In his role, Sam Alito showed a passionate commitment to the rule of law, and he gained a reputation for being both tough and fair. In 1990, President Bush nominated Sam Alito, at the age of 39, for the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. Judge Alito's nomination received bipartisan support, and he was again confirmed by unanimous consent by the United States Senate. Judge Alito has served with distinction on that court for 15 years and now has more prior judicial experience than any Supreme Court nominee in more than 70 years.

Judge Alito's reputation has only grown over the span of his service. He has participated in thousands of appeals and authored hundreds of opinions. This record reveals a thoughtful judge who considers the legal matter—merits carefully and applies the law in a principled fashion. He has a deep understanding of the proper role of judges in our society. He understands that judges are to interpret the laws, not to impose their preferences or priorities on the people.

In the performance of his duties, Judge Alito has gained the respect of his colleagues and attorneys for his brilliance and decency. He's won admirers across the political spectrum. I'm confident that the United States Senate will be impressed by Judge Alito's distinguished record, his measured judicial temperament, and his tremendous personal integrity. And I urge the Senate to act promptly on this important nomination so that an up-or-down vote is held before the end of this year.

Today Judge Alito is joined by his wife, Martha, who was a law librarian when he first met her. Sam and I both know you can't go wrong marrying a librarian. Sam and Martha's two children, Phil and Laura, are also with us, and I know how proud you are of your dad today. I'm sure as well that Judge Alito is thinking of his mom, Rose, who will be 91 in December. And I know he's thinking about his late father; Samuel Alito, Sr., came to this country as an immigrant child from Italy in 1914, and his fine family has realized the great promise of our country.

Judge, thanks for agreeing to serve, and congratulations on your nomination.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:01 a.m. in the Cross Hall at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Associate Justice-designate Alito. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy

October 31, 2005

President Bush. The Prime Minister and I will make statements. Thank you very much. Welcome.

It is good to have my friend back in the Oval Office. I say "my friend" because it seems like we see each other a lot, and every time we do, I appreciate your advice and your counsel. Relations between Italy and the United States are strong, and the relationship between our countries is important. It's important for our economies, and I'm pleased to know that trade is—between our countries is vibrant.

And this relationship is important because the United States has a strong partner in peace. I want to thank Silvio's strong commitment to the freedom of people in Afghanistan and in Iraq. I appreciate his strong vision of peace in the Balkans. In the past, we worked closely together to help the Libyan leader understand that we're living in a different world, a world in which we've got to work together for peace.

So it's my honor to welcome you back, Mr. Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Berlusconi. Thank you.

President Bush. And thank you for coming.

Prime Minister Berlusconi. Thank you, Mr. President. It's now a habit for me to come and pay homage to the President of the United States here at the Oval Office. It's always a pleasure for me. And it's a pleasure for me to come and see a friend, the leader of a friendly country.

Italy will be always—be grateful to the United States for what this country has been doing to free us from totalitarianism in the past century. And it is for us a reason of pride to be next, side by side with our American

ally in broadening the borders of democracy and freedom in the world and in order to pursue peace, which is something we all aspire to.

I, personally, admire, very strong, the leadership shown by President Bush. He has—[*inaudible*]—the same values and the same principles I have. And he is very consistent in the decisions that he carries on. And I do believe that President Bush and what he has been doing will remain ingrained in history. In a sensitive moment of our global history, he will mark history as the one who had—he was so farsighted, because also within United Nations, he carried out a mission of democracy.

And this is the reason why Italy is a member of the community of democracies, and we provide our support and contribution to the Fund for Democracy that President Bush established and which we joined recently in New York.

President Bush. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:44 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya. Prime Minister Berlusconi spoke in Italian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on the National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Preparedness and Response in Bethesda, Maryland

November 1, 2005

Thank you all. Michael, thank you very much for your introduction. And thanks for the warm reception here at the National Institute of Health. It's good to be back here again.

For more than a century, the NIH has been at the forefront of this country's efforts to prevent, detect, and treat disease, and I appreciate the good work you're doing here. This is an important facility, an important complex, and the people who work here are really important to the security of this Nation. The scientists who have been supported by the folks who work here have developed and improved vaccines for meningitis and whooping cough and measles and mumps and rubella and chicken pox and other infectious diseases. Because of the revolutionary advances in medicine, pioneered with the help of the NIH, Americans no longer fear these dreaded diseases; many lives have been saved.

At this moment, the men and women of the NIH are working to protect the American people from another danger, the risk of avian and pandemic influenza. Today, I have come to talk about our Nation's efforts to address this vital issue to the health and the safety of all Americans. I'm here to discuss our strategy to prevent and protect the American people from a possible outbreak.

I appreciate members of my Cabinet who are here. More importantly, I appreciate the hard work you've done on this issue. Secretary Rice, Secretary Johanns, Secretary Mineta, Secretary Nicholson, Secretary Chertoff.

I appreciate the fact that Dr. J.W. Lee, Director-General of the World Health Organization, has joined us. Dr. Lee, thank you for being here.

I want to recognize Dr. David Nabarro, the Senior United Nations System Coordinator for Avian and Human Influenza. Thanks for being here. This is—you're about to hear me talk about the international scope of response and detection necessary to protect not only our own people but people around the world. And the fact that these two gentlemen are here is an important signal.

I want to thank Dr. Elias Zerhouni, he's the Director of the NIH—doing a fine job. I want to thank Julie Gerberding, who's the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. I appreciate Dr. Rich Carmona, the U.S. Surgeon General. Dr. Tony Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. I want to thank Dr. Bruce Gellin, Director of the National Vaccine Program Office. I want to thank Dr. Andy von Eschenbach, who is the Acting Director of the FDA and the Director of the National Cancer Institute.

I appreciate all the members of the health care community who have joined us today. I want to thank State and local officials who are here. I particularly want to thank Senators Specter and Kennedy for coming, as