

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:25 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom at Camp David, Maryland  
*February 23, 2001*

Q. How is it going so far?

*President Bush.* Pretty darn good.

Q. How was lunch? Is it true that Churchill once came to this cabin?

*President Bush.* That's exactly right.

Q. How goes the get-acquainted session?

*President Bush.* Good, John [John Roberts, CBS News], thank you. "Ambassador" Johndroe was telling us where to go.

Q. Sir, can you tell us the historical significance of where you're standing?

*President Bush.* This is where Prime Minister Winston Churchill, the first visitor to Camp David, stayed. It's a huge honor for Laura and me to welcome the current Prime Minister and his wife. And we're about to have a press availability to answer all these difficult questions that you're throwing at us, John. I promised the Prime Minister that you in particular would be-

have well during the press conference—and Fournier [Ron Fournier, Associated Press].

All right, we're actually now going to go for a walk of a couple miles.

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, where's your coat?

*Prime Minister Blair.* It's around somewhere, but actually it's a lot warmer than Canada.

*President Bush.* You shouldn't have noticed that.

NOTE: The exchange began at 3:23 p.m. on the porch of Holly Lodge. In his remarks, the President referred to Assistant Press Secretary Gordon Johndroe and Prime Minister Blair's wife, Cherie. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom at Camp David  
*February 23, 2001*

*President Bush.* Welcome. It's my honor to welcome the Prime Minister, from our strongest friend and closest ally, to Camp David. We've had a couple of formal visits. More importantly, we had a nice walk around Camp David and got to know each other. And as they told me, he's a pretty charming guy. He put the charm offensive on me. [Laughter] And it worked. No, we're delighted, and tonight we'll have a

dinner, just the four of us—Mrs. Blair and Laura and the two of us—and I'm really looking forward to it.

This is a chance for me to tell the Prime Minister how dedicated my administration will be to an alliance that has made a huge difference in the world, an alliance that I firmly believe will make a difference in the years to come.