

our goods and services overseas. We need to pass CAFTA, the Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement, to show the world our commitment to free and fair trade and to stand squarely with those young democracies in our own hemisphere.

A vibrant economy requires a strong and confident economic leadership, and I am happy to have Ben's experience. I want to thank Ben for agreeing to serve at an important time for our economy, and I look forward to his wise counsel. Congratulations.

*[At this point, Chairman Bernanke made brief remarks.]*

**The President.** Hold off on a happy birthday for a minute. *[Laughter]*

*[Chairman Bernanke made further remarks.]*

**The President.** Good job, Ben. Thanks for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:26 a.m. in Room 450 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Chairman Bernanke.

### **Satellite Remarks to the Southern Baptist Convention Annual Meeting** *June 21, 2005*

Bobby, thank you very much for your kind introduction. And thank you for letting me address this convention. I'm so honored to be able to speak to you from Washington, DC. And Bobby, I appreciate you. I appreciate you for wearing our Nation's uniform and for earning the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart as an Army officer. I know you share in my sentiments when I say that we are grateful for the goodness and courage of the men and women of our military. We're grateful for the support and sacrifices of our military families. And I want to thank the Southern Baptists' campaign to send out postcards to our troops in the field. I appreciate what you're doing. Our men and women appreciate even more; they appreciate your prayerful support as they protect our liberty.

Laura and I also want to—at least I want to tell you, on behalf of Laura, that we really

appreciate your prayers, the prayers of our Baptist friends that have sustained us and uplifted us. I cannot tell you the number of times Americans have said to me, "Mr. President, I pray for you and your family." And I tell them the same thing I'm telling you now, that is the greatest gift anyone can give to me and Laura, and thank you for your prayers.

From the landing of the pilgrims at Plymouth Rock, the men and women who founded this Nation in freedom relied on prayer to protect it and preserve it. In 1789, President George Washington called America's Baptists the firm friends of liberty. Today, another President, George W., thanks you, because more than two centuries later, you remain firm in your dedication to God and country.

You believe that the ideal of religious liberty is a free church in a free state. And you know that freedom is a divine gift that carries serious responsibilities. We are called by our Creator to use this gift of freedom to build a more compassionate society, where families are strong, life is valued, and the poor and the sick can count on the love and help of their neighbors.

Building a more compassionate society starts with preserving the source of compassion, the family. Strong families teach children to live moral lives and help us pass down the values that define a caring society. And Southern Baptists are practicing compassion by defending the family and the sacred institution of marriage. Because marriage is a sacred institution and the foundation of society, it should not be redefined by local officials and activist judges. For the good of families, children, and society, I support a constitutional amendment to protect the institution of marriage.

And for the good of our legal system, I will also continue to nominate Federal judges who faithfully interpret the law and do not legislate from the bench. Every judicial nominee deserves an up-or-down vote on the floor of the United States Senate, and I thank you for your strong support of the fairminded jurists I have named to the Federal courts.

Building a more compassionate society also depends on building a culture of life.

A compassionate society protects and defends its most vulnerable members at every stage of life. A compassionate society supports the principles of ethical science. When we seek to improve human life, we must always preserve human dignity, so that's why we stand against cloning. A compassionate society rejects partial-birth abortion. And I signed a law to end that brutal practice, and my administration will continue working to defend that law. To advance a culture of life, I was proud to sign the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act and the Unborn Victims of Violence Act.

A compassionate society will not sanction the creation of life only to destroy it. At the White House, I recently met with 21 remarkable families, each of whom either adopted or gave up for adoption frozen embryos that remained after fertility treatments. The children I met confirm our shared belief that America can pursue the tremendous possibilities of science and, at the same time, remain an ethical and compassionate society. With your continued dedication and work, we will continue to build a culture of life in America, and America will be better off for it.

Finally, building a more compassionate society requires that we mobilize our Nation's armies of compassion to help the poor, the sick, and those who hurt. America's faith-based institutions change hearts every day. And we depend on the work of these organizations to bring hope to harsh places. Yet for too long, the Governments have discriminated against faith-based programs, just because they have a cross or a Star of David or a crescent on the wall. And that's why I signed an Executive order that said that faith-based groups providing social services are entitled to the same access to Federal money as other groups. I am proud that we have now opened billions of dollars in grant money to competition that includes our faith-based charities. For example, my administration awarded College Park Baptist Church in Orlando, Florida, \$5.8 million to build 68 homes for low-income seniors.

Because faith-based groups should never have to forfeit their religious liberty to get Federal dollars—and that's an important concept—we want your help. We want your

love, but at the same time, you do not have to forget the mission of faith or ignore the mission of faith that calls you to action in the first place. And that's why the Executive order I signed should be codified into Federal law. Congress needs to pass charitable choice legislation to forever guarantee equal treatment for our faith-based organizations when they compete for Federal funds.

Southern Baptists are the soldiers in the armies of compassion at home and abroad. You're bringing hope to the continent of Africa, and I thank you for that. In Uganda, Southern Baptists have emphasized abstinence and helped as that country reduced the percentage of people infected with HIV by more than two-thirds in less than a decade and a half. In Sudan and other countries across Africa, the Samaritan's Purse ministry provides food and water and medical care and education to suffering people.

Helping Africa is a mission we share. I recently announced \$674 million in emergency humanitarian aid to Africa. We and our African partners have together brought lifesaving AIDS treatment to more than 200,000 people in sub-Saharan Africa. We're on track to meeting a 5-year goal of treating nearly 2 million African adults and children for HIV/AIDS.

Service to others is a long Baptist tradition. One of the most popular hymns in the Baptist hymnal cries out to the Lord, "Thy compassions, they fail not." The compassion of Southern Baptists toward your neighbors in America and around the world has helped heal broken hearts. Where there is despair, you provide hope, and you help those who need love find love. As you work to feed the hungry and provide shelter for the homeless, you are changing America and the world for the better—one heart, one soul, and one conscience at a time.

I've come to your convention via video to thank you for all you do. Thank you for your love for your country. Thank you for your love for your neighbor.

May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke by satellite at 11:57 a.m. from the Map Room at the White House to the convention meeting in Nashville, TN. In

his remarks, he referred to Bobby Welch, president, Southern Baptist Convention.

### Remarks at Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant in Lusby, Maryland

June 22, 2005

**The President.** Thanks for the warm welcome. Thanks for letting me interrupt your workday. [Laughter] I hope it's okay. [Laughter] I really appreciate you having me. It's a good—I like to get out of Washington, and I like to pay a visit to our neighbors outside the Beltway. So I appreciate you letting me come by.

Thanks for the tour of this important facility. I want to thank those back at the control room for being so gracious and kind and taking time to explain all the dials and gauges. [Laughter] I can play like I understand what I saw. [Laughter]

But one thing is for certain, that when the people of Maryland flip a switch and see their lights come on, they need to thank the people working here at this plant. This plant is providing a lot of important power for people all over the State of Maryland. I've come to talk about economic security. I've come to talk about the need to get a good energy policy out of the Congress. And there's no better place to do it than right here in Calvert Cliffs. Thanks for letting me come.

Laura didn't come with me. She's out west with our daughter Jenna in the Grand Canyon. How about that? [Laughter] She's doing a great job as the First Lady. She is a fabulous wife and a great mom, and she sends her best to all the good folks who work here at Calvert Cliffs.

I appreciate the Secretary of Energy joining me today. He's a good man. He knows a lot about the subject, you'll be pleased to hear. I was teasing him—he taught at MIT and—do you have a Ph.D.?

**Secretary Bodman.** Yes.

**The President.** Yes, Ph.D. [Laughter] Now I want you to pay careful attention to this. He's the Ph.D., and I'm the C student, but notice who is the adviser and who is the President. [Laughter] He's a good man, and I really appreciate working with Sam to achieve a great national goal, which is be-

come less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

I appreciate Nils Diaz, who is the Chairman of the NRC, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Thanks for coming. I want to thank Governor Bob Ehrlich from the great State of Maryland. I appreciate you coming, Governor. Thanks for being here. He's a pro-jobs, pro-growth, pro-small-business Governor. And I enjoy working with him to help create an environment that helps people realize their dreams.

I want to thank George Vanderheyden, who is the site vice president of the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant. He represents—at least on the tour—represented a lot of the good folks who work here. I want to say something about the folks who work here. I want to thank you for your hard work, and I want to thank you for your patriotism and your love of your country. I understand that six of your fellow employees are now in Iraq. And for the families and the coworkers here, I say: Thank you, on behalf of a grateful nation, for supporting these good folks. These folks are there defeating terrorists who cannot stand the thought of democracy and freedom, defeating them there so we do not have to face them here at home. These folks are there spreading democracy and freedom, understanding that a democratic world is more likely to leave a foundation for peace for our children. So I want to thank you for your sacrifices and thank you for supporting those good folks.

I want to thank the president and the CEO of Constellation Energy, Mayo Shattuck. That's a pretty cool first name, isn't it, Mayo. [Laughter] Pass the Mayo. [Laughter] His wife, Molly, appreciated that. [Laughter] I want to thank Mike Wallace, Skip Bowman. Thank you all. Thanks for letting me come by.

As you know, I'm an optimistic person, and I hope you are as well. These are incredibly hopeful times for our country, and the state of our economy is strong. And Americans from all walks of life have got good reason to be confident about the future of this country. Let me just give you some of the facts. Over the past year, America's economy has grown faster than any major industrialized economy in the world. In other words, we're

leading growth when it comes to major industrialized economies.

Over the past 2 years, America has added more than 3.5 million new jobs. The unemployment rate is down to 5.1 percent. That's lower than the average rate in the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s. In Maryland, the unemployment is 4.2 percent. People are working. I'm proud to report that more Americans are working today than ever before in our Nation's history.

Our economy is sustaining low inflation rates, low interest rates, and low mortgage rates. Small businesses are flourishing. Families are taking home more of what they earn. Your after-tax incomes are up. More Americans are going to college than at any other time in our Nation's history. More Americans own their own businesses than ever before. And homeownership in America is at an all-time high. This strong and growing economy is lifting our standard of living, and that's important because that means opportunity is being spread throughout the country.

Now listen, I understand parts of our country are still struggling from the effects of the recession and the attacks. I know some workers are concerned about jobs going overseas. I know some are concerned about gaining the skills necessary to compete in the global market that we live in. I know that families are worried about health care and retirement. And I know moms and dads are worried about their children finding good jobs.

See, even though the numbers are still good, there are still worries out there in the country. And these are the challenges of a rapidly changing economy. And we've got the responsibility in Government to take the side of our working families. So we're moving aggressively. We're not taking the good numbers for granted. We're moving aggressively with a pro-growth, pro-worker set of economic policies that'll enhance economic security in the country.

Economic security happens for our workers and families when we keep your taxes low. It happens when we open up new markets for American products. It happens when we stop the spread of junk lawsuits. We're going to create economic security for moms and dads by making health care more afford-

able, by guaranteeing a quality education for every child, and ensuring dignity in retirement. And that's what I've come to talk to you about today.

The United States Congress has now an opportunity to create more economic security by passing an energy bill that will make energy more affordable and reliable for generations to come. Energy is vital to the future of this country. Everybody who works here knows that. Everybody who turns on their light switch should know that. It's obvious that we can't expand our economy if businesses don't have energy. You've got to have energy if you're going to be a farmer. You got to have energy if you're just trying to raise a family. If you're a baseball fan, you need energy. I mean, try going to a night ball game—[laughter]—without any lights. How about the Nats and the Orioles, by the way, speaking about baseball?

Our Nation needs to confront a basic problem. We're using energy faster than we're producing it. And the problem has been building for a long period of time, because we really haven't confronted this problem. That's why I submitted this strategy to Congress when we first got up to Washington. Over the past decade, America's energy consumption has been growing about 40 times faster than our energy production. Think about that. Four years ago, I said to Congress, "Let's deal with this problem now."

The problem is, there's been a lot of debate and a lot of politics but no results. So now is the time, for the sake of our consumers and business folks and people who are trying to heat their homes in the winter and cool them in the summer and find reasonable gas prices at the—gasoline prices at the pump, it's time for Congress to stop the debate, stop the inaction, and pass an energy bill.

And I appreciate Chairman Barton in the House, that moved a good—where he'd been able to move a good bill to the floor, and it got voted on. I appreciate Senator Domenici of New Mexico for moving a bill out of committee. It's on the Senate floor. They need to get it passed out of the Senate. They need to reconcile their differences. They need to get me a bill before they go home in August. And I'm looking forward to signing

that bill, and it's going to be an important part of developing a national energy strategy.

Look, I recognize and I hope you recognize that when I sign that bill, your gasoline prices aren't going to drop. This problem has been long in the making. But by addressing it now, we're going to be able to say, "Life's going to be better for our children and grandchildren."

To make this country less dependent on foreign sources of oil, we need to do the following things: One, we need to encourage our citizens to be better conservers of energy, and technology will help a lot. There's some incentives in the bill to encourage conservation.

We need to make more efficient use of existing energy sources like oil, coal, and natural gas. We've got a lot of coal in this country, about 250 years' worth of coal. I'm convinced that with proper use of technology, that we will be able to develop coal-fired electricity plants that have got zero emissions. We're spending a fair amount of your money to make sure that we can achieve that objective. I think it's a good use of your money. It's a way to help make sure we use an abundant resource that we have here in America without polluting the air.

We need to diversify our energy supply by increasing the use of alternative and renewable sources like ethanol, which is made from corn, or biodiesel made from soybeans. I went to a soybean refinery the other day in Virginia where they're making diesel fuel from soybeans. With the right, proper use of your dollars to encourage research, it's very conceivable that source of energy will become economic. And that makes sense, doesn't it? Can you imagine walking down the road here in the farmlands of Maryland, see a guy growing soybeans; you say, "Thanks, buddy, for making us less dependent on foreign sources of oil."

So there's some smart things that this energy bill will encourage the country to do, including solar power and hydrogen. I don't know if you remember I laid out, I thought—I know—an interesting initiative. It said, "Why don't we explore how we use hydrogen power—hydrogen to power our cars, to help us diversify away from dependency upon hydrocarbons." And I believe we can develop

a hydrogen-power automobile over the next decade or two. I think it will be cool if your young son is able to take a driver's test in a hydrogen-powered automobile that has got zero emissions and, at the same time, will make us less dependent on hydrocarbons which we have to import from foreign countries.

We need to modernize the electricity grid and make reliability standards mandatory. We also need to make—get rid of some of these laws that prohibit the capacity for those people who are building transmission lines and powering our cities and States to be able to raise money in an effective way.

We need to help large energy users like India and China become more efficient. And by helping them develop efficiency standards, it'll take pressure off of global demand for hydrocarbons. One of the reasons why your price of gasoline is going up is, one, we're dependent on foreign sources of oil; and two, economies like China and India are demanding more oil in a limited supply—in a market that's of limited supply, which causes the price of oil to go up, which causes the price of gasoline to go up. So it makes sense to help those who are demanding more energy to be more efficient users of energy.

And I'll take that message to the G-8 in Scotland here, right after the Fourth of July celebrations, to say, "Look, let's work together on a comprehensive energy plan to help these new consumers of energy be better users of energy."

The energy bill will also help us expand our use of the one energy source that is completely domestic, plentiful in quantity, environmentally friendly, and able to generate massive amounts of electricity, and that's nuclear power.

Today, there are 103 nuclear plants in America. They produce about 20 percent of the Nation's electricity without producing a single pound of air pollution or greenhouse gases. I think you told me that 20 percent of all Maryland's electricity is produced here at this plant. Without these nuclear plants, America would release nearly 700 million metric tons more carbon dioxide into the air each year. That's about the same amount of carbon dioxide that now comes from all our cars and trucks.

Across this State, Maryland has looked to Calvert Cliffs to keep their lights on and to keep their land, air, and water clean. In other words, you're generating electricity and helping the environment at the same time. That's an important combination of talents, and it's an important combination of—that the American people have got to understand is possible when we expand nuclear power.

Nuclear power is one of America's safest sources of energy. People out here practice a lot of safety; they're good at it. You've got nuclear engineers and experts that spend a lot of time maintaining a safe environment. Just ask the people that work here. You wouldn't be coming here if it wasn't safe, I suspect. *[Laughter]*

Some Americans remember the problems of the nuclear plants—that the nuclear plants had back in the 1970s. We all remember those days. That frightened a lot of folks. People have got to understand that advances in sciences and engineering and plant design have made nuclear plants far safer—far safer than ever before. Workers and managers are trained and committed and spend hours working on nuclear safety, and that's good. And they do such a good job here at Calvert Cliffs that this was the first nuclear plant in America to get its operating license renewed, and I congratulate you.

There is a growing consensus that more nuclear power will lead to a cleaner, safer nation. Slowly but surely, people are beginning to look at the facts. One of the reasons I've come to this plant is to help people understand the difference between fact and fiction. Yet, even though there has been a growing consensus over time, America has not ordered a nuclear plant since the 1970s. By contrast, France has built 58 nuclear plants in the same period of time. By contrast, China now has 8 nuclear plants in the works and plans to build at least 40 more over the next two decades.

In the 21st century, our Nation will need more electricity—more safe, clean, reliable electricity. It is time for this country to start building nuclear powerplants again.

We're taking practical steps to encourage new construction of powerplants. Three years ago, we launched the Nuclear Power 2010 Initiative, which is a \$1.1 billion part-

nership between Government and industry to coordinate the ordering of new plants. The Department of Energy is working with Congress to reduce uncertainty in the nuclear plant licensing process. Look, you don't want to go out and build a plant, spend all the money, and have the license jerked at the last minute. *[Laughter]* Nobody's going to spend money if that's the case.

And so we want to have a rational way to move forward, and one rational way to move forward is to provide incentives for new construction such as Federal risk insurance, to help the builders of the first four plants—that's what's now embedded in the energy bill—first four plants against lawsuits and bureaucratic obstacles and other delays beyond their control.

In other words, there's a rational approach for the Federal Government: On the one hand, to convince the American people nuclear power is safe, that it makes sense for our consumers, it makes sense for the long-term economic security of our country to expand nuclear power; and on the other hand, say to those who are risking capital, "Here's some help. Here's some ways we can provide incentive for you to move forward with the construction of plants."

Delivering a good energy bill is part of a comprehensive agenda, but there's some other things we need to do. One of the last things that we need to do to this economy is to take money out of your pocket and fuel Government. I firmly believe that one of the reasons we recovered the way we did after the recession and September the 11th is because of the tax cuts we passed. I believe that if you've got more money in your pocket, you can spend it wiser than the Federal Government can spend it. And therefore, I think Congress ought to send a strong signal to families and small businesses and risktakers about taxes, and that is: We're going to keep your taxes low. They need to make the tax relief we passed permanent.

Secondly, we need to do something about the Tax Code itself. It's complicated. It's really thick. It makes—it does not reward entrepreneurship. It's unfair. So I called some Republicans and Democrats who care about this issue together. I said, "Come up with a plan

to simplify the Tax Code so people can understand it and so it helps achieve some objectives, which is fairness, simplicity, easy to understand.” I mean, you shouldn’t have to—have to hire all kinds of folks to figure out what’s in the Tax Code. And so once we get those recommendations, I look forward to working with Congress to not only keep your taxes low but to make the code simple and easy to understand.

Families understand you’ve got to live within a budget. That’s something that Congress needs to understand as well. So I submitted the most disciplined proposal for non-security discretionary spending since Ronald Reagan was in the White House. I say “non-security”; my attitude is, when we got anybody in harm’s way, we’re going to spend whatever it takes to make sure they’ve got the very best equipment and training so they can do their mission. We owe that to the families, and we owe that to their loved ones.

But I’m talking about nonsecurity discretionary spending. And it’s important for Congress to adhere to the budgets they passed. And by doing so, we will reduce the deficit in half by 2009. In other words, we can meet priorities. We can keep your taxes low. And if Congress is fiscally wise and sound with your money, we can reduce that deficit in half by 2009. I’m looking forward to working with them to be wise about how we spend your money. Sometimes it’s interesting in Washington, you hear, “Well, we’re spending the Government’s money.” That’s—when you hear somebody say “the Government’s money,” get a little nervous, because they have seemed—they seem to have forgotten where that money comes from. See, it’s not the Government’s money. It’s your money that we’re spending in Washington, and we’ve got to be wise about we spend it in order to keep this economy growing.

Another threat to economic security is junk lawsuits. Frivolous lawsuits help drive up the total costs of America’s tort system to more than \$240 billion a year. That’s a burden far greater than any other major industrialized nation, by the way. In order to remain competitive, in order to keep jobs here in America, in order to make sure that people can make a decent living, we’ve got to do something about these junk lawsuits.

It’s one thing to have a legal system where people can—who have got a legitimate claim can go take care of it. It’s the junk lawsuits that run up the cost of doing business, junk lawsuits that make it a—America less competitive. These junk lawsuits cost people jobs, and they raise your prices. And so I’ve been working with Congress and call upon Congress, if we’re interested in economic security for the future, let’s do something about frivolous lawsuits.

And we’re making progress. We got a good bill to curb abuse of class-action lawsuits. There’s more to do. I think we need to get something done on the asbestos issue, have a fair bill that says, “We’re going to treat the workers who’ve been harmed well.” They deserve to be treated. They deserve to be focused on—not the trial lawyers. And at the same time, provide certainty in the system. Legal reform is a necessary part of keeping this economy going.

And so, by the way, is opening up new markets for America’s producers and farmers. We got a chance to break down some trade barriers. I told the people when I was campaigning, I said, “Look, I’m for free trade. I’m also for fair trade. I just want to be treated fairly. If we treat you one way, you treat us the same way.”

There’s a debate raging in Congress now about the Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement. It’s called CAFTA. Let me tell you the facts about this trade agreement. I don’t know if you realize this, but now 80 percent of the goods from Central America come into our country duty-free. Yet, we’re not treated the same way down there. Now, that doesn’t make sense to me. It seems like to me that it would make sense if we say, “Okay, your goods are already coming in here; treat us the same way. Just level the playing field. You’ve got 44 million consumers. Open up your markets to our goods just like we’ve done to you.” That’s what CAFTA is all about.

See, I have a different approach than some of the economic isolationists who oppose this agreement. I believe they’re pessimistic about America. I believe American workers can compete with anybody, anywhere, anytime, if the rules are fair. And so they need to pass CAFTA to be fair to our farmers and

ranchers and workers and small-business owners.

Millions of Americans lack economic security because of the rising cost of health care. Did you know this, that more than half of the uninsured work for small businesses? Isn't that interesting? One way to address health care is to say, "Small businesses ought to be allowed to pool risk so they can buy insurance at the same discount that big companies are able to do." Congress needs to pass what's called association health plans to let small businesses be able to enter the market in a way that is—they're able to spread risk across a lot of employees.

We need to offer incentives for small businesses and low-income workers to open tax-free health savings accounts. If you're running a small business, look into what's called HSAs, health savings accounts. They're really interesting products that'll let your worker manage his or her own money and, at the same time, make health care more affordable for the small business—or large business for that matter. HSAs are an interesting, innovative way for people to get good health care insurance that puts you in charge of the decisionmaking process, that lets you make the decisions and, at the same time, save money for your health care concerns tax-free.

We need to encourage a national marketplace for health insurance. In other words, workers ought to be allowed to go on the Internet and purchase health care across State lines. We've got to create more demand within the health care place. Right now, for example, if you live in Maryland, you only can buy health insurance out of Maryland, the health insurance that is certified out of Maryland. I think you ought to be allowed to go on the Internet, and if you can find a better product for you in Colorado, you ought to be allowed to do that. In other words, we ought to have a consumer-friendly system, where people are encouraged to go out and make choices that meet their needs.

We need to expand health information technology. If you've really looked at your own industry here or industries across America, they're using information technology to modernize and become more efficient. Health care hasn't done that yet. If you look at your file, your medical file, they're gen-

erally handwritten. And knowing how doctors write, it's hard to read what they've written. [Laughter] But it's an inefficient system. And so to bring health care into the 21st century, we're working on an information technology initiative.

To reduce the cost of medicine for every doctor, every patient, and every business, it's time for Congress to pass medical liability reform. One of the biggest problems we got here in America is junk lawsuits running good doctors out of practice. We've got ob-gyns leaving the practice of medicine all across this country because they can't afford to stay in business. And that's not right.

When I first came to Washington, I said, "Well, maybe medical liability reform was a State issue." I was the Governor of a State, so I was kind of—felt like we could do a better job in our respective States of dealing with medical liability until I looked at the cost of what these junk lawsuits were doing to your Federal budget.

See, if you think you're going to get sued, oftentimes you practice more medicine than necessary. It's called the defensive practice of medicine. Ask your local doctor, and he'll tell you what I mean by that. If you are getting sued a lot, your premiums go up. And in that the Federal Government pays a lot of health care costs through Medicaid, Medicare, veterans health benefits, we're spending a lot of money at the Federal level as a result of these lawsuits.

And so I decided that this was a national problem that required a national solution. And for the sake of affordable and available health care, Congress needs to pass medical liability reform. And I urge them—I urge them as Members of the United States Senate, where the bill is stuck, not to listen to the trial lawyers but listen to the patients and doctors all across America.

To make sure that we have economic security for generations to come, we've got to make sure we have quality education for every child. You can't compete unless your children can read and write and add and subtract. The No Child Left Behind Act we passed is challenging what I've called the soft bigotry of low expectations. That means you have your expectations so low, you just move the children through the system without

measuring whether or not they can read and write. In other words, if you don't think certain children can read and write, the easy path is just move them through. I have a—I had a different view when I came to Washington. I said, "I believe every child can read and write, and I expect every child to read and write, and in return for Federal money, we want schools to show us whether or not children are learning to read and write." That's how you achieve results: You measure.

And so we've asked schools, we said, "Look, we're giving you a lot of money out of the Federal level, so in return for that money, just show us. That's all you got to do. Show us whether the curriculum you're using is working. Show us whether or not children are learning to read and write."

And it's working here in Maryland. You're doing a good job, Governor; so are your education people, the teachers all across this State. And here's why I can say that: Since the No Child Left Behind Act took effect, reading and math scores have increased in all 24 of Maryland's public school systems. How do you know? Because we measure. We're not guessing. We used to guess. Now we measure, so we know.

In 2003, 39 percent of Hispanic third graders in Maryland met the standards in reading—39 percent. We have an achievement gap in America. Two years later, more than 63 percent are meeting the standards. In other words, when you measure, you can determine whether or not what you're using in the classroom is working. And if not, it gives you reason to change.

The gap—in that the gap is closing all across the country is really good news for the future. We've got to make sure every child from every background, every part of America, gains the basic skills necessary to become employable in the 21st century, which means I think we need to expand the high standards and accountability of No Child Left Behind to our public high schools so that the high school diploma means something. When you graduate, it means you can—means you're employable, or it means you can go to a community college, or it means you go to higher education. That's what we ought to be doing. This country ought to maintain high stand-

ards and strong accountability to make sure we have economic security in the future.

And finally, Americans need to know that if they work hard all their lives, they can retire with dignity. You might have heard, I've decided to address the Social Security issue. [Laughter] Let me tell you why I've addressed the issue. One, we have a problem, and secondly, I believe that the job description of a President ought to be, this person ought to confront problems, not pass them on to future Presidents and future generations. I believe that's my job.

If you're getting a check or you've got a mother or a grandmother getting a check, tell them that person has no problem when it comes to Social Security. You're going to get your check. I don't care what the politicians say or what the rhetoric—how heated the rhetoric becomes. Seems like every time I've run for office, they say, "If he gets in, he's going to take away your check." Well, people are still getting their checks, and I got in. [Laughter]

But here's the problem—here is the problem: About 73 million of us are getting ready to retire. I'm kind of looking around trying to figure out who the baby boomers are. [Laughter] Generally, people without hair or gray hair. [Laughter] My retirement date, for example, my age when I'm eligible for retirement benefits happens to fall on 2008, which is a convenient year for me to be—[laughter]—be in a position to retire.

But a lot of us are getting ready to retire. As a matter of fact, I told you 73 million baby boomers are getting ready to retire. That contrasts with the 40 million folks who have retired today. So you got a lot more of us getting ready to enter the system. And we're going to live longer. And interestingly enough—I'm sure you're aware of this—but Congress over the past years has said, "Vote for me. I'm going to promise you better benefits." And so my generation, our generation, is going to get greater benefits than the previous generation. You've got a lot of people living longer, being promised greater benefits, with fewer people paying in the system. In 1950, there was about 16 workers to one paying into the system. Today, there's 3.3 workers to one. Soon there will be two workers to one. You've got a lot of youngsters

coming up carrying a hefty burden for old guys like me.

And what that means is, is in 2017—which I guess seems like a long time to people in Washington, DC. If you’ve got a 2-year horizon, 2017 seems like ages. But 2017 is right around the corner. It’s 12 years from now. If you’ve got a child 4 years old and you can get your driver’s license at 16, they’ll be driving before you know it. By the way, it’s a little nerve-racking. [*Laughter*]

And so I think it’s time to act, and if we don’t, we’re going to start running some serious cash deficits, because in 2017, the system goes in the red; 2027, it’s about 200 billion a year in the red; 2030, it’s about 300 billion a year in the red. I know this is a tough issue for some of them in Washington. And the tendency is, “Let’s just don’t worry about it. Mr. President, why did you bring it up? Let’s just pass it on.”

The reason I brought it up is I cannot travel our country looking at young workers who are paying payroll taxes into a system that I know is going broke. And so now is the time to come together, both Republicans and Democrats, forget all that party business, and come together and solve this problem permanently, forever.

And I put some ideas on the table. And I expect people from both parties to put ideas on the table, and so do the American people. They’re tired of this partisan bickering. When they see a problem, they want the American people to come and solve it. They tell me, “Well, you’re not making much progress on Social Security.” Well, I’ll tell you one thing I am making progress on: The overwhelming number of Americans understand we have a problem. And I suspect the overwhelming number of Americans say, “If there’s a problem in Washington, how come you’re not doing anything about it?”

And I’m going to continue talking about this issue. And I put a plan out there that says you can’t retire—if you’ve worked all your life, a hard-working person, you shouldn’t retire in poverty. And it’s a plan, by the way, that says benefits will grow at the rate of wage increases for lower income Americans and the rate of inflation for the top 1 percent. And that solves about—a significant portion of the problem.

And I also believe something else. I believe younger workers ought to be able to take some of their own money, if that’s what they choose, and set it aside in a personal savings account. In other words, you’re paying payroll taxes in a system that’s going broke. By the way, they call it pay-as-you-go. A lot of people in Washington—in the country probably think the payroll—the Social Security system is, “I’m paying my payroll taxes, and the Government’s holding my money for me and giving it back to me when I retire.” I hate to tell you, that’s not the way it works, and it hasn’t worked that way for a long time. We take your money, and we pay out to the retirees, and if we have money left over, like we have now, we’re spending it on Government programs. And all that’s left is a file cabinet full of IOUs in West Virginia, and I went and saw the file. You’ll be happy to hear the paper’s there—[*laughter*]—but not your money. In other words, all you’re left with is an IOU.

What I think you ought to be left with, if you so choose, is some assets. And so I believe younger workers ought to be allowed to take some of their own money, if they want to, as a part of a Social Security system, and set it up in a conservative mix of bonds and stocks or only bonds or whatever you choose to use. It’s kind of like a 401(k). I suspect you’ve got a 401(k) plan here.

I went to an automobile plant in Mississippi. I said, “Anybody here have a—manage their own money as part of their retirement?” These were line workers. These weren’t the office workers. There were the people out there making the automobiles, people from all walks of life, all income levels, all education levels. And I’ll bet you 90 percent of the folks raised their hands. In other words, they say, “We’re used to that, Mr. President. We’re managing our own money. We’re opening up our statement on a regular basis, watching our money grow.”

Right now, if you—your money in Social Security is growing at about 1.8 percent. That doesn’t seem like a very good deal to me. We ought to—if you so choose, we ought to let you earn a reasonable rate of money—a reasonable rate of return on your own money. And that money grows over time, and it compounds. And if you’re a young worker

at age 20 and you start setting aside some of your own payroll taxes in a reasonable rate of return, you're going to watch that money grow. And it's your asset, and the Government can't spend it on what they want, and they can't take it away, and you can pass it on to whomever you choose.

And let me tell you something about personal accounts. It was such an attractive idea that the United States Congress said as part of their retirement plan, they're going to let Members of the United States Senate or House of Representatives take some of their own money and set it aside in a personal account. And my attitude is this: If personal—voluntary personal savings accounts are good enough for the Members of the United States Congress, they're good enough for workers all across America.

And so here's a way forward, a way to encourage economic security and smart ways to make sure this economy continues to grow so people can realize dreams. That's really what Government ought to do. It ought to create that environment in which people are able to realize dreams and own a home and own your own business, own and manage your own retirement account. I love the idea of an ownership society. The more people own something in America, the better off America is, as far as I'm concerned. The more people own—the more assets people own, the more independent Americans are. They feel confident about the future. And I'm confident about our future. I don't think there's any problem we can't solve when we put our minds to it.

Things are going fine right now. But my job is to keep looking down the road. My job is to figure out how to keep this economy growing. My job is to get Congress to do—make wise policy so the entrepreneurial spirit is strong, so people can realize dreams, so this country remains the great beacon of hope that it has been in the past.

I want to thank you for giving me a chance to come by and visit with you. May God bless you and your families, and may God continue to bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Michael J. Wallace, president, Constellation Generation Group; and Adm. Frank L. "Skip" Bowman, USN (Ret.), president

and chief executive officer, Nuclear Energy Institute.

### Remarks in a Discussion on Strengthening Social Security in Silver Spring, Maryland

June 23, 2005

**The President.** Thanks for the warm reception. Ben, you always draw a good crowd. [Laughter] He claims he went to this high school.

**Ben Stein.** I did—class of '62.

**The President.** Yes, pretty soon you'll be receiving a Social Security check.

**Mr. Stein.** I hope so. I hope my son and my grandchildren will too.

**The President.** Listen, thank you all for giving us a chance to come and visit with you about Social Security. Before I begin, I do want to thank Laurie Checco, who is the business manager at Montgomery Blair High School. Thanks for letting us come by. I appreciate you opening this beautiful facility.

I want to thank Mark Mackey and Linda Hollands, who are part of the National Retirement Planning Coalition for sponsoring this event. It's important that there be an open dialog about Social Security, the problems inherent with Social Security, and the opportunities to fix Social Security. And that's why I've come today. So thank you all for sponsoring this.

You know, some in Washington wish I hadn't brought it up. [Laughter] They say, "Why would you bring up Social Security? I mean, after all, we might have to run for election." [Laughter] "Why would you bring up such a difficult topic?" And the answer is because I see a problem, and I believe my job is to address problems and not pass those problems on to future Presidents, future Congresses, or future generations. And here's why I see a problem.

Before I describe the problem, I do want to congratulate one of my predecessors, Franklin Roosevelt, for doing something really smart and really wise, and that is setting up a safety net for retirees. Social Security has worked. It's been a very important part of a lot of people's lives.

And the first thing I want to say to those who receive a Social Security check today: Nothing changes for you; you're in good shape. The system is solvent for people receiving a check. The reason I say that is because I understand how politics works. You see, the surest way to stop something from going forward or stop a dialog or stop reform if reform is needed, is to scare people. And in the past, people have used the Social Security issue to scare seniors. They say, "Old George W. gets elected, you're not going to get your check," or, "If this goes through, you're not going to get your check." You know, that's kind of shameless politics.

And so I'm spending a lot of time not only describing the problem but assuring seniors that no matter what the rhetoric is coming out of Washington, you are going to get your check. So you need to tell your grandparents, they're going to get their checks. All of us, whether you're Republican or Democrat, know how important this program is to a lot of seniors around the country. The question is not whether the seniors will get their checks. The question is whether younger Americans will be able to have a safety net, a retirement system just like today's generation gets.

And here's why we have a problem. There's a lot of people like me getting ready to retire. [Laughter] In my case, I reach retirement age in 2008, which turns out to be a fairly convenient date. [Laughter] Get it? [Laughter]

About 70 million-plus of us are getting ready to retire. You're so old, you don't even qualify as a baby boomer. [Laughter]

**Mr. Stein.** Thank you, Mr. President.

**The President.** No, don't worry about it. [Laughter]

There's now about 40 million retirees. So you get a sense of the problem. In other words, a whole bunch of people are getting ready to retire, and we're living longer than the previous generation, and we've been promised greater benefits than the previous generation.

And so you've got a lot of people getting ready to retire who have been promised greater benefits. The problem we have is that there are fewer people paying into the system. In 1950, there were about 16 workers

for every beneficiary. Today, there's 3.3 beneficiary—workers for every beneficiary. Soon there will be two workers for every beneficiary. You've got a lot of people living longer, getting greater benefits, with fewer people paying for us. And the system, as a result, starts going into the red when the baby boomer generation begins to retire.

As a matter of fact, it starts going into the red in 2017. I know that sounds like a long time for people in Washington. It's not very long if you're entering the workplace. In other words, you're paying into a system that starts going broke in 2017, into the red. And every year thereafter, after 2017, the problem gets worse. In 2027, it's \$200 billion in the hole. In 2030, it's \$300 billion in the hole.

See, Social Security is not a trust. It's a pay-as-you-go system. You pay, and we go ahead and spend. You pay payroll taxes. You work hard. You put payroll taxes into the system, and the Federal Government spends your payroll taxes on retirees. And with money left over, it goes for Government programs. And all that's left is a file cabinet of IOUs. In other words, some think that we're taking your money, and we're holding it for you, and then we're going to give it back to you when you retire. That's not the way it works. It's a pay-as-you-go system, and the pay-as-you-go system starts going into the red. And it gets worse and worse and worse.

As a matter of fact, every year we wait, it's going to cost us \$600 billion to fix it—\$600 billion a year to fix it. In other words, the longer we wait, the harder it is for me to be able to look at younger Americans and say, "The money you're putting in the system is going to be there for you."

Now, if you're older, you're going to get your check. If you're born prior to 1950, you're fine. If you're a younger American, you need to pay attention to this issue. I think this is a generational issue. Grandmothers and granddads have nothing to worry about. Their grandchildren have got a lot to worry about.

My strategy has been to travel the country saying, "We've got a problem." I think pretty well most Americans now understand we do have a problem. And the reason I knew that was the first step that needed to be taken

is because I have confidence that once people realize there's a problem, then they'll ask their elected Representatives to do something about it. And I was pleased to see some Members, Republican Members of the House and the Senate have started laying out ideas. I've been laying out ideas.

I think it's time for the leadership in the Democrat Party to start laying out ideas. See, the American people expect those of us who've come to Washington, DC, to negotiate in good faith on behalf of the people. If there's a problem, people ought to say, "Here's what I'm for," not what they're against. People ought to be willing to step up and lead, as opposed to playing partisan politics. That's what the people want.

I believe future generations ought to receive benefits equal to or greater than the previous generation. I like the idea that has been put on the table by a Democrat economist named Pozen. It's called progressive indexing. It says if you're the poorest of Americans or lower income Americans, you get your benefits calculated by wage increase. If you're the richest Americans, top 1 percent, you get your benefits calculated by inflation, increase of inflation. In other words, everybody's benefits go up. The wealthier people's benefits will go up slower than the poorer benefits. And in between, there's a scale. That's called progressive indexing. It basically says we can make a commitment to poor Americans that if you've worked all your life, you're not going to retire into poverty. I like that idea. I think that makes a lot of sense. This progressive indexing solves—permanently solves most of the problems in Social Security. It doesn't solve it all, but it permanently solves most of the problem.

And there are other ideas on the table. I asked people to bring them forth. "You've got a good idea, step up with it. I'm more than willing to listen." What I'm not going to listen to is this partisan bickering in Washington, DC. People really expect us to do different. They expect us to think differently and act differently when you see a problem, and we have a problem.

I've got another idea that we're going to discuss today. It's an idea that some feel uncomfortable about—I understand that—but

I think it's certainly worth the dialog. And that is, on the one hand, we ought to permanently solve the solvency issue for Social Security so I can—we can—all of us involved in politics can look at younger workers and say, "You're fixing to pay into a system that will not only take care of baby boomers like me, but there will be a retirement system for you."

I also think we ought to make the system a better deal for younger workers, and that means giving younger workers the option, the ability, if they so choose, to take some of their money—after all, it's your money in the payroll taxes—and set it aside in what we call a voluntary personal savings account. It's an opportunity—I like the idea of giving somebody a chance to build a nest egg that the Government can't spend. In other words, remember the—what you have left in the Social Security system today is a file cabinet with IOUs in West Virginia. I actually went and saw the file cabinet, and I'm proud to report the paper is there. *[Laughter]*

I like the idea of encouraging people to own assets that they get to manage. It makes economic sense. If you're a younger worker and you realize that we're taking your money and we're putting it in a system that may not be around for you, you ought to demand change. But let me tell you what else we're doing. We're taking your money and putting it into a system that's yielding about a 1.8 percent return. That's a lousy deal.

So I think you ought to be allowed to take some of your money, set it aside in a voluntary personal savings account so you can invest in bonds or stocks—bonds and stocks, whatever you so choose. You can't put it in the lottery, by the way. There will be go-bys. In other words, the Government is going to say, "We're not going to let you take it to the track. We're not going to let you take wild risks." People do this all the time, by the way, and they get a better rate of return than 1.8 percent. And if you can get a better rate of return than 1.8 percent, that compounds over time. And it's that compounding of interest that helps create wealth and security in retirement. The voluntary personal accounts will complement that which is available to you through the Social Security system. But you're going to get a better deal

on your own money than in the current system.

I like the idea of people having assets that they can pass on from one generation to the next. I reject this notion that the investor class is confined to only a certain group of people. I think investors ought to be around—[*applause*].

And finally, I believe this idea ought to be debated because the system is not fair, in this sense. If you're a spouse and your other spouse—if you're a husband and your wife works or you're a wife and your husband works, and you're both contributing in the Social Security system, if one of you dies early—if you die before 62, what you get is you get a burial benefit from the Government. In other words, you've been working all your life; you're putting money in the Social Security system—both of you have been—one of you dies early, and the Government says, "Here, fine, here's a burial benefit." And then when you get to retirement age, you get to choose. You get to choose the benefits of your spouse or your own benefits, whichever might be higher, but you don't get both.

Think about that. So you've got two folks contributing into the system; one dies early. And by the time the survivor reaches retirement age, he or she gets to say, "I either get my spouse's benefits or my benefits, but not both." In other words, one of—the deceased spouse has contributed to a system, and the money has just gone away. That's not fair. It's not fair to say to working people, "Work all your life, and the money you've contributed is not around if you happen to die early." It's not fair to the spouse. It's not fair to the family.

If we allow younger workers—if they so choose—to take some of their own money—now, remember, I keep saying, "if they so choose"—to take some of their own money and set it up in an asset that grows over time, if that were to happen, if somebody were to die early, at least there's an asset to pass on to help the spouse.

See, the system is not fair today. It's not fair for younger workers to know it's going broke, and you have to contribute into it. It's not fair for people living today, who worked in their system all their—paid into the sys-

tem, and there's not an asset upon death, early death. It's not right. And I think now is the time to get something done.

By the way, the idea of voluntary personal savings accounts is not new. You're going to hear from some young investors. Investing is not new. It's new for older people. You know, when we grew up, there wasn't 401(k)s or IRAs. These are relatively new concepts. I bet there was no 401(k)s when you grew up. You look like a baby boomer. [*Laughter*] Yes, okay, you.

But the idea of, you know, saying if you work for the Government, you can take some of your own money and put it aside in a voluntary personal savings account isn't new in Washington. I don't know if you know this or not, but the Federal Thrift Savings Plan—see, that's the plan that the Congress set up for themselves and people who work in the Federal Government—it says if you want to, you can set aside some of your own money in a mix of bonds and stocks.

And so my attitude is—to folks around the country is, if it's a good idea for Congressmen and Senators, in other words, if they think it's a good enough idea for themselves, it ought to be a good enough idea for workers all across the country.

Anyway, I see a problem. I'm willing to talk about solutions. I'm looking forward to working with both Republicans and Democrats to get the job done. And I want to thank our panelists for joining us to help make some very important points. See, this is an education process we're going through. People have got to be educated. There's a lot of messages getting out there on the TV screens—you know, people saying this and people saying that. Once people understand there's a problem, once the grandmothers and granddads understand they're going to get their check, they can relax. Then they're going to start asking people who have been elected to office, "What are you going to do about my grandkids?"

You don't have a grandkid yet, do you?

**Mr. Stein.** Thank God, our son is only 17. [*Laughter*]

**The President.** Well, that's good. You went to high school here?

**Mr. Stein.** I went to Montgomery Blair High School, class of '62. The best class ever.

**The President.** Really? That's good. [Laughter]

**Mr. Stein.** I'm concerned about it. I'm extremely concerned about it.

**The President.** You've been talking about it for a while.

**Mr. Stein.** I talk about it—I represent two groups. I represent the National Retirement Planning Coalition, which helps people plan for retirement. And I'm also representing for the gangstas all across the world—[laughter]—hidden corners in them low-lows girl. [Laughter] That's rap music, Mr. President. [Laughter]

**The President.** Yes. [Laughter]

[At this point, Mr. Stein, economist, lawyer, actor, and writer, made further remarks.]

**The President.** I'll tell you an interesting story. I was at an automobile plant in Mississippi, and I—

**Audience member.** [Applause]

**The President.** There you go. [Laughter]

**Mr. Stein.** He's from Mississippi.

**The President.** Yes, okay, two of you. [Laughter] And I was with the line workers. And I said, "How many of you all have 401(k)s," in other words, "How many of you are managing your own money?" And I bet 90—I didn't count, but a lot, 90 percent of the hands went up. These are people from all walks of life, all income groups. It's amazing how quick you become financially literate when you're watching your own money, in other words.

But let's talk about financial literacy, and let's talk about this notion of risk. Let's talk about whether or not a person who is nervous about stocks and bonds has the capacity to absorb all these fancy words you're talking about.

**Mr. Stein.** But they're not—they turn out not to be fancy words.

**The President.** They sound fancy.

**Mr. Stein.** Well, it isn't fancy. [Laughter] A stock is a share in ownership of a corporation. A broad index of stocks is a share in hundreds, thousands of corporations. And the values of those investments will fluctuate from year to year. But over long periods of time, they will do incredibly well. I mean, here's a statistic—I know you don't like statistics.

**The President.** No, I like them, yes, particularly when they help make the point. [Laughter]

**Mr. Stein.** But over any 20-year period in the last 100 years, a person who bought the broad index of the Standard & Poor's 500, the largest 500 corporations in America, would not have lost money, and his average return would have been 10 times his money. That is so much more than Social Security, it's insane. Over a 25-year period, the average return is more than 20 times his money. And there's been no 20-year period in the last 100 years when a stock market investor would have lost money. So there will be fluctuations from year to year, but over long periods of time, investors in stocks through mutual funds, exchange-traded funds, variable annuities will come out way, way, way ahead of the game, wildly ahead of the game.

**The President.** A lot of people—I hear, you know, I hear these people saying, "Well, all they want to do is let Wall Street get rich."

**Mr. Stein.** They're already rich. [Laughter]

**The President.** All right, richer. In other words, I think one of the things people have got to understand—and perhaps you can help on this one—is that there will be negotiated fees on behalf of the people. In other words, you're not going to get gouged. I think that's a convenient red herring.

**Mr. Stein.** Yes, the usual fees on these things, especially if you're a careful shopper and especially under your plan, are going to be extremely minimal. I mean, fees for many of these things are close to zero. And Wall Street is not going to get rich off this. They're already rich. They don't need the money. The person who needs the money is the person Ben or Brian's age who is going to get in at the age of 20 or 21 or 22 or 25 and is going to let compound interest do all the heavy lifting for him. If you get in, in your 20s, by the time you're in your 40s, you're set.

**The President.** Compound interest—some people many not know what that is.

**Mr. Stein.** Well, compound interest means you earn interest, and then you earn interest on the interest. And if you let that work for you in the stock market for 20, 30, 40 years, even if you're just putting a small

amount away each month, you're going to have a much more comfortable retirement than you ever dreamed of having. If you start when you're in your 40s or 50s, the problem doesn't get solved. If you start when you're 20, it does get solved. And that's sort of exactly what we're talking about with your Social Security plan. If we start now, it's going to be easy to solve the problem. If we wait until the system is already broke, it's going to be incredibly difficult and expensive to solve the problem. Why not do it now, when it's easy?

**The President.** See, the idea is to say to younger workers, "Instead of putting money into a bankrupt system or a system that will be bankrupt, we're going to, one, permanently solve the problem and, two, give you a better deal by letting you watch your own money grow, investing in a safe mix of bonds and stocks that will compound over time."

Wendy Merrill is with us. Should we turn to Wendy?

**Mr. Stein.** Yes, absolutely.

**The President.** Wendy, where are you from?

**Wendy Merrill.** Good morning. Thanks for having me.

**The President.** Where are you from?

**Ms. Merrill.** I'm from Reisterstown, Maryland—

**The President.** Reisterstown, very good.

**Ms. Merrill.** —which is near Baltimore.

**The President.** Great, thanks for coming over.

**Ms. Merrill.** Thank you, my pleasure. I'm 32 years old, and I—

**The President.** You don't look a day over 21.

**Ms. Merrill.** Oh, aren't you sweet. Thank you.

**The President.** Oh, you know how we politicians are. [*Laughter*]

**Ms. Merrill.** I have two family members with me today. I wanted to say hi to my husband Stephen and my father Neil are in the audience with us today.

**The President.** Thanks for coming, yes. Say hello to them after the event?

**Ms. Merrill.** Yes.

**The President.** Good, thank you.

**Ms. Merrill.** And I have been in the financial services business for 10 years. I'm an in-

surance broker. I work with my family's insurance agency. And I'm a big fan of these personal accounts.

**The President.** Right.

**Ms. Merrill.** I think it's a great solution to the problem. I am a member of—I'm a little older than these guys over here, but I'm definitely a member of the generation that was taught that I couldn't count on Social Security for my retirement. For that reason, ever since I joined the workforce, I've been saving in 401(k)s and IRAs and really taking charge of my own future, which is what I advise my clients to do as well, when we discuss retirement planning. I just tell them, you know, "Don't count on Social Security," unless it gets fixed, of course.

**The President.** That's kind of sad, isn't it? Excuse me for interrupting. You've got younger Americans saying, "Don't count on Social Security." I guess the word is getting out, slowly but surely, we've got a problem with Social Security, to the point where you've got some people saying, "Don't count on it." As a matter of fact, I saw a survey where it said younger workers feel like they're more likely to see a UFO than get a Social Security check. [*Laughter*] Excuse me for interrupting.

**Ms. Merrill.** No problem. I agree. I mean, I—

**The President.** It is amazing that we sit here in Washington not getting anything done knowing that you've got younger Americans not thinking they're going to see a check on Social Security. That's the wrong kind of politics.

Sorry, go ahead.

[*Ms. Merrill, director of business development, Insurance Designers, Inc., made further remarks.*]

**The President.** Well, that's exactly the concept that I'm asking Congress to think about. One of things that people have got to understand is like in the Federal Thrift Savings Plan, there is—the options are relatively limited. In other words, you can't go out and create your own notion about what you want to invest in. The Government says, "Here, if you want to take some of your own money, here's a variety of options" and, you know, mainly bonds, mainly stocks, a mix of

bonds and stocks. And the truth of the matter is, when you're younger, you may want to take a little risk. I presume you say to younger people, "Take a little risk." When you're older, kind of—

**Ms. Merrill.** Absolutely. I mean—

**The President.** —crank down on the risk.

**Ms. Merrill.** —it's always on an individual basis, obviously. But younger people can definitely afford to take more risk, and compound interest works for you. And you're better off putting a dollar in yesterday as opposed to two dollars tomorrow, because of that.

**The President.** Yes. Good. Well, thanks for coming.

**Ms. Merrill.** My pleasure.

**The President.** Appreciate you being here.

Brian Smart.

**Brian Smart.** Yes, sir. How are you?

**The President.** Feeling pretty good, yes. [Laughter] How about you?

**Mr. Smart.** Good, good.

**The President.** Good, thanks for coming. I understand you just got a job?

**Mr. Smart.** Yes, which my parents—mom and dad and sister—

**The President.** They must be thrilled, yes. [Laughter]

**Mr. Smart.** They were very happy about—very happy.

**The President.** Well, congratulations. And you paying payroll taxes yet?

**Mr. Smart.** Yes.

**The President.** Yes, you are.

**Mr. Smart.** Yes, a lot of them.

**The President.** More than you realized, right?

**Mr. Smart.** It's a scary thing. I mean, I graduated from Radford University. I graduated this December, so relatively new, and got a job. And I'm out there making money, and this is kind of something that's come up to my attention that it's not going to be there. And it's something that really bothers me.

**The President.** Like that bite out of the check, first time that happened, got your attention?

**Mr. Smart.** Well, I mean, it's got my attention previously. But it's something that I'm realizing now that—and I'm not doing

anything. I'm paying into something that I can't even use, and there's nothing I'm going to be able to do with it when I retire.

**The President.** Yes, see, it's kind of a sad thought, isn't it? The Government now—has got a system now that has evolved away from something that worked really well. Franklin Roosevelt created something that worked well—working well when there's 15 workers for every beneficiary. And slowly but surely over time, as a result of demographic change, promises we made, we cannot keep. You got a 23-year-old guy, got his first job, saying he's nervous about the system.

Government ought to—Government at the very minimum ought to earn the trust of the people. He trusts—[applause]. Keep going.

**Mr. Smart.** Well, I mean—

**The President.** So have you been paying attention to this issue when you were at college?

**Mr. Smart.** A little bit.

**The President.** Tell me the truth.

**Mr. Smart.** No—to be honest, no, I haven't. [Laughter] But I mean, it's something that to me I've seen firsthand with my grandmother. She's retired, living the life I'd love to live. You know, she—her and my grandfather invested wisely when they were young, in stocks. And right now she's basically living off her dividends. She doesn't count on Social Security—

**The President.** Yes.

**Mr. Smart.** —which is something that scares me because she's already at retirement.

**The President.** Right.

**Mr. Smart.** Something I have 40, 50 years before it even—I even start drawing Social Security.

**The President.** Well, your grandma made some—and grandfather—made some wise choices. There's some people in this country, that's all they depend upon is their Social Security check. And it's really important that those folks know that they're going to continue to get their check. There are a lot of people that the only check they live on is the Social Security check, which as you can imagine, when they start hearing people talking about reforming the system, they're really thinking, "Well, maybe my check is going to

go away,” and people have got to know it’s not. It’s just not going to go away. Government will never do that to people. But I’m not so sure you’re going to have a check.

**Mr. Smart.** And that’s something, as a 23-year-old person who’s paying into Social Security now, really scares me.

**The President.** I hope so.

**Mr. Smart.** Because I don’t—I mean, I don’t know enough. I don’t really know enough right now to try to make a decision. And I’m hoping you can guide me in the right direction—

**The President.** That’s it.

**Mr. Smart.** —and tell me this is what you need to do.

**The President.** Well, all right, I’ll tell you. I’ll give you a hint. In 2041, the system goes bankrupt. That’s not very long.

**Mr. Smart.** I know.

**The President.** It’s long for me and old Ben. That seems like ages, doesn’t it?

**Mr. Stein.** That’s a long time.

**The President.** Yes, but not for him.

**Mr. Stein.** No, not at all.

**The President.** Do you remember when you were 23?

**Mr. Stein.** Extremely vividly. I remember when I was here at Blair High School at 17 and 16. But you know, his grandparents hitched their wagon to a star, which was the star of investing in stocks and bonds, and it worked incredibly well. The idea of allowing all Americans, not just well-to-do or even upper middle class ones, to hitch their wagons to that star makes total sense. Why should we say to the ordinary citizen, “Look, because you’re not rich, you can’t get in on the same kind of investment opportunities that rich people can get in on.” Let’s let everybody get in on it. Let’s let everybody get a chance to make some real money.

The Standard & Poor’s Index compounded at a rate—I know you don’t like statistics—but 14 percent a year from 1926 to 2004. If you could have your Social Security or even a quarter of it or a fifth of it compound at that rate instead of at 1.8 percent a year, the difference would be astronomical—astronomical.

**The President.** Yes, I do like statistics. [Laughter]

**Mr. Stein.** Okay, sorry. [Laughter]

**The President.** Just not too many of them.

**Mr. Stein.** Okay. [Laughter]

**The President.** What I like more—even more than statistics is the notion of an ownership society. We want more people owning something.

You know, Brian said something interesting—he basically turned—he said, “I hope you old guys fix it.” And we have an obligation to fix it. I think there’s a lot of younger folks sitting around saying, “Well, I’m—one, I either don’t care; I’m not paying attention to it,” when they start paying attention to it, realize there’s a problem, and they’re going to say, “Well, you know, surely the people we sent to Washington will do something to permanently fix it. Surely, there’s enough goodwill in the Nation’s Capital that people will set aside their political parties and come together and permanently solve this problem. Surely, they’re not going to let us pay money into a bankrupt system.”

I hate to tell you, unfortunately, some are playing politics in Washington. But we’re going to keep working it and keep working it and keep calling upon the people.

Go ahead.

[Mr. Smart made further remarks.]

**The President.** Like when you were sitting in the library, reading all those books, did you ever think about sitting on the stage with the President? [Laughter]

**Mr. Smart.** No, not at all.

**The President.** How about the library part? Was that fiction? [Laughter]

**Mr. Smart.** Fiction. [Laughter]

**The President.** I know what you mean. [Laughter]

Ben Ferguson.

**Ben Ferguson.** Howdy. I’m not one of those two Mississippi guys.

**The President.** You are from Mississippi? Where?

**Mr. Ferguson.** Well, Memphis, but I go to school at Ole Miss.

**The President.** Oh, Ole Miss. Very good, yes. [Applause]

**Mr. Ferguson.** There we go. I’m glad there’s one.

**The President.** So why are you here? Come all the way from Ole Miss.

**Mr. Ferguson.** I got together with some students who started an organization called Students for Saving Social Security—

**The President.** Really?

**Mr. Ferguson.** —because we realized that basically our second chance at Social Security, the only chance we ever have to have this, is if it gets fixed and we get our personal accounts. That's the only way we're going to get it. We know it's not there. We know we're paying someone money that we're not going to see, and so we need our second chance. And that's the only way we're going to get it. I mean, besides if we win Ben Stein's money, but he told me there's not enough. [Laughter]

**The President.** Pretty good line.

**Mr. Ferguson.** Yes.

**The President.** So how did you get involved in the Social Security issue? It's a— it's pretty interesting that you would pick up on the issue and decide to do something about it.

[Mr. Ferguson, communications director, Students for Saving Social Security, made further remarks.]

**The President.** You're on a roll. Keep going. [Laughter] See, I've got a little—one of the dynamics of this issue is the people that are—the people that benefit from Social Security today have nothing to worry about. You notice I keep saying that. In my line of work, you've got to say the same thing over and over and over again, finally get it to sink in.

But one of the dynamics on the issue is that there's a lot of folks out there who need to pay attention to it who might not be paying attention to the issue. And therefore, Members of the Senate and the House aren't hearing from younger Americans.

And so part of the goal is to remind people that if you're getting your check, you're going to get your check, but if you've got a child coming up, you better start asking the politicians what they're going to do about your child or your grandchild.

[The discussion continued.]

**The President.** Yes, that's why I want to repeat what I said earlier. I believe in ownership. I want people from all walks of life,

every background, saying, "This is mine. I own this. I'm going to work my life. I'm going to own this asset. I'm going to pass it on to whomever I want to pass it on to." The more ownership there is in America, the better our future is. The more people can say, "This is my stake. This is my home, my business, my retirement fund, my health care account"—the more people say, "I own this," the more solid the future of America will be.

Have you got something else, because I've just—that was my peroration.

**Mr. Stein.** No, I was just going to say, it is a basic fact of both political and economic life that societies that have a—in which the ordinary citizen feels he has a stake in the society and isn't just a ward of the state, isn't just a straw in the wind blowing about by the state, are societies that last a long time. And we want this society to last forever, and it will if we have an ownership society.

**The President.** Absolutely. Go ahead, yes.

**Mr. Ferguson.** And too, one thing is I want to let you know, and there's been a lot of people that have said in the media that young people just don't care. We started our organization 2 months ago. We have over 100 college campuses, chapters that have said, "We want to be involved in this debate."

**The President.** That's good, thank you.

**Mr. Ferguson.** Young people care, and I want to say thank you to you for actually listening to us instead of talking about us.

**The President.** Well, I appreciate you. If you're interested, I'm sure you've got a web page where people interested in the issue can—

**Mr. Ferguson.** Yes, you want me to plug it?

**The President.** Well, yes, you've got the grammar—[laughter]—

**Mr. Ferguson.** It's [secureourfuture.org](http://secureourfuture.org). There you go.

**The President.** It's like Marketing I, right?

**Mr. Ferguson.** That's right. I'll give you some money later.

**The President.** Try it again—[secureourfuture](http://secureourfuture.org)—

**Mr. Ferguson.** Dot org. Right, there you go.

**The President.** So people can get on the web page, figure out how to help.

**Mr. Ferguson.** Start a campus chapter.

**The President.** Get involved in the issue.

**Mr. Ferguson.** Get involved and be heard.

**The President.** My final point is, where does a guy get a pair of shoes like that?

**Mr. Stein.** You can get them at a place called FrontRunners, in Brentwood, California.

**The President.** Never mind.

Listen, thank you all for coming. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:03 a.m. at Montgomery Blair High School. In his remarks, he referred to Mark J. Mackey, president and chief executive officer, and Linda Hollands, vice president, operations, National Association for Variable Annuities, a member organization of the National Retirement Planning Coalition; and Robert C. Pozen, former member, President's Commission to Strengthen Social Security.

## Remarks on the Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement

June 23, 2005

Thank you all for coming. Please be seated. I want to thank the Democratic and Republican leaders who have come here today to support the Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement known as CAFTA. As you can see, there are former Cabinet members of both Republican and Democrat Presidents, former staff members of Republican and Democrat Presidents, people who have said it is time to set aside political differences and focus on this very important trade agreement for the good of our country. And I want to thank you all for coming. I appreciate our visit. I appreciate the chance to hear your point of view about what we need to do together to get this bill passed.

I want to thank the members of my Cabinet who are here. I appreciate you all coming. I particularly want to say thanks to Ambassador Rob Portman, who is the U.S. Trade Representative. He is the point person in the Bush administration to get this bill passed. He's working hard. He's working smart, and

with your help and the help of those on the stage, I'm confident that Congress will do the right thing.

The reason we're here is because we share an interest in promoting opportunity and prosperity here at home. All of us understand that strengthening our economic ties with our democratic neighbors is a vital issue of national importance. All of us urge Congress to pass the agreement, because America has an interest in strengthening democracy and advancing prosperity in our hemisphere.

One of the surest ways to strengthen democracy and advance prosperity is by establish a trading system based on clear rules. My predecessors from both parties, former Presidents from both political parties, pursued this goal at all levels—at the global level, at the bilateral level, and at the regional level. Today, CAFTA presents us with an historic opportunity to advance a free and fair trading system that will bring benefits to all sides.

I want to thank the members of the diplomatic corps from Central America who have joined us today. *Los Embajadores, bienvenidos.* Thank you for coming.

These Ambassadors understand what I just said. I said, this trade agreement benefits both sides. It's a good deal for the CAFTA countries, and it's a good deal for America as well.

It's a good deal for America because CAFTA will help level the playing field for our goods and services. Under existing rules, nearly 80 percent of imports from Central America and the Dominican Republic already enter the United States duty free. But U.S. exports into the region face heavy tariffs. Let me repeat that: 80 percent of goods produced in Central America come into our country, come into the United States duty-free. Yet the same isn't—it's not the same for American products.

By passing CAFTA, the United States would open up a market of 44 million consumers for our farmers and small-business people and entrepreneurs. By lowering barriers in key segments like textiles, CAFTA will put our region in a better position to compete with low-cost producers in Asia.

For the young democracies of Central America and the Dominican Republic,

CAFTA would continue the current trade benefits. That means good jobs and higher labor standards for their workers. And because of reduced tariffs on U.S. goods, consumers in these countries would have access to better goods at lower prices. And that brings us a step closer to our goal of an Americas where the opportunities in San Jose, Costa Rica, are as real as they are in San Jose, California.

People have got to understand that by promoting policy that will help generate wealth in Central America, we're promoting policy that will mean someone is less—more likely to stay at home to find a job. If you're concerned about immigration to this country, then you must understand that CAFTA and the benefits of CAFTA will help create new opportunity in Central American countries, which will mean someone will be able to find good work at home, somebody will be able to provide for their family at home, as opposed to having to make the long trip to the United States. CAFTA is good immigration policy as well as good trade policy.

And it's good geopolitics as well. For the Western Hemisphere, CAFTA would bring the stability and security that can only come from freedom. That's what we're interested in. We're interested in spreading freedom. Today, a part of the world that was once characterized by oppression and military dictatorship sees its future in democratic elections and free and fair trade, and we cannot take these gains for granted. These small nations are making big and brave commitments, and America must continue to support them. And CAFTA is a good way to support them. CAFTA is good for our workers. It's good for our farmers. It's good for our small-business people, but it's equally as good for the folks in Central America.

By transforming our hemisphere into a powerful trading area, CAFTA will help promote democracy, security, and prosperity. The United States was built on freedom, and the more of it we have in our own backyard, the freer and safer and more prosperous America will be. The leaders from both parties here today share this vision.

These folks, who toiled in the vineyards of good international politics and worked in the White House know exactly what I'm talk-

ing about. That's why they're standing up here and saying with common voice to the United States Congress, "Let's get this bill passed." See, CAFTA is more than a trade agreement; it is a signal of our Nation's commitment to democracy and prosperity for the entire Western Hemisphere. And I urge, and we urge, the United States Congress to pass CAFTA.

Thanks for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:43 p.m. in Room 450 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

**Message to the Congress  
Transmitting Legislation and  
Supporting Documents To  
Implement the Dominican Republic-  
Central America-United States Free  
Trade Agreement**

*June 23, 2005*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

I am pleased to transmit legislation and supporting documents to implement the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement (the "Agreement"). The Agreement represents an historic development in our relations with Central America and the Dominican Republic and reflects the commitment of the United States to supporting democracy, regional integration, and economic growth and opportunity in a region that has transitioned to peaceful, democratic societies.

In negotiating this Agreement, my Administration was guided by the objectives set out in the Trade Act of 2002. Central America and the Dominican Republic constitute our second largest export market in Latin America and our tenth largest export market in the world. The Agreement will create significant new opportunities for American workers, farmers, ranchers, and businesses by opening new markets and eliminating barriers. United States agricultural exports will obtain better access to the millions of consumers in Central America and the Dominican Republic.

Under the Agreement, tariffs on approximately 80 percent of U.S. exports will be eliminated immediately. The Agreement will help to level the playing field because about 80 percent of Central America's imports already enjoy duty-free access to our market. By providing for the effective enforcement of labor and environmental laws, combined with strong remedies for noncompliance, the Agreement will contribute to improved worker rights and high levels of environmental protection in Central America and the Dominican Republic.

By supporting this Agreement, the United States can stand with those in the region who stand for democracy and freedom, who are fighting corruption and crime, and who support the rule of law. A stable, democratic, and growing Central America and Dominican Republic strengthens the United States economically and provides greater security for our citizens.

The Agreement is in our national interest, and I urge the Congress to approve it expeditiously.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
June 23, 2005.

**Notice—Continuation of the  
National Emergency With Respect to  
the Western Balkans**

*June 23, 2005*

On June 26, 2001, by Executive Order 13219, I declared a national emergency with respect to the Western Balkans pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701–1706) to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States constituted by the actions of persons engaged in, or assisting, sponsoring, or supporting (i) extremist violence in the Republic of Macedonia, and elsewhere in the Western Balkans region, or (ii) acts obstructing implementation of the Dayton Accords in Bosnia or United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 of June 10, 1999, in Kosovo. Subsequent to the declaration of the national emergency, the actions of persons obstruct-

ing implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement of 2001 in Macedonia also became a pressing concern. I amended Executive Order 13219 on May 28, 2003, in Executive Order 13304 to address this concern and to take additional steps with respect to the national emergency. Because the actions of persons threatening the peace and international stabilization efforts in the Western Balkans continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States, the national emergency declared on June 26, 2001, and the measures adopted on that date and thereafter to deal with that emergency, must continue in effect beyond June 26, 2005. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing for 1 year the national emergency with respect to the Western Balkans.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
June 23, 2005.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register,  
1:12 p.m., June 23, 2005]

NOTE: This notice was published in the *Federal Register* on June 24.

**Message on Continuation of the  
National Emergency With Respect to  
the Western Balkans**

*June 23, 2005*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the

Western Balkans emergency is to continue in effect beyond June 26, 2005. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on June 25, 2004, 69 *FR* 36005.

The crisis constituted by the actions of persons engaged in, or assisting, sponsoring, or supporting (i) extremist violence in the Republic of Macedonia, and elsewhere in the Western Balkans region, or (ii) acts obstructing implementation of the Dayton Accords in Bosnia or United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 of June 10, 1999, in Kosovo, that led to the declaration of a national emergency on June 26, 2001, has not been resolved. Subsequent to the declaration of the national emergency, I amended Executive Order 13219 in Executive Order 13304 of May 28, 2003, to address acts obstructing implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement of 2001 in the Republic of Macedonia, which have also become a concern. The acts of extremist violence and obstructionist activity outlined in Executive Order 13219, as amended, are hostile to U.S. interests and pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to the Western Balkans and maintain in force the comprehensive sanctions to respond to this threat.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
June 23, 2005.

**The President's News Conference  
With Prime Minister Ibrahim al-  
Jafari of Iraq**

*June 24, 2005*

**President Bush.** Thank you very much. Mr. Prime Minister, I am honored to welcome you to the White House. As the leader of Iraq's first democratically elected Government in more than 50 years, you are helping to lift your country from decades of fear and oppression.

The Prime Minister is a great Iraqi patriot. He's a friend of liberty. He's a strong partner

for peace and freedom. For more than two decades, he served the cause of Iraqi freedom in exile as a fierce opponent of Saddam Hussein's tyranny. Today, this medical doctor now serves his people as he works to build a new Iraq.

I told the Prime Minister that the American people share his democratic vision for Iraq. I told him of our Nation's deep and abiding respect for Islam, for the people of Iraq, and for the potential of the nation that now belongs to them.

Today we meet at a critical moment in the history of this proud nation. In just a few days, we will mark the first anniversary of the return of Iraq to its people. In the year since then, the Iraqis can take credit from [for] \* some extraordinary achievements in the face of tremendous challenge.

Seven months after resuming sovereignty over their nation, the Iraqi people defied the car bombers and assassins to hold their first free elections in a half century. In April, the newly elected Transitional National Assembly formed a Government and appointed Dr. Jafari as the Prime Minister. This month, after a spirited debate, the Iraqis reached an agreement to expand their constitutional drafting committee to include more Sunni Arabs, so that this important community also has a strong voice in shaping the future of their country.

The Prime Minister and I discussed the important work the Iraqis have before them in the months ahead. This work includes drafting a permanent constitution for a free Iraq, submitting it to the Iraqi people for approval, and then holding new elections to choose a constitutional Government. These are monumental tasks, yet at every step of the way so far, the Iraqi people have met their strategic objectives, and the terrorists have failed to stop them. I commend the Prime Minister and his fellow Iraqis for their hard work and courage. And I'm confident that the Iraqi people will continue to defy the skeptics as they assume greater responsibility for their security and build a new Iraq that represents their diversity.

The way ahead is not going to be easy. The killings and roadside bombings that we

\* White House correction.

see underscore that freedom in Iraq is opposed by a violent and ruthless enemy with no regard for human life. The enemy includes former members of Saddam Hussein's regime. The enemy includes criminal elements, and the enemy includes foreign terrorists. The terrorists are fighting in Iraq because they know a free Iraq in the heart of the Middle East will deal a severe blow to an ideology that lives on oppression and fear. By securing Iraqi democracy, we will make America and our friends and allies around the world safer.

The enemy's goal is to drive us out of Iraq before the Iraqis have established a secure, democratic Government. They will not succeed. Our goal is clear, a democratic and peaceful Iraq that represents all Iraqis. Our troops will continue to train Iraqi security forces so these forces can defend their country and to protect their people from terror. And as Iraqis become more capable in defending their nation, our troops will eventually return home with the honor they have earned.

As the Iraqi people stand up for their freedom, they know that the free world is now standing with them. Earlier this week, more than 80 countries and international organizations came together in Brussels to discuss how to help Iraq provide for its security and rebuild its country. And next month, donor countries will meet in Jordan to discuss Iraqi reconstruction.

I appreciate Prime Minister Jafari's brave leadership. Prime Minister Jafari is a bold man. I've enjoyed my discussions with you, Prime Minister. He is a frank, open fellow who is willing to tell me what's on his mind. And what is on his mind is peace and security for the people of Iraq, and what is on his mind is a democratic future that is hopeful.

I want to thank you for your courage. I want to thank you for your understanding about the nature of free societies. I want to thank you for helping Iraq become a beacon of freedom.

Prime Minister Jafari's visit comes at an important time. I want to thank you for coming.

**Prime Minister al-Jafari.** Thank you very much.

**President Bush.** Welcome.

**Prime Minister al-Jafari.** Thank you very much. I want to thank the United States people for their courage and commitment against terrorism and for democracy in our country.

I visited hospital in the past month in Turkey, Muthanna, and yesterday in Washington, DC. There were Iraqis and American. They had suffered side by side, and they were on a common enemy: terrorism. They were fighting for the security of Iraq but also of American. This is not the time to fall back—to fall back. We owe it to those who have made sacrifices to continue toward the goals they fought.

I see from up close what's happening in Iraq, and I know we are making steady and substantial progress. People said Saddam would not fall, and he did. They say the election would not happen, and they did. They say the constitution will not be written, but it will. And the political process—[*Inaudible*—including the Sunni Arabs, will further undermine the terrorists. They have joined the parliamentary committee and the Government, and they will take part in the next elections.

[*At this point, Prime Minister al-Jafari spoke in Arabic, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.*]

Another time I would like to thank and commend Mr. President for his hospitality and his receiving me here and for the subjects we discussed together. And also he was frank and transparent, and he gave me very good feelings towards the people in Iraq. I would also like to thank the American people for standing beside the Iraqi people, going through these difficult times. No doubt our people will never forget those who stand beside Iraq, particularly at these terrible times. We do appreciate the assistance given by America during the present period of time in particular. There is a great achievement in Iraq, there is democracy in Iraq, and the people in Iraq defied terrorism, and they refused to accept any constitutional association.

There is about 30 percent of women participating, and this is an example of democracy in Iraq and in the region, even in the whole world. There are six minister ladies in my Government, and it is my intention

to add one more woman to be Deputy to the Prime Minister.

In the new Iraq, there is progress on more than one aspect, even though, again, it's all the challenges we have, particularly in security. Even though there is a lot of infiltration from the countries adjacent to Iraq, moving from inside Iraq itself, but there is a will in Iraq to secure security. And so the bombing in Iraq has been reduced a lot. And we are making great progress. And we depend on our security forces, multinational forces also who work with us, support us, but the responsibility in the frontline is for the Iraqis, and everything is making progress quantitatively and qualitatively.

We want to secure love instead of hatred in our country, coexistence and cooperation in Iraq instead of cursing each other. The whole people of Iraq would like to continue the democracy in Iraq, and they will fight for achieving it. So many people said that democracy will never stand in Iraq, said that elections will never be held in Iraq, and they said also that the Government will never be established in Iraq, and they said there would be no constitution. But everything will be there, and the whole world will see that changes in Iraq happen because of the great will of the people of Iraq and the countries that are assisting us.

We want fraternal relations with all the countries of the world and the adjacent countries, keeping our sovereignty against all infiltration from the borders of Iraq. We want goodness for all countries of the world and wish you all the best for the American people.

Thank you, very much. Thank you, very much.

**President Bush.** Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister. What we'll do now is we'll ask a question—answer a question from the American side and then one from the Iraqi side. Thank you, we'll be there in a minute. And then—we'll have two a side, in other words.

I will start with Kelly O'Donnell [NBC News].

### **Status of Efforts in Iraq**

**Q.** Thank you, Mr. President. On Iraq, sir, the Vice President has described the conditions there, regarding the insurgency as being

in its last throes. General Abizaid said there has been no significant change over the last 6 months. Your spokesman said you agreed with the Vice President's assessment. Can you help the American people understand these two different views that are coming forward, one from the administration, one from top commanders, when your spokesman tells us every day you get your information directly from those top commanders?

**President Bush.** I do get briefed by our top commanders, as does the Vice President. As a matter of fact, about 2 hours ago, General Abizaid briefed the Vice President and myself and the Secretary of Defense about what is taking place on the ground. And there's no question there's an enemy that still wants to shake our will and get us to leave. And they're willing to use any means necessary. They try to kill—and they do kill innocent Iraqi people, women and children, because they know that they're—the carnage that they wreak will be on TV. And they know that they are—they know that it bothers people to see death—and it does. It bothers me. It bothers American citizens. It bothers Iraqis. They're trying to shake our will. That's what they're trying to do, and so of course we understand the nature of that enemy.

We also understand that there is reason to be optimistic about what's taking place. The very same commanders that say that these folks are terrible killers are also reminding us that we're making good progress. On the one hand, you just heard the Prime Minister talk about a new democracy. Remember, the killers tried to intimidate everybody so that they wouldn't vote. That was their tactic. If you look back at the history of our involvement in Iraq, there was a lot of bombings and killings prior to the elections. What they were trying to do is say, "Let's shake the will of not only the Americans but the Iraqi citizens." And—but nevertheless, the Iraqi citizens wouldn't have their will shaken.

So we're optimistic. We're optimistic that more and more Iraqi troops are becoming better trained to fight the terrorists. We're optimistic about the constitutional process. There is a political track that's moving forward in parallel with the security track. No question about—it's difficult. I mean, we

hear it every day, of course. So do you. You report it every day. It's tough work, and it's hard. The hardest part of my job is to comfort the family members who have lost a loved one, which I intend to do when I go down to North Carolina on Tuesday.

But nevertheless, progress is being made, and the defeat of the enemy—and they will be defeated—will be accelerated by the progress on the ground in Iraq that—the establishment of a democratic state that listens to the hopes and aspirations of all the people in Iraq will lead to the defeat of this enemy. And so that's what this administration believes, and we firmly believe it is going to happen.

Would you like to call on somebody from the Iraq press?

**Prime Minister al-Jafari.** Yes, yes.

**President Bush.** Who would you like to call on? Better pick one.

#### ***Timetables for Iraq/Visit of Secretary of State Rice***

**Q.** [*Inaudible*—my first question is, Mr. Bush, we heard here that there are Members of the Congress and the Senate, they are asking for a schedule for withdrawing your troops from Iraq. Have you discussed this with the Government of Iraq or will it be left to the Government to decide?

Mr. Jafari, it was said in the streets of Iraq that the administration of America is pressurizing your Government through the visit of Ms. Rice in Iraq. Is there a reaction to that with President Bush?

**President Bush.** Thank you. You've picked up a good American trick, which is to ask two questions. [*Laughter*] Congratulations.

There're not going to be any timetables. I mean, I've told this to the Prime Minister. We are there to complete a mission, and it's an important mission. A democratic Iraq is in the interest of the United States of America, and it's in the interest of laying the foundation for peace. And if that's the mission, then why would you—why would you say to the enemy, you know, "Here's a timetable. Just go ahead and wait us out." It doesn't make any sense to have a timetable. You know, if you give a timetable, you're conceding too much to the enemy.

This is an enemy that will be defeated. And it's—so I'm not exactly sure who made that proposition, but I would—you don't have to worry, Mr. Prime Minister, about timetables. And we want to work with you to continue to build up the Iraqi forces. See, success will happen in Iraq when the political process moves forward, like it is. Again, I remind you all, maybe 4 months ago—anyway, the beginning of the winter, there was a lot of people here in the country that never thought the elections would go forward. They thought the enemy had the upper hand because of the death and destruction that we saw on our TV screens. They said, "Well, can't possibly be elections. The Iraqi people don't want to be free," and you know, "These killers are going to stop the elections." And sure enough, over 8 million people voted because they do want to be free.

And so success will occur as this political process continues to move forward. And we spent time talking about making sure that Sunnis were a part of the process, and I appreciate the Prime Minister's attitude. We made sure we talked about making sure that people's points of view are represented, making sure that we stay on—the only timetable that I think is going to—that I know is out there is the timetable that says, "Let's have the constitution written by a certain date, and let's have it ratified by a certain date, and let's have the election by a certain date." That's the timetable, and we're going to stay on that timetable. And it's important for the Iraqi people to know we are.

And the second track is to have Iraqis take the fight to the enemy. And we're, slowly but surely, getting this training completed. And so we spent time today not only hearing about the conditions on the ground and the nature of the enemy from Generals Abizaid and General Casey, but we also talked about progress in the training mission. And we are making good progress when it comes to training Iraqis. One of the interesting statistics as to whether or not the Iraqis want to join the fight is whether or not they're able to recruit Iraqis to join the army, and recruitment is high. In other words, Iraqis do want to be a part of the process.

And so part of the coalition's job is to give these Iraqi units the training necessary to be

able to fight the terrorists. That's our strategy, and it is working, and it is going to work, for the good of the country.

Now, he asked you a question, and it's a very intelligent—

**Prime Minister al-Jafari.** As for the second question on the visit of Ms. Rice, Condoleezza Rice to Iraq, the general impression of that visit was a general review for the situation there. It was a time for us so that—that gave support at Bruxelles, and I think they played a great role that the greater opportunity for the Iraqis as a big party. And as for the program and the ministers who attended, they all spoke in the interests of Iraq, and we thanked her very much for the efforts she made. And I spoke about the preparation for her and what she can present us of services to Iraq. And I believe she played a great role and will play a great role in Bruxelles, and I hope the recommendations will reflect on the donor countries so that we get the interest to the Iraqi people, particularly for the services. Thank you.

**Status of President's Second Term/U.S. Popular Support for Efforts in Iraq**

**Q.** Thank you, Mr. President. Declining public support for the mission in Iraq and the lack of progress on some of your domestic priorities has prompted suggestions that you're in something of a second-term slump. Do you worry—

**President Bush.** A quagmire, perhaps. [Laughter]

**Q.** You can choose the word, sir. Do you worry at all about losing some of your ability to drive the agenda, both internationally and domestically?

And Mr. Prime Minister, if I may, does the decline in American support for the mission in Iraq have any impact on your Government and the people of your country?

**President Bush.** No, I appreciate the polls, the question about the polls. Look, this is a time of testing, and it's a critical time. We're asking Congress to do—to take on some big tasks domestically. I fully understood when I went into the Social Security debate that there would be a lot of people that wished we hadn't have brought it up. I knew that. After all, there are some who, in Congress, that would rather not take on

the tough issue, make—they're afraid if you take on a tough issue, it will make it harder to get reelected.

And so I'm not surprised that there is a, kind of a reaction, the do-nothing reaction in Congress toward Social Security, and I'm not surprised the American people are saying, "I wonder why nothing is getting done." You know, they see a problem, and they're wondering why people won't step up and solve the problem. So I'm not surprised about—that there's a—people are balking at doing big things. I do think we'll get an energy bill that will be good and show the American people finally we're willing to put an energy strategy in law that will help us conserve more and diversify away from hydrocarbons and develop technologies that will enable us to burn coal cleanly, for example.

Overseas, the idea of helping a country that had been devastated by a tyrant become a democracy is also a difficult chore, and it's hard work, particularly since there's an enemy that is willing to use suicide bombers to kill. It's hard to stop suicide bombers, and it's hard to stop these people that, in many cases, are being smuggled into Iraq from outside Iraq. It's hard to stop them. And yet they're able to do incredible damage. They're damaging not only—you know, they're obviously killing Americans, but they're killing a lot more Iraqis. And their whole attempt is to frighten the people of both our countries. That's what they're trying to do.

In other words, they figure if they can shake our will and affect public opinion, then politicians will give up on the mission. I'm not giving up on the mission. We're doing the right thing, which is to set the foundation for peace and freedom. And I understand why the Al Qaida network, for example, is so terrified about democracy, because democracy is the opposite of what they believe. Their ideology is one of oppression and hate. Democracy is one that lifts up people and is based upon hope.

I think I said at this press conference here in the East Room, you know, "It's like—following polls is like a dog chasing his tail." I'm not sure how that translates. But my job is to set an agenda and to lead toward that

agenda. And we're laying the foundation for peace around the world.

Iraq is a part of the agenda. There's going to be—there were elections in Lebanon. We hope Egypt has free and open elections. My dream is that there be a Palestinian state living side by side in peace with Iraq. I noticed our former Ambassador to Afghanistan is with us, who is now going to be the ambassador to Iraq. Afghanistan is a hopeful story. It's still difficult because, again, there are terrorists there associated with this—the likes of—or are a part of the Al Qaida network that is interested in stopping the advance of democracy because democracy is—will be a part of their defeat and demise.

**Prime Minister al-Jafari.** Thank you very much. As for the question on the reduction of support, Iraq's—the Iraqi people had a specific request which is toppling down Saddam Hussein for reasons relating to their dignity and their policy—their politics. And after Saddam Hussein was removed, through the different efforts of international efforts and Iraqis, this was achieved. Right now we have another danger, which is terrorism, which is against not only the Iraqi people but all the world of the country—of the world, and at any time, doesn't have any particular land, but it works everywhere. Geography of terrorism is the human beings, themselves. And those people who are doing it are the enemies of humanity.

Once they do it in Washington, once in Spain, once in Iraq. So fighting the terrorism and limiting their impact and in order to keep the human dignity and civilization requires that we all act together. It's not only the duty of Iraqi people but other countries as well. As you know, Iraq is rich in oil, in water, in cultivation, as strategy and—[*inaudible*]*—*and also—but because of the exception of circumstances of Iraq, now it has become a poor country, so we have to have the impact and the support from other countries.

The success of our Iraqi people is your own success. The people of Iraq is civilized. I look forward to support from all other countries of the world. You have given us something more than money. You have given us a lot of your sons, your children that were killed beside our own children in Iraq. Of

course this is more precious than any other kind of support we receive. You have to be proud before your own people that you presented us for the maintenance of democracy in Iraq and to remove the dictatorship. We do not forget those who stood beside us at hard times, and they are decided to go forward. And there is a lot of difference between one month and another, between one week and another. Iraqi people are insistent on going along the path for their economy and their security, but we do need the help of other countries who will help us, to stand beside us.

Thank you.

**President Bush.** Final question, Mr. Prime Minister. Would you—

### **Reconstruction in Iraq**

[*The reporter spoke in Arabic, and the question was translated by an interpreter.*]

**Q.** Mr. Prime Minister, I am a presenter on radio in Iraq. My question is for you. For more than 2 years, we've started a change in Iraq, but the process of building is very slow. There are secure cities in Iraq, Samarra and Kurdistan. When will you begin the reconstruction in Iraq? When do we begin to establish the first bases of reconstruction? And you know that if you started reconstruction in Iraq, it will mean that young people will have something to do, and they will leave terrorist activities. So the question is for Mr. Prime Minister. There were discussions held with President Bush, and the most important thing you discussed with him, we want to know about it. Thank you very much.

**President Bush.** Sometimes we don't tell you things, you know. [*Laughter*] No, we discussed a lot of important things. We discussed democracy. We discussed having the constitution there, and we discussed security. We discussed reconstruction.

We are spending reconstruction money, but you know, you need to ask that to the Government. They're in charge. It's your Government, not ours. This is the Government that is—that has got the ministries in place that spends the money. We're willing to help, and we have helped. And I want to thank the Congress and the American people for their generosity in helping Iraq rebuild, and we're spending money.

But remember, your question kind of made it seem like—that we're in charge. We're not. You had elections; 8½ million people voted; and this good man is now in charge of the Government. I don't want to be passing the buck, as we say, but we're more than willing to help reconstruction efforts, but this is a sovereign Government—

**Prime Minister al-Jafari.** Thank you, very much.

**President Bush.** —with an elected Prime Minister, by the people of Iraq. And so we want to look forward to working with the Government. Our role is to help. His role is to govern and lead. And we've got the money allocated. Obviously, it's important to get electricity to the Iraqi citizens and clean water to the Iraqi citizens. And you know, I was pleased to see the other day when I was reading that there's a lot of air traffic in and out of the airport now, quite a lot of air traffic. In other words, there's commerce beginning to develop. We want to be helpful. But the responsibility rests with the people who the Iraqi people elected. And that's you, Mr. Prime Minister.

**Prime Minister al-Jafari.** Thank you, Mr. President. Of course, there were many points discussed with the President, Mr. Bush, in our special meeting, and we talked about so many facts. It was the first meeting between us, so we talked directly about the democracy in Iraq and the constitution, the achievement of the constitution, and we decided to continue the case of security until everything is well established.

And at the same time, we thought that there is a Marshall project after the Second World War that contributed—the U.S. contributed in that and in Truman's Government when they presented assistance to the German people. German people had selected Hitler in a democratic process that had a 98 percent result, however, we are quite happy with this hospitality of the U.S. So Germany was able to work.

The Iraqi people did not elect Saddam Hussein. In fact, they suffered a lot from Saddam Hussein before he attacked the geographical adjacent countries. He took their money before he took the money of Kuwait. He occupied Kuwait, in fact, as he did, and there is a lot of indications to tell us that

the Iraqi people are innocent of all that had happened. They have to pay off their—so many debts, and we hope that all countries will stand beside us to correct this unexceptional [exceptional]\* situation. They did not commit any crime against any people. They are peaceful. But it was Saddam Hussein who committed the crimes, and he brought about so many debts and losses to the Iraqi people.

We look forward to the international community to stand beside us, and we believe that this is a humanitarian stance. And we hope that Mr. Bush will try to redo a Marshall plan, calling it the Bush plan, to help Iraq, to help the Iraqi people. And this would be a very wonderful step that they stand beside us.

**President Bush.** Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister. Thank you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:31 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Gen. John P. Abizaid, USA, combatant commander, U.S. Central Command; Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; and U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad.

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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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### June 18

In the morning, in Camp David, MD, the President had an intelligence briefing.

### June 19

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush returned to Washington, DC.

### June 20

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Oval Office,

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\* White House correction.

the President met with Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker of Luxembourg, in his capacity as President of the European Council, President Jose Manuel Durao Barroso of the European Commission, and Secretary General Javier Solana of the European Council. They then had a meeting in the Cabinet Room.

In the afternoon, in the Blue Room, the President had lunch with President Juncker, President Barroso, and Secretary General Solana.

Later in the afternoon, the President participated in a meeting and photo opportunity with White House Fellows.

The President announced his intention to appoint Lawrence Scott Charbo as Chief Information Officer at the Department of Homeland Security.

The President announced his intention to nominate Sue Ellen Wooldridge to be Assistant Attorney General (Environment and Natural Resources Division) at the Department of Justice.

### **June 21**

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan to discuss counterterrorism efforts, United Nations reform, and other issues. He then had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the State Dining Room, the President met with the Senate Republican Policy Committee.

Later in the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with former Secretary General Lord Robertson of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Later, in the Residence, he met with Republican Members of the House of Representatives to discuss the Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA).

### **June 22**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Lusby, MD, where he toured the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

### **June 23**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Silver Spring, MD.

Later in the morning, the President returned to Washington, DC.

In the afternoon, the President had lunch with Vice President Dick Cheney. Later, in the Roosevelt Room, he met with bipartisan supporters of the Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA).

Later in the afternoon, in the Residence, the President met with Republican and Democrat Members of the Senate to discuss CAFTA.

The President announced his intention to nominate Steven G. Bradbury to be an Assistant Attorney General (Office of Legal Counsel) at the Department of Justice.

The President announced his intention to nominate Colleen Duffy Kiko to be General Counsel of the Federal Labor Relations Authority.

The President announced his intention to nominate Stephanie Johnson Monroe to be Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights at the Department of Education.

The President announced his intention to nominate Granta Y. Nakayama to be Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (Enforcement and Compliance Assurance).

The President announced his intention to nominate Mary M. Rose to be a member of the Merit Systems Protection Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint Ignacio Eduardo Sanchez as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

The President announced his intention to nominate Kent R. Hill to be an Assistant Administrator (Global Health) at the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The President declared a major disaster in Nebraska and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding May 11–12.

### **June 24**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had a briefing and

met with Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld; Gen. John P. Abizaid, USA, combatant commander, U.S. Central Command; Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; and Gen. Richard B. Myers, USAF, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Later in the morning, in the Oval Office, the President met with Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jafari of the Iraqi Transitional Government.

In the afternoon, in the Residence, the President had lunch with Prime Minister al-Jafari. Later, he met with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

The White House announced that the President will welcome Prime Minister Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir Al Sabah of Kuwait to the White House on July 1.

The White House announced that the President will welcome Prime Minister John Howard of Australia to the White House on July 19.

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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 June 20***

Timothy Elliott Flanigan,  
of Virginia, to be Deputy Attorney General,  
vice James B. Comey, resigned.

Sue Ellen Wooldridge,  
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Attorney General,  
vice Thomas L. Sansonetti, resigned.

#### ***Submitted June 23***

Steven G. Bradbury,  
of Maryland, to be an Assistant Attorney General,  
vice Jack Landman Goldsmith III,  
resigned.

Kent R. Hill,  
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Administrator  
of the U.S. Agency for International Development,  
vice E. Anne Peterson, resigned.

Colleen Duffy Kiko,  
of Virginia, to be General Counsel of the  
Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term  
of 5 years, vice Peter Eide.

Stephanie Johnson Monroe,  
of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary for Civil  
Rights, Department of Education, vice Gerald  
Reynolds.

Granta Y. Nakayama,  
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Administrator  
of the Environmental Protection Agency,  
vice John Peter Suarez, resigned.

Mary M. Rose,  
of North Carolina, to be a member of the  
Merit Systems Protection Board for the term  
of 7 years expiring March 1, 2011, vice  
Suzanne T. Marshall, term expired.

Peter Manson Swaim,  
of Indiana, to be U.S. Marshal for the Southern  
District of Indiana for the term of 4  
years, vice James Lorne Kennedy, resigned.

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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 June 20***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

EU-US Declaration on the 60th Anniversary  
of the Signing of the San Francisco Charter

EU-US Declaration on Working Together To  
Promote Peace, Stability, Prosperity, and  
Good Governance in Africa

Energy Security, Energy Efficiency, Renewables  
and Economic Development

The United States and the European Union Initiative to Enhance Transatlantic Economic Integration and Growth

Initiative To Enhance Transatlantic Economic Integration and Growth

U.S.-EU Working Together To Fight Against Global Piracy and Counterfeiting

The United States and the European Union Initiative To Enhance Transatlantic Economic Integration and Growth

U.S.-EU Declaration on Enhancing Cooperation in the Field of Non Proliferation and the Fight Against Terrorism

***Released June 21***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

***Released June 22***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

***Released June 23***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Nebraska

***Released June 24***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit by Prime Minister Sabah of Kuwait to Washington

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit by Prime Minister John Howard of Australia

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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.