

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Vicente Fox of Mexico and
an Exchange With Reporters in Quebec City
April 21, 2001

President Bush. It's an honor for me to be with my friend, a friend of the United States, President Fox. He's a strong advocate of trade, and he's a strong advocate of good relations. Today I've decided that the first state dinner I will have as President of the United States will be with my friend Vicente Fox. We will have the state dinner in early fall, hopefully the month of September, depending upon our schedules. I look forward to a continued dialog on a lot of issues that concern our countries, a lot of issues that concern our hemisphere prior to the dinner. And of course, we look forward to welcoming you, sir, to Washington on that day.

President Fox. Yes, sir. Well, on my side, just to say that again we meet, and we meet always to keep the programs going, to keep the followup on the issues that we have been discussing. And I can say that we're working with speed, that we're moving ahead, and that issues like water that we—

President Bush. Yes.

President Fox. —have created back in San Cristobal, Mexico, is running along and the same—other issues, like migration, like the rest—excellent. And right now, here in this meeting in Quebec, the main concern I think is—to all of us is, how do we move with sufficient speed ahead on the trade agreement of the Americas, which, as we had the opportunity to see today, everybody is in favor of it. And now our common responsibility, joint responsibility, is to structure a solid, solid project so that it's going to be to the benefit of everybody, a win-win proposal.

I really appreciate the commitment and the enthusiasm that President Bush showed on his presentations today. I think that's what we need in Latin America, that kind of support, that kind of push, that kind

of dynamism that Latin America will take with our partner—in this case, the United States.

Missionary Aircraft Incident in Peru

Q. Mr. President, the United States had a surveillance aircraft tracking the missionary plane over Peru. Does the United States share any responsibility for it being shot down as a suspected drug plane?

President Bush. The United States is certainly upset by the fact that a citizen—two citizens lost their lives in Peru. Our hearts go out to the families, the community affected by the loss. I will wait to see all the facts before I reach any conclusions about blame. But right now, we mourn for the loss of a life—two lives. And I'm—

Labor and Environmental Protections in Trade Agreements

Q. In your speech today, you mentioned labor and environmental standards. Were you signaling that this will have to be part of future trade deals?

President Bush. I understand there's a lot of discussion about labor codicils and environmental codicils. What I was signaling is that we should not allow those codicils to destroy the spirit of free trade. In other words, a free trade agreement focuses on commerce, and that while I understand that some unionists are interested in making sure there's labor protections, I don't want those labor protections to be used to destroy the free trade agreement.

Secondly, it's very important for folks to understand that when there's more trade, there's more commerce, and there's more prosperity. And a prosperous society is more likely to be just. And a prosperous society is one more likely to have good environmental standards and be able to enforce those standards.

So I happen to think trade and clean air and trade and labor conditions—good labor conditions—go hand in hand. It's the poor nations that have trouble dealing with labor conditions. It's the poor nations that have trouble meeting their obligations to environmental quality. And I firmly believe, like my friend the President believes, that commerce and trade go hand in hand,

which will yield a more prosperous society all throughout the hemisphere.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:41 p.m. in the Club Executive Room at the Hilton Quebec. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Observance of Earth Day *April 21, 2001*

On April 22 each year for more than three decades, Americans have paused on Earth Day to celebrate the rich blessings of our Nation's natural resources and to take stock of our stewardship of nature's gifts. Each of us understands that our prosperity as a nation will mean little if our legacy to future generations is a world of polluted air, toxic waste, and vanished forests.

During the past 31 years, we have made progress on protecting our environment.

America is truly blessed with a vibrant and flourishing environment. But with blessings come responsibility. There is much more to do. As we celebrate Earth Day on this April 22, 2001, I encourage Americans to join me in renewing our commitment to protecting the environment and leaving our children and grandchildren with a legacy of clean water, clean air, and natural beauty.

The President's News Conference With Summit of the Americas Leaders in Quebec City *April 22, 2001*

[Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada opened the news conference with brief remarks in French, and a translation was not provided. He then continued in English.]

Prime Minister Chretien. We will start with the President of the United States.

President Bush. Mr. Prime Minister, thank you very much, and congratulations on a very successful summit. I want to thank you and your staff and the people of Quebec City for their hospitality.

I've been most impressed by the discussions we've had. It's clear to me that ours

is a hemisphere united by freedom. It's a partnership that will help us tackle the big challenges that we all face: the education of our children, HIV/AIDS, protecting our environment. It's a strong partnership. It's a partnership that will help us all achieve what we want—is that everybody in our respective countries are able to succeed and realize their dreams.

I want to thank my fellow leaders who were here. This is my first summit, as you know. I've been most impressed by the quality of leadership. I am most thankful