

live here after the '56 incidents. They can trace their history to our country because of those—of what took place in Hungary. Plus, a lot of Americans followed the incidents in 1956 and appreciated and respected the courage of folks who were willing to stand up for freedom and liberty.

See, 1956 says to us, there are key moments in history when ordinary citizens are willing to defend the right for all to be free. And so it's an important event. I told the Prime Minister, I'm not my own scheduler. I will pass the word on how important this event is, and I will look very carefully at the invitation.

Listen, thank you all. Mr. Prime Minister, thanks for coming. Appreciate it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Klara Dobrev, wife of Prime Minister Gyurcsany. Prime Minister Gyurcsany spoke in Hungarian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks at a Reception Honoring Hispanic Heritage Month

October 7, 2005

The President. *Gracias, y bienvenidos a la Casa Blanca.* Thank you for coming. It is such an honor to have you here to help celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. It's a month in which we can recognize the contributions that Hispanic Americans make to our great land.

The Hispanic community is known for its strong commitment to the *familia y fe* and a great love of our country. Here's what I think: I think Hispanic Americans—I don't think, I know Hispanic Americans have helped build our country and shape our culture, and the United States is better off because of the Hispanic influence.

I appreciate so very much that members of my administration have come. I told them they could take a little time off from work. [Laughter] Carlos Gutierrez, the Secretary of Commerce, and his wife, Edi, thank you for coming. *El Juez*, the Attorney General of the United States, Al Gonzales, and his wife, Becky. Hector Barreto, head of the SBA. Newly confirmed as the Assistant Secretary

of Commerce, Israel Hernandez. Congratulations.

We've got Members of the Congress who are here. Wayne Allard, thank you for coming. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Marilyn Musgrave, Henry Cuellar, Luis Fortuno, thank you all for being here. It's such an honor you're here. Hans Hertell, an Ambassador to the Dominican Republic, members of the diplomatic corps, thank you all for coming. It's nice of you to join us today. *Los Embajadores.*

It is good to see my friend, Emilio Estefan. Thank you for coming, Emilio. Hector Gomez, Major League Soccer player from the L.A. Galaxy is with us. Christian Gomez, Major League Soccer player from D.C. United. Strong right-hander from the Washington Nats, Esteban Loaiza. *Gracias*, thank you all for coming. We're proud you're here. I appreciate members of the Latino organizations who are here today. Thank you for working on behalf of Latino citizens around the country.

As we celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, we honor the promise of freedom and opportunity that brought either you or your ancestors to America. That's what we're honoring. We're honoring the fact that this is a free society, and we recognize our responsibility to ensure that everyone in this country has a chance to realize their God-given talents and to realize their dreams. That's what America is all about. America must always be a land of dreamers, and people will have a chance to realize those dreams.

The 21st century opportunity begins with a quality education. You can't be a land of dreams if you don't educate your kids. One of my biggest concerns was that sometimes in our public schools, if your parents didn't speak English, for example, you just got shuffled through. And that was unacceptable to me and unacceptable to many Members of the United States Congress.

I came together for the—with the Congress to challenge what I've called the soft bigotry of low expectations, to encourage school systems all around America to raise standards and raise the bar and measure to make sure that every child is learning to read and write and add and subtract. And if not, if they find they're not learning to read and

write and add and subtract, do something about it early, before it's too late.

And so the No Child Left Behind Act became the law. And that law is beginning to make an enormous difference in the lives of Latino youngsters. And I can tell you how I know: It's because we measure. We know. People are learning to read and write and add and subtract, and that's going to make America a better place for generations to come.

Secondly, we've got to make sure that this is a country where work is respected and work is rewarded, where people who want to work hard to own their own business are able to do so. I believe it's important to keep taxes low in order to make sure entrepreneurs are able to get their business started and keep their businesses running.

I know it's important to have legal reform and regulatory reform to make sure the environment is such that entrepreneurs of all walks of life have a chance to flourish. I am proud to report to you that Latino-owned businesses are on the rise in the United States of America. And America is better for it when people are able to create jobs and own their own business.

I mentioned Hector Barreto being here. The Small Business Administration has more than doubled the number of loans to Hispanic-owned businesses since 2001. Our goal is to get people a chance to realize their dream of owning their own business. And one of the reasons why we're creating jobs in America, that Carlos talked about, is because the small-business sector is strong. Any strong economy must have a strong business sector. And the strong—the business sector is going to be even stronger because of Latino-owned businesses.

I set a goal of 5.5 million new minority homeowners by the end of this decade. I'm proud to report the number of minority homeowners has increased by 2.2 million since I set the goal. See, I love the fact that more and more people from all walks of life are opening up the door of their home and saying, "Welcome to my home. Welcome to my piece of property. Welcome to a place where I can raise my family." There's nothing better than homeownership in America, and this administration is dedicated to make sure

more and more people from all walks of life are able to open up the door where they live and say, "Come on in to my house."

As we celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, we're also going to honor the strong tradition of service in the Hispanic community. Hispanic Americans have fought in every war since our founding. Forty-two Hispanic Americans have earned our Nation's highest military decoration, the Medal of Honor.

At this hour, men and women of Hispanic heritage are bringing freedom to people of other lands. They are laying the foundation of peace for generations to come. They are making sacrifices to bring justice to the terrorists and, at the same time, giving people a chance to live in a free society.

More than 127,000 Hispanic Americans wear the uniform of the United States of America. I'm proud to be their Commander in Chief, and I want to welcome those who wear the uniform to this event today. Thank you all for coming.

The strength of this country is the fact that every day, thousands of citizens, millions of citizens, volunteer to make somebody's life better. And that includes thousands and millions of Hispanic Americans who are volunteering in their community, people who use their time and their talent to make a difference in the lives of others, people who have heard the universal call to love a neighbor just like you'd like to be loved yourself.

In the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Hispanic groups around this country provided critical services and much-needed love to people whose lives were affected by those storms. In Texas, the League of United Latin American Citizens—we call them LULAC—served food at shelters and teamed up with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce to help people find housing as well. In Arizona, Latino groups sent truckloads of water and food and medical supplies to Mississippi. The National Council of La Raza established a relief fund to provide emergency financial aid and housing assistance to hurricane victims. Acts of generosity from Hispanic Americans gave many people a lot of hope, and our Nation honors the compassion of Latinos today in this celebration.

The President's Volunteer Service Award that I'm about to give to six citizens is the

highest level of commendation a President can give in recognition of those who have contributed their time and energy to helping others.

Today, I'm going to talk about—you'll hear the stories of six folks who have served as such a wonderful example. I mean, not only have these people helped somebody but they served as an example for others. They're true leaders in their own quiet way and their own humble way: Junior Salazar of Bradenton, Florida; Marie Arcos of Houston, Texas; Manuel Fonseca of Nashville, Tennessee; Elmer Carreno of Silver Spring, Maryland; Maria Hines of Albuquerque, New Mexico; and John Diaz of Crowley, Colorado.

Their efforts are helping children to learn to read, improving fire safety in schools and communities, and helping more Hispanics achieve the dream of a college education. In the wake of the hurricanes, they've helped set up emergency clinics, provided spiritual counseling to the displaced, just simple acts, such as reading stories to children whose families had lost their homes. Today, we're here to honor your service, and we appreciate so very much what you have done to help lift the spirit of the country.

As we celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, we thank the Hispanic community that has helped build and shape our country in so many ways. America is a better place because of your contributions. I join all Americans in celebrating the accomplishments and wishing our Hispanic communities all across the country continued success.

I want to thank you all for coming. And now, I'm going to ask the military aide to please announce the Volunteer Service Awards. *Y por fin, que Dios les bendiga.*

[At this point, Maj. Christian G. Cabaniss, USMC, Marine Corps Military Aide to the President, read the citations, and the President presented the medals.]

The President. I hope you can tell why I was so looking forward to this event. There's nothing like being able to thank six quiet heroes, helping to improve somebody's life, and at the same time, improving the spirit of the country. What a joyous occasion. Thank you all for coming. May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:46 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Herculez Gomez, forward, L.A. Galaxy; Emilio Estefan, Jr., president, Estefan Enterprises, and member, President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities; and Eleuterio Salazar, Jr., President's Volunteer Service Award recipient. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Legislation To Increase Domestic Refining Capacity

October 7, 2005

I commend the House for passing legislation that would increase our refining capacity and help address the cost of gasoline, diesel fuels, and jet fuels. No refineries have been built in our Nation since 1976, and the recent disruptions in supply from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita have demonstrated that additional refining capacity is critically needed. We must continue to promote sound energy policy to help keep prices down for small businesses and hard-working American families.

Proclamation 7942—National School Lunch Week, 2005

October 7, 2005

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Since 1946, the National School Lunch Program has contributed to the welfare of our Nation's youth and the academic mission of our schools. Each year during National School Lunch Week, we recognize this valuable program and highlight the continuing importance of providing America's children with access to nutritious meals.

Today, nearly 100,000 public and private schools and residential child care institutions are implementing the National School Lunch Program, providing fresh fruits and vegetables, milk, and other nutritious food choices to an average of 29 million children each