

Remarks Following a Meeting With Hispanic Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters in Miami, Florida

June 4, 2001

The President. It's been my honor to address community leaders from many nations in our hemisphere. Miami is the international capital of South America and Central America. It's one of the most vibrant cities in our Nation, and another reason why it's so culturally rich.

We had a wide-ranging discussion about different countries in our hemisphere. But I started off with a discussion about this administration's firm commitment to making sure our own neighborhood is free and democratic and trades—actively trades, so that we can promote wealth throughout the hemisphere. The best foreign policy for this country begins with having a neighborhood that's peaceful and free and secure and prosperous.

And I was able to share with the leaders here how pleased I was that the Summit of the Americas went well, particularly the embrace—the fact that 34 democratically elected leaders from our hemisphere, all but one nation, was represented there.

We had a great discussion, and it's so important for the President of the United States to sit at the same table with the leaders of this hemisphere. And they were—in our meetings where we were able just to sit around without a lot of people watching, we were able to have a free discussion. And they—I was able to explain

our vision; they were able to share their problems. And many times, this great Nation of ours would be willing to help as much as we possibly can.

I am confident and optimistic that our hemisphere is going to be more free and more prosperous than it's ever been. As we've discussed here, there are some problem areas, but that's what—that's what we need to do. We need to discuss the problem areas and come together to figure out ways to solve them.

Anyway, I'm so thankful and so gracious—I'm gracious that my brother Jeb is concerned about the hemisphere, as well. I'm thankful that Mel Martinez, a product of the State of Florida, has agreed to see the Cabinet. I'm also thankful that these two people from the United States Congress, two great leaders, are—[*applause*].

Thank you for coming.

Cuba

Q. [Inaudible]

The President. Yes, we'll talk about Cuba again, of course.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:05 p.m. at the Omni Colonnade Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Tax Relief Celebration in Tampa, Florida

June 4, 2001

The President. Thank you all very much. It is good to be back in the Tampa area. I remember the last time I was here was right around the corner, at the stadium.

Many of you were there. Thanks for coming then, and thanks for coming now.

I appreciate my brother giving me credit for the rain, but the truth of the matter is, the current Governor and the future

Governor gets credit for the rain, Jeb Bush. He's not only a great brother; he's a great Governor. He's the kind of fellow who does in office what he said he's going to do. We need more of that kind of talk in politics.

I'm honored to be traveling today with the Secretary of HUD, Mel Martinez, from the great State of Florida. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. We're here with members of the congressional delegation, Congressmen Davis, Miller, Young, and Putnam, and I want you all to give a huge round of applause for those Congressmen who were bold enough to vote for you to have a tax cut. [*Applause*] They did the right thing. They listened to the people. They heard the people speak loud and clear. And when that bill came up in front of the Congress, some of the members from this congressional delegation didn't blink; they did the right thing.

I'm honored to be here as well with Speaker Feeney and Senator McKay from the statehouse, hard-working members of the Florida delegation at the statehouse. I want to thank my friends, the Bellamy Brothers, for being here. It's good to see you all again. I want to thank my friend George Steinbrenner as well for opening up this beautiful park.

A year ago, tax relief was supposed to be a political impossibility. Six months ago, it was supposed to be a political liability. Today, folks, tax relief is reality. I have the honor of signing the largest tax relief bill in 20 years.

It's thanks to the American people that we're going to have meaningful tax relief. It's thanks to the thousands of hard-working Americans who made it clear at the ballot box, through phone calls, through e-mails, through letting everybody who is elected know that once we meet our needs at Washington, DC, it's important to always remember whose money we're spending. That surplus is not the Government's money. That surplus is the people's money. And in a couple of weeks, we're going to

start sending checks back to the American people.

This year, if you're single, you get a \$300 check. If you're raising a family, you get a \$600 check in the mail. Every taxpayer in America who wrote a check to the Government is going to start getting money back this year, as soon as possible. But that's just the beginning. That's just the beginning.

We're also going to cut all rates. You remember over the course of the campaign, ours was a campaign that made it clear we're going to be fair to the American people, that we didn't believe in the Washington talk about targeted tax cuts, that we felt that a targeted tax cut meant folks in Washington got to decide who won and who didn't win, that the best tax policy—the best tax relief policy was to say, if you pay taxes, you get relief, everybody who pays taxes in America. All rates will be cut. Everybody who pays taxes is going to get not only tax relief this year but tax relief in the coming years.

During the course of the campaign, we said how unfair the marriage penalty was. The marriage penalty is unfair, and we eased the penalty of marriage in the Tax Code coming down the road.

During the course of the campaign, I heard from hundreds of small-business owners and farmers and ranchers, who said loud and clear, "We're sick and tired of having our assets taxed twice," who said loud and clear, "The death tax is unfair." Under the bill I'm going to sign this week, we finally eliminate the death tax in the American Tax Code.

Tax relief is the right thing to do. It's an answer to a prayer, such as this one: "Lead us not into temptation." The big surplus accumulating in Washington was one great temptation for the spenders. And once we met basic needs, with a reasonable growth in our budget, instead of increasing the size of your Federal Government, what we decided to do was to put faith in the

American people. We would rather have you spend the money.

It's a fundamental difference of opinion. For those that voted against tax relief, they basically said to America, "We can spend your money better than you can."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. It's just a philosophical difference of opinion. But one of the things that's loud and clear in this campaign is there is a group of folks in Washington who now understand where the power of this country is; it's with the people.

This bill is more than just tax relief. It is more than just preventing Washington from growing the size of Government. This bill reflects a philosophy that says, we trust the American people more than we trust Government. It's a philosophy represented in the hundreds of tax families that I had the opportunity of campaigning with all across the country.

One such family is here with us today, the Fuller family: Stephen Fuller, Quita Fuller, Andrew and Anna Fuller. They're folks from this part of the world. He's a business manager. He's a hard-working man, and so is she. They're deeply concerned about their family and their family's future. This family will save \$1,925 when the tax relief plan is fully phased in. They will receive an \$800 check this year, because the child credit kicks in immediately and increases to \$1,000 per child.

And here's what the issue is about, folks. It's about, do you want the Fullers spending that \$1,900, or do you want the Federal Government?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. The people who stood on the side of tax relief understand we met our Nation's needs. But when it came down to it, with their aye vote they said, "We trust the Fullers to spend that \$1,900. It's their money to begin with." We think they can better allocate that money than the Federal Government. We think they know how best to save for their children. We think they know how best to set aside

money to make sure their family has got a safe and secure future. No, this tax relief bill is a victory for the American people.

There's a new attitude beginning to develop in Washington. This wasn't just a Republican bill. There were some wise Democrats that came along, too. And this coming Thursday, when I sit there at the White House and sign the bill, I'll be praising not only the Republicans who helped, but I'll be praising those Democrats who helped, as well. There's a new spirit in Washington, DC. There's a spirit of accomplishment. There's a spirit that says we can show the American people that it's possible to get positive things done. And we're just beginning.

We're working on an education bill that sets high standards for every child in America, a bill that trusts local people to run the schools, a bill that believes in accountability and results, a bill that says loud and clear, no child will be left behind in America.

We're strengthening the military. We will boost the pay for those who wear the uniform. We will improve the housing. We will improve the health benefits. And we will have a clear mission, which is to be trained well enough to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place.

Ours is the first administration in a long time that has laid out a vision for a secure energy policy for America. It talks about the need to conserve and to use technologies to bring more efficiencies to the use of energy. But it also talks about a realistic, commonsense way to protect our environment and, at the same time, bring new energy supplies, so consumers will be able to have safe and secure and reliable energy sources.

Ours is an administration that talks about Medicare and Social Security reform. No, there's a new spirit of accomplishment in Washington, DC, and there's a bigger task at hand, as well.

It's one thing to pass legislation, and that's going to be important. But there's a larger calling for this country. Our Nation must come together to unite, to usher in what I call an era of personal responsibility, an era in our country where each of us who is fortunate enough to be a mom or a dad tells our children on a daily basis, "We love you with all our heart;" an era in our country where if you're fortunate, you turn to a neighbor and say to a neighbor in need, "What can I do to help, brother? What can I do to help?" We must rally the great faith of America and the faith-based institutions across this land to provide help and care and comfort to people in need.

In order to usher in a period of responsibility, it requires all of us who are in positions of responsibility to understand the awesome responsibility we bear. It is my high honor to be the President of the greatest land on the face of the Earth. I take

this responsibility very seriously. I understand people watch the office, and I can promise you, I will not let you down.

We are just beginning to show the American people what's possible. And we're just beginning to help work with you, the moms and dads and hard-working honest citizens, to change our culture in America, so that this great land holds out its promise for every single citizen, so people aren't left behind, so we're united with a common purpose of one land, indivisible, under God.

Thank you all for coming. God bless. It's my honor.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:15 p.m. at Legends Field. In his remarks, he referred to Florid State Representative Tom Feeney; Florida State Senator John M. McKay; country/western singers David and Howard Belamy; and George M. Steinbrenner III, principal owner, New York Yankees.

Remarks to Habitat for Humanity Supporters in Tampa June 5, 2001

Thank you very much. Mel, thank you very much. I'm so honored Mel agreed to become the Cabinet Secretary of HUD. He brings a fresh look and a true spirit of compassion to the job, plus he's a Floridian. [Laughter] He's going to make a big difference.

It's great to be here with the Lieutenant Governor. Tell Governor Bush, I hope he slept in well. [Laughter] Here the rest of us are out working for a better Florida and a better America. [Laughter]

I'm so honored to be here with members of the congressional delegation Davis, Miller, Putnam, and Young. Thank you, Congressmen, for being here, and I look forward to flying back to Washington with you today.

Millard, it is an honor to be here with you. I talk about soldiers in the armies of compassion; Millard is the general, and Corporal Bush reported for duty today. [Laughter] I did run into Sergeant Doris Meyer. [Laughter] I can barely lift my arm. [Laughter] What a great, great honor it was to be here with Roger and the leadership of Habitat for this part of the State and all the volunteers, people who work hard, sweat hard, and end up the day with a beautiful smile on your face.

I really wish I could spend more time building. It is one of these moments of life where you realize there is something greater than yourself in life and that you get the joy of helping somebody help themselves.