

Peruvian President, he or she will receive you in Peru as a President of the APEC.

Thank you very, very much.

President Bush. *Mi amigo, gracias.* Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:53 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Statement on the Resignation of Gale Norton as Secretary of the Interior *March 10, 2006*

Gale Norton has been a strong advocate for the wise use and protection of our Nation's natural resources and a valuable member of my administration for more than 5 years. As the first woman Secretary of the Interior, she served the Nation well with her vision for cooperative conservation, protection and improvement of our national parks and public lands, and environmentally responsible energy development on public lands and waters. She was instrumental in establishing my Healthy Forests Initiative that has helped make communities safer from catastrophic fire, while improving wildlife habitat. Gale played an influential role in shaping the Nation's offshore and onshore energy policies to help enhance America's domestic production. When Hurricane Katrina devastated the gulf coast region, she played a leading role in my administration's efforts to restore badly needed offshore energy production to avoid further supply disruption and higher energy costs for consumers. Because of her leadership and thoughtful attention to management, repairs, and maintenance issues, Americans will be able to better enjoy our great national parks and wildlife refuges for generations to come. I appreciate Gale's dedicated service to our country, and I wish Gale and John all the best.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest an-

nounced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

March 4

In the morning, at the U.S. Ambassador's residence in Islamabad, Pakistan, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, the President of Pakistan's residence, he and Mrs. Bush participated in an arrival ceremony with President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan. Then, in the Pink Room at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, he met with President Musharraf.

Later in the morning, in the Reception Hall at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, the President participated in a briefing on the Pakistani earthquake and reconstruction efforts.

In the afternoon, in the President's Dining Room at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, the President and Mrs. Bush had lunch with President Musharraf and his wife, Sebha Musharraf. Later, at the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, the President greeted U.S. Embassy staff. Then, in the Raphael Memorial Gardens of the U.S. Embassy, he participated in a cricket clinic with Pakistani youth.

In the evening, in the Reception Hall at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, the President and Mrs. Bush attended a performance. Later, they returned to Washington, DC, arriving the following morning.

March 6

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in Room 350 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building, he dropped by a meeting of the Academic Competitiveness Council.

In the afternoon, the President participated in a briefing on Hurricane Katrina recovery and rebuilding efforts along the gulf coast.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Alejandro Toledo of Peru to the White House on March 10.

March 7

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Viktorovich Lavrov of Russia.

Later, he and Mrs. Bush traveled to Crawford, TX.

The President made additional disaster assistance available to areas of Mississippi impacted by Hurricane Katrina.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jerry Gayle Bridges to be Chief Financial Officer at the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The President announced his intention to nominate Richard Capka to be Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration.

The President announced his intention to nominate Robert F. Godec to be Ambassador to Tunisia.

The President announced his intention to nominate Philip D. Moeller and Jon Wellinghoff to be members of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Michael E. Ranneberger to be Ambassador to Kenya.

The President announced his intention to nominate Warren W. Tichenor to be the U.S. Representative to the European Office of the United Nations and other international organizations with the rank of Ambassador.

The President announced his intention to appoint Scott G. Kriens as a member of the President's National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the Advisory Commission on Drug-Free Communities: James R. Aiona, Jr. (State Organization); Sandra Heverly (National Organization); Keith N. Humphreys (Public); Patricia J. Kempthorne (Public); Charles W. Larson, Jr. (State Organization); Darren L. Myles (National Organization); and Camille Q. Solberg (Public).

The President announced his intention to designate William McCabe as Acting Chief Financial Officer of the Department of Education.

March 8

In the morning, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to New Orleans, LA. While en route aboard Air Force One, he had an intelligence briefing, and then he and Mrs. Bush participated in a briefing on hurricane recovery and rebuilding efforts in New Orleans

and other parts of Louisiana. Upon arrival in New Orleans, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Theo Richards.

Later in the morning, aboard Marine One, the President and Mrs. Bush participated in an aerial tour of hurricane-damaged areas of New Orleans followed by a walking tour of damaged areas and reconstruction efforts in New Orleans, including the lower Ninth Ward and Industrial Levee Canal. During the tour, they stopped in at Stewart's Diner in the lower Ninth Ward. They then traveled to Gautier, MS, where they toured hurricane-damaged areas.

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

March 9

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany to discuss foreign policy issues. Later, he had an intelligence briefing. He then participated in a photo opportunity with the National and Distinguished Principals of the Year.

Later in the morning, the President met with Republican congressional leaders to discuss legislative priorities. Later, on the North Portico, he participated in a photo opportunity with U.S. Senate Youth Program students.

In the afternoon, the President met with bipartisan Members of Congress to discuss his proposed Advanced Energy Initiative.

In the evening, the President traveled to College Park, GA. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Cancun, Mexico, to meet with President Vicente Fox of Mexico and Prime Minister Stephen Harper of Canada on March 30–31.

March 10

In the morning, the President had breakfast with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Later, he had an intelligence briefing. He then participated in a National Security Council meeting on Iraq.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush had lunch with President Alejandro Toledo of Peru. Later, in the Oval Office, he and Mrs. Bush met with members of military

service organizations that have participated in the Department of Defense's America Supports You program.

The White House announced that the President will welcome Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland to the White House on March 17 and that he and Prime Minister Ahern will meet with Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Peter Hain of the United Kingdom. They will then meet with community peace activists from Northern Ireland.

The President announced his intention to nominate Robert D. McCallum, Jr., to be Ambassador to Australia.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

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

Submitted March 7

Jerry Gayle Bridges,
of Virginia, to be Chief Financial Officer,
Corporation for National and Community
Service, vice Michelle Guillermin, resigned.

Richard Capka,
of Pennsylvania, to be Administrator of the
Federal Highway Administration, vice Mary
E. Peters, resigned.

Robert F. Godec,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior
Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be
Ambassador Extraordinary and Pleni-
potentiary of the United States of America
to the Republic of Tunisia.

Philip D. Moeller,
of Washington, to be a member of the Fed-
eral Energy Regulatory Commission for the
term expiring June 30, 2010, vice Patrick
Henry Wood III, resigned.

Michael E. Ranneberger,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior
Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor,

to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Pleni-
potentiary of the United States of America
to the Republic of Kenya.

Jon Wellinghoff,
of Nevada, to be a member of the Federal
Energy Regulatory Commission for the term
expiring June 30, 2008, vice William Lloyd
Massey, term expired.

Withdrawn March 7

James Hardy Payne,
of Oklahoma, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for
the Tenth Circuit, vice Stephanie K. Sey-
mour, retired, which was sent to the Senate
on September 29, 2005.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

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.

Released March 4

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Sec-
retary Scott McClellan

Transcript of a press briefing by Secretary
of State Condoleezza Rice on the President's
visit to South Asia

Fact sheet: United States and Pakistan:
Long-Term Strategic Partners

Released March 6

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Sec-
retary Scott McClellan

Transcript of a press briefing by Lt. Gen.
Carl Strock, commander and chief of engi-
neers, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, on re-
covery efforts in the gulf coast

Transcript of a press briefing by Office of
Management and Budget Director Joshua B.
Bolton on the President's line-item veto leg-
islation