

So I'm pleased with the progress we're making. I'm mindful that we've got a lot more work to do, and I want to thank you all for giving me the chance to come and make my case.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:11 p.m. in Presidential Hall at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Denise Marie Fugo, chairman, National Restaurant Association.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters *April 2, 2001*

Trade Promotion Authority

The President. It's my honor to host a discussion on trade and its advantages to our country. I want to thank the leaders of the House and the Senate in both parties for being here. We've got a lot of work to do in order to get trade promotion authority, but I'm confident that we can work together to do so. It's in our Nation's best interest that we trade. It's in the interest of those who provide jobs. It's in the interest of our farmers and ranchers. It's in the interest of small-business owners. And as I was reminded, it's in the interest of those of us who care about our values as to how to spread our values around the world.

This is an issue that is going to require close cooperation between members of the Republican Party and the Democrat Party. But that's achievable because trade is an American issue, and it's an important American issue.

So I look forward to working with the Members. I'm honored you all are here. Thank you for coming. And Ambassador Zoellick, who is the Trade Representative, is working hard on the Hill. And when you all get back from recess, we'll be working with you to see if we can advance the cause.

Thanks for coming.

U.S. Navy Aircraft Incident

Q. Any progress on the Chinese, Mr. President?

The President. Nothing more to report.

Q. Is it safe to assume they boarded the plane?

The President. Nothing more to report. Gregory [David Gregory, NBC News], give it a rest, will you? [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:19 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With the Congressional Hispanic Caucus *April 2, 2001*

I thank you all for coming. It's my honor to welcome Chairman Reyes and members of the Hispanic Caucus here. I thank them for coming. It's going to give us a very good chance to get to know each other

on a personal basis, as well as to talk about some issues that are of deep concern to the Members of the Congress. And Mr. Chairman, I'm honored to have you here.