

July 17 / Administration of George W. Bush, 2001

Statement on House of Representatives Action on National Energy Policy
Legislation
July 17, 2001

Today's actions in the House Resources Committee and in the House Energy and Commerce Committee represent important steps toward implementing a comprehensive and balanced energy policy. I am pleased that the committees are acting swiftly to increase energy efficiency, expand use of renewables, and open a small portion of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for environmentally responsible exploration.

For too long America has lacked a comprehensive national energy policy. My administration has proposed a plan that will reduce America's reliance on foreign oil through increased conservation and efficiency, improved infrastructure, and increased exploration. I commend the House committees for moving forward on these goals.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National
Emergency With Respect to Sierra Leone
July 17, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Sierra Leone

that was declared in Executive Order 13194 of January 18, 2001.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
July 17, 2001.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Interview With Foreign Journalists
July 17, 2001

The President. I'll make a few comments. Did anybody hear what I said at the World Bank? Nobody? [*Laughter*] You're kidding me. I spend all this time writing this speech, and nobody listens.

Here's what I said. I said that in Europe I talked about a house of freedom. I talked about opening doors; that means expanding freedom by enlarging NATO and the European Union. I also talked about opening windows, so that America, our allies, and

friends can more clearly see the problems that face those who are the developing world.

And so I laid out a strategy that I'm going to pursue in Genoa that, one, says that those of us who are prosperous must continue to put policies in place to enhance prosperity, lower taxes, less regulation, and free trade; secondly, that we have—must work together to develop a new security arrangement that will help address the

threats of the 21st century. In other words, prosperity for all must include a prosperous and stable world.

Secondly, I talked about open trade. I firmly—I said clearly, as clearly as I could, that the protesters in Italy have the right to express their opinion in a peaceful way. But they hurt the case of the poor when they argue against trade; they hurt the opportunities for developing nations to grow. As I said, my friend Ernesto Zedillo put it well. He said, the thing that troubles him is that it's clear that the protesters don't want the developing nations—

Assistant Press Secretary Mary Ellen Countryman. They want to protect the developing nations from development.

The President. Yes. All I was going to say is, it's clear they don't want the developing nations to have access to development, and he's right.

And thirdly, in order for developing nations to be able to succeed, our nations and our friends must work hard to enhance education, fight disease. I reminded folks that we were the first nation to step up with contribution to the HIV/AIDS fund. We're part of the strategy. We will put more in as the fund shows success. I believe you're going to see that, at the G-7, there will be a strong commitment for more contributions from nations represented here at the table. We contribute nearly a billion dollars a year in international aid to HIV/AIDS; that's more than double the second-largest donor in the world.

I talked about the need for the World Bank and multilateral banks to have more grants for education and health, as opposed to loans. I said that our Nation will work to develop a teacher training program in Africa.

My point is, is that part of enhancing world prosperity and world freedom—that those of us who are fortunate nations must work together to provide opportunity: trade, better health, and better education.

That was my speech; I'm sorry you missed it. [Laughter]

I'll be glad to answer a few questions.

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. I was going to kick off, as the British representative.

As you know, the peace process in Northern Ireland is at a critical stage and facing possible disaster at the moment. The Irish Prime Minister, the Catholic Deputy Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, moderate voices in both north and south have no less than 40 editorials in the American newspapers, including in the Washington Post and the New York Times, have called for decommissioning of weapons. I quote the latest one—the Houston Chronicle put it: “It is time, indeed, it is well past time for the IRA to honor its commitment to the Good Friday peace agreement by surrendering its weapons.”

Is it now also time now for U.S., as you prepare to visit Britain, to help break the logjam by calling on Sinn Fein and its IRA associates to move on surrendering of weapons and bring back stability to Northern Ireland?

The President. We strongly support of Tony Blair and Bertie Ahern's attempts to enact the Good Friday agreement. And one of the crucial points is decommissioning. And my Government stands side by side with those two governments and those two leaders in urging all sides to decommission, to disarm, and to enact the Good Friday agreements.

The situation in Northern Ireland is coming to a critical stage. I look forward to talking to my friend about the issue. As I said yesterday, I stand ready to help. But there should be no mistake that we believe the decommissioning part of the Good Friday agreement must be upheld.

Upcoming Visit With Pope John Paul II

Q. Mr. President, you're coming close to Italy and to the Holy See.

The President. Yes, I'm looking forward to it.

Q. What do you expect from your first meeting with His Holiness the Pope, considering his position on abortions, stem cell, the death penalty?

The President. Well, I expect to talk to a very principled man who speaks from strong convictions. And I look forward to being in the presence of a great world leader.

In my speech in Warsaw, I reminded people that His Holiness and his influence had amazing effect on transforming—an amazing effect to encourage freedom. I believe—I truly believe he's a great world leader, and I appreciate his efforts of reconciliation and healing. In my country, the Holy Father has an enormous impact, because the leaders of the Catholic Church, for example, stand strong on the principle of life. They also stand strong on making sure that those who have no voice are heard. And I respect the Catholic Church; I respect the leadership. And I look forward to a very frank discussion.

This will be my first chance to have met the Holy Father. It's not my first time to Rome, though.

Q. Are you a little excited?

The President. I'm very excited. You can't help but be excited and be thinking about being in the presence of a great leader, a man who has got such depth, such spiritual strength and depth. And he's had an enormous impact on the world.

And so I look forward to that, and I also look forward to seeing Rome again. I was there to visit my daughter, who went to school at the American School in Rome for a 6-month period of time. Laura and I went over to visit her; I believe it was in the fall of '98, right after my reelection as Governor of Texas. We had a wonderful experience, and I'm looking forward to going back.

Role of Market-Oriented Economies/ Strength of the Dollar

Q. Mr. President, the strong U.S. dollar is getting a real problem for the U.S. export industry. Are you worried about this? And a question related to this, the European countries a year ago, when they have been here at the IMF/World Bank meeting, they were talking about taking the role of an engine for the world economy. Do you think, or do you expect them to take this role, and, if, what do you think they're going to do?

The President. If the IMF should take a strong role for—

Q. No, the European countries taking a—

The President. Well, I think this. I think that—let me answer the dollar question second.

First, as to the role of market-oriented economies and democracies, we do have a role. And the first step is to make sure our economies are strong and that we trade freely between ourselves. That's why I urge—as a matter of fact today, if I'm not mistaken, the EU Trade Commissioner and Ambassador Zoellick, the trade commissioner for the U.S., are making a joint statement—if it's not today, it's soon—about the need to have a new global round of trade. In other words, I do believe that those of us who have got rule of law and transparency in our economies, who have got essentially market-oriented economies, have an opportunity to help spread wealth around the world.

In other words, if our economies don't grow, it's very difficult for African nations to grow. Because I remind you, I submit the only way for growth is for commerce and trade and capital to exchange across borders. So we do have a—but we've got to make sure our own economies grow. And part of the problem I think you're alluding to is the fact that our economy has slowed down.

And so we have—and I will talk about this, what we have done to, you know, enhance economic growth—one, we've got a tax stimulus package that's going to be kicking in here soon. I think the checks start actually going out this week. About \$40 billion will be injected into our economy over the next 3 months in terms of rebates. So that should help bolster consumer activity.

Secondly, the Fed has continued to act to cut rates. And whether they will or not in the future is up to Mr. Greenspan. It's an independent part of our Government.

But nevertheless, I can safely say to our partners, we're taking steps necessary to make sure our economy recovers, and that includes, by the way, addressing energy. And needless to say, we had a very frank discussion about energy in my last trip to Europe, and I suspect we'll have another frank discussion about energy.

One of the things—the Prime Minister of Canada and I have had a very interesting relationship, and one that will continue to grow, is over energy. He knows full well—and Canada, by the way, is now the largest supplier of energy to the United States, and there are some great opportunities for us to enhance natural gas deliverability into our country by cooperating in our own hemisphere.

My only point is that I will assure my friends and our trading partners that we're doing our part to strengthen our economy, but we've got to work to make sure we reduce trade barriers in order for prosperity to continue.

The strong dollar: The dollar is what it is based upon market. And the reason I say that is, our Government will not artificially enter markets. The market decides the strength of the dollar. And I would urge other countries, now, to do the same thing. A strong dollar has got, obviously, benefits and problems for us. One, it's harder to export, but it also helps attract capital. And much of our economy relies upon investors investing in the U.S. be-

cause of the dollar. And so we understand the pluses and minuses and, therefore, let the market determine the float of the dollar.

I don't know if that answered your question properly.

Japan's Economy/Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change

Q. My question is—I tried to follow up his question. So, Mr. President, you met Prime Minister Koizumi last month, and it was a very good meeting. But Prime Minister Koizumi tried hard to make serious structural reform, and then the Japanese economy continued to decline, and then the yen rate—the result is a weak yen and a stronger dollar. So, President, are you concerned about such a weak yen?

And may I—President, my second part of the question is on Kyoto Protocol issues. And President, you know the Japanese Government have been trying to persuade the United States to participate in Kyoto agreement, but the U.S. is still reluctant to join. So my question is, what will be the U.S. reaction if Japan move forward to sign the Kyoto agreement without U.S. commitment to join the agreement?

The President. Well, first I did have a great visit with your Prime Minister. I found him to be a very charming man and a courageous leader. He's tackling a very tough economic situation, a huge amount of debt. And he is willing to work hard to restructure and reform the economy so that there is, in fact, transparency and reality in the assessment of the Japanese economy. And I appreciate that a lot.

I said in my statement with him at Camp David that we firmly stand with him on his reforms. And of course there may be a consequence as to the yen and dollar relationship, but the market ought to make that decision. I believe Japan—and we hope that Japan does restructure her economy and fully address the loans and the debt overhang in a very constructive, forthright manner. I believe the Prime Minister

intends to do that, and I urge him and continue to encourage him to do so. And I appreciate his willingness to take on this very difficult issue, and I think the Japanese people appreciate that as well.

Secondly, we also had a long discussion about Kyoto, as I have with many of the leaders around the world, and I made it clear to all the world leaders that our country supports the goals. We just have differences on the methodology. I reminded the people that we spend a lot of money on understanding global warming, that we approach the issue from a science-based perspective, that the goals are unrealistic, however, and that the United States Congress—Senate made it very clear that they were unrealistic with a 95-to-nothing vote and that my assessment of the situation was upfront.

I explained to them as clearly as I could that our Nation will work to develop a strategy that other nations can understand clearly, but that they should make no mistake about it, that the idea of this particular treaty—of which there was a goal of—for example, setting a goal of carbon reductions by 1990—something less than the 1990 emissions was something that our country was unable to withstand. You know, some leaders were more sympathetic than others, I must confess.

Nevertheless, I do believe that people appreciated the frank assessment, and I believe they're going to appreciate the strategy that we lay out over time to help meet the needs. Each country has to make its own mind up as to how to proceed with this issue. Each country must—the parliaments of these countries must deliberate. The governments must be straightforward, it seems like to me, about the consequences. And we will see how other nations—I know how other nations have accepted my declaration; we'll see how they handle it with their own internal politics regarding this issue. But we can continue to cooperate and will cooperate on technology transfers.

You know, a new generation of nuclear power and the capacity to be able to handle the waste in a technologically feasible way makes a lot of sense. And our Nation is more than willing to invest in new technologies and to look at how to make the world more clean. I reminded the ministers and the leaders that this also relates to energy. And as one of the trading partners, significant trading partners for many countries, it seems like the nations would want our economy to continue to grow. And yet, in order to do so, we must address our energy needs.

There is a big debate in America right now about energy. But make no mistake about it, when you import nearly 60 percent of your product from overseas, that's a dependency upon foreign sources that can create instability.

Secondly, we've got to find—and the State of California was the best in conservation in the Nation. They're the best at putting conservation practices in place, but they ran out of energy. And so on the one hand, we've got to do a better job of conservation, and we will. The Vice President has spent a lot of time talking about that. But we've got to find more energy. They hadn't built a powerplant in 12 years in the State of California. And guess what? When you grow your State the way they have—in other words, the demand increases the way it has and there is no supply, it creates a problem. And we've got to address that. And it must be—and I put this in the context of an environmental strategy. And the two go hand in hand as far as we're concerned.

I talked very frankly to leaders around the table about the need for us to continue to come up with safe alternatives, safe disposal practices for nuclear energy. But our Nation needs to look into it, and so does the developing world, by the way, it seems like to me. And you know, some in Europe have a different perspective about nuclear energy. It's an important discussion, and we'll continue to consult with our friends.

Russia and NATO/Russia-China Friendship Pact

Q. First of all, I wanted to thank you for inviting us all in—it's a high—working in my life.

President Putin yesterday suggested that he wants a new security structure in Europe that would either involve Russia in NATO or NATO disbanded and a new infrastructure with Russia in it. I wonder whether you think such integration can really be on the table.

And also, the Russians and the Chinese have just concluded a new treaty on friendship. And both of those countries are firmly opposed to NMD, so I wonder if you are concerned about that issue.

The President. I can understand nations that share a large border wanting to work on a friendship agreement. It makes sense to me.

First, let me say, we did have a very constructive meeting in Slovenia. It was a very forthright, very straightforward, very open discussion about issues. And I made it very clear to Mr. Putin that Russia is no longer our Nation's enemy. And therefore, I don't think—the “therefore” of that is that we should not view each other with suspicion, that we ought to think seriously about working together to get rid of a document that codified a cold war distrust. That's what the ABM Treaty was. It was a document—when Russia and America divided the world into armed camps and we stared each other down with missiles.

I've spoken very clearly to the President that it's time for new leadership to develop a new strategic framework for peace. The threats that the ABM Treaty addressed no longer exists—no longer exists. There are new threats, new forms of terror: cyberterrorism, fundamentalist extremists, extremism that certainly threatens us, threatens Israel, who is our strong ally and friend, threatens Russia. We've got to deal with it, the threat in Europe, at some time, perhaps. We must deal with that issue. And

one way to do that is coordinate security arrangements, is to talk about how to—as to how to deal with the new threats but also is to be able to have the capacity to rid the world of blackmail, terrorist blackmail.

And so we had to have the capacity to shoot somebody's missile down if they threatened us. It's a defense, as opposed to relying on peace—but with offensive weapons, why don't we think about developing defensive systems. So I've read with interest the statements—I've been reading with interest the statements by a lot of people.

But this Nation, I'm committing this Nation to a more peaceful world by a realistic assessment of the threats. And we've got to address them, and I'm going to. And I continue to consult with our allies and friends, which I'm confident this topic will come up with Tony Blair. I look forward to explaining him my position. I did so with the Prime Minister; I have done so with the leaders of every nation represented here. I did so with Jean Chretien right here at this table during my first working dinner as the President of the United States. He sat right there, and we had this discussion.

I explained to him the philosophy behind my attitudes. I firmly believe it's the right thing to keep the peace. And I look forward to a continued dialog starting next—when—ever—Sunday, I guess it is, with Mr. Putin, on this very subject. I'm not going to speak for him, but I will tell you, he listened very carefully, and I appreciated that.

Now, the other question was—

Q. Can both sides belong to the same structure?

The President. Oh, oh, oh, NATO. Well, first of all, his vision, he mentioned this in our press conference in Slovenia, as well. He talked about a NATO that might at some point include Russia. I think that's what he was saying. You know, I found that to be an interesting comment, something worth noting.

In the meantime, however, there is a round of NATO expansion—the practicality is, there’s a round of NATO expansion next fall, a year from this coming fall, and I will reiterate what I said. It’s not a matter of when—I mean, it’s not a matter of if, it’s a matter of when. And countries that are making progress toward democracy and working hard to conform to the action plan, we ought to be very forward-leaning toward those countries. I gave it very—you should read my speech.

But I will tell you this: As Russia looks west, she finds no enemies. She finds no enemies. And that’s the way it’s going to be, so long as I’m the President.

Energy Policy in the Western Hemisphere

Q. I know you like energy questions, so I’ll throw a double-barreled energy question at you.

The President. Thank you, sir. The Canadians are always good about double-barreling. [Laughter]

Q. You’ve expressed a strong desire to get at the natural gas that’s in the Northwest Territories. How do you reconcile that with the very intense political pressure to bring the gas south, through Alaska, bypassing the Canadian resources? And secondly, you’ve talked about a continental energy policy, energy pact. You’ve got free trades with NAFTA. Would a logical next step, given the United States’ great need for water, be a water pact?

The President. Very interesting. Let me start with the energy. What Barrie [Barrie McKenna, Toronto Globe and Mail] is referring to is, there are competing visions about how to get natural gas from a gas-plentiful part of the world into American markets: One, an Alaska pipeline; and secondly, a Canadian pipeline—or perhaps a combination of the two. We’ve got a debate here in America about whether or not America ought to be exploring for natural gas in parts of our State of Alaska. It’s very similar to the Northwest Territories in Canada.

The Canadian Government has made—along, I might add, with the tribes in that part of the world—have made the decision that exploration for natural gas would not only be economically beneficial but can be done in a way that doesn’t harm the environment. I agree with their assessment. Whether or not the United States is willing to think along the same lines is an open question that is still going to be debated in the United States Senate. Nevertheless, my attitude is, we need supply. And therefore, I have committed myself to working with the Canadian Government to figure out how to get natural gas into the United States.

The quicker, the better, Barrie. And we are willing to work with your Government to figure out a way that can expeditiously move gas. He’s referring—you know, obviously, to the extent that it would be an American pipeline, a pipeline on American soil would make it easier for me politically. Nevertheless, I’m a practical man; I want the gas here.

We will continue to work on the Alaska pipeline. There are perhaps enough reserves to justify an Alaska pipeline. I know there’s enough reserve to justify a Canadian line. It’s conceivable we could have both, that would both feed the midwestern market and the western market.

The second issue is hemispheric energy, and that really pertains to—I don’t know if you know this, but Mexico is a net importer of gas. And so we’ve got all of us—three of us are continuing to meet on how best to make sure that all of us are able to fully explore the opportunities in the hemisphere. But so long as Mexico imports gas from America, it is gas that ultimately will be replaced by Canada in our market. And we’ve got to encourage Mexico, and I know that President Fox thinks this way, about enhancing exploration for what he calls “dry gas” in the country of Mexico.

As well, we’re working on electricity hookups. And one of the things that the Prime Minister and I have talked about,

the possibility of hydroelectric power generating in Canada, moving down through to particularly the Midwest. It requires a significant amount of capital outlay, but nevertheless, it's really worth the discussion.

Water is—I'm from a part of the world where—where I grew up, there was no water. And at one time, when the price of international crude oil got down to around \$10 a barrel, water was more valuable than oil, at least where we live. Water will forever be an issue in the United States, particularly the Western United States. I don't know exactly what you have in mind in terms of importation of water. I presume it's—perhaps some have suggested abandoned pipelines that used to carry energy. That's a possibility. I would be open to any discussions.

Our Nation must develop a comprehensive water strategy as we head—particularly as these Western States continued to grow. You know, one big debate we have in America is whether or not we build more reservoir space, more water storage, above-ground water storage. It is a battle, needless to say, that pits local conservationists versus those with agricultural interests, for example. And I've looked forward to discussing this with the Prime Minister, should he want to bring it up, at any time, because water is valuable for a lot of our countries. A lot of people don't need it, but when you head south and west, we do need it.

Q. Mr. President.

The President. Patrice [Patrice DeBeer, *Le Monde*].

European Union-U.S. Relations

Q. Yes. What is your vision, your master plan for U.S.-European relations, and more specifically, for U.S.-EU relations for 2008, until 2008 when you leave this house? Maybe this would be—

The President. I like an optimistic man. [Laughter]

Q. I'm not voting.

The President. But nevertheless, I appreciate it. [Laughter]

Q. Maybe this would reassure all those who have questions about the U.S. strategy.

The President. Well, I appreciate that. Yes. Look, when I first went to—my first trip to Europe was an icebreaker. You know, some of the leaders had come here, and we had visited. But a lot of folks had never—you know, they had read things about me, so they weren't able to hear my vision. They were told things through the newspapers; sometimes things were true, sometimes frankly not so true. But nevertheless, it gave me a chance to have a very honest dialog.

Patrice, I think they realize that, one, my Nation is firmly committed to NATO, the expansion of NATO. Our commitment to NATO is real. One of the big issues—that's important for people's vision of the American role—very important.

You know, during the course of the campaign, I made it clear that I thought that our military should be used to fight and win war—that's what I thought the military was for—and that I was concerned about peacekeeping missions and that we've got to be very clear about—to our friends and allies about how we use our troops for nation-building exercises, which I have rebuffed as a—basically rebuffed as a kind of a strategy for the military.

And as a result of that, some in Europe were very concerned about our presence in the Balkans, for example. And the Secretary of State reiterated my position very clearly early in the administration, and I had the opportunity to do so: "We came in together. We leave together." That's an important statement for people to understand, that our Nation will continue to work with our European friends—in this case, to bring stability to the Balkans and Macedonia. We're very much involved. We've got an Ambassador on the ground there working with the EU Ambassador to bring peace. There is a cease-fire. Progress is

being made. Our Nation is engaged and involved.

Having said that, it's important, however, to continue to work, though, to replace troops in a responsible manner with civil institutions, civil structures that can do the same thing the troops are doing. We've got to work for a police force and security arrangements that are run locally, so that the NATO troops at some point in time will no longer serve as peacekeepers. Now, that's obviously more opportunistic to do that in Bosnia than it is in Kosovo at this point in time, but nevertheless, we must do so.

In terms of the EU, I believe that we can have a very constructive relationship with the EU. Obviously, there are some concerns where we differ, but we shouldn't allow these differences—like biotechnology, for example, which I talked about today in my speech regarding developing nations. The U.N. came out—this is kind of an aside—the U.N. came out with a very interesting study that made it clear that biotech and biotechnology will enhance the ability of poor nations to grow more plentiful amounts of food. We agree with that position. And yet, we have a disagreement with our European friends on that, it seems like.

Nevertheless, we shouldn't allow those disagreements to undermine and to kind of diminish the fact that we share the same values. And it's the values that unite—not just the history but the values that unite America with Europe. The values of freedom, free press—I emphasize free press being exercised right here in the Family Dining Room at the White House—free speech—it will be exercised in Genoa, I suspect—[laughter]—free elections, free religion, basic values that we share. And our European friends, I believe, are beginning to understand that about me, that I respect Europe, I respect our history, but most of all, I respect the values of Europe, and that I will not let differences of opinion get in the way for the larger vision—and that is a Europe free and whole, a Europe

expanded, and a Europe in partnership with America.

And we'll have frank discussions. Look, the only thing I can do in these meetings, and I will do—I will just tell people what I think. I will represent my Government in a way that is forthright, transparent. People will know where we stand. And some will like it, and some won't like it. But they will always know that I will be willing to listen, discuss, and consult on issues of importance.

And I think people will find that my lecture is—my manner is not lecturing; it's hopeful and optimistic. It is, I believe that we can—I'm an optimistic man. I wouldn't be sitting here as the President if I didn't have an optimistic view of how we can work together.

And secondly, I think people will find that, as I said today, that I do embrace a kind of compassionate conservatism in the international arena that recognizes that those of us who are fortunate have an obligation to help the developing nations, the sick.

It is unbelievable that on my watch and on the watch of the other leaders around the table that Africa, for example, suffers the pandemic that it does. And we must come together, and we must take this issue incredibly seriously and work together to help develop—help Africans develop a strategy of education, treatment, and cure that will work, and help fund it, and crank up our NGOs to go help. And I think the people will see the strategy and—

Protests at Economic Summits

Q. Does it look to you that these big meetings are increasingly being held behind armed camps? You were in Quebec City; WTO is going to meet in the desert. In Genoa, they're on a boat, some of them, and Canada is talking about making it on a mountaintop next year.

The President. Let me say, I—in Quebec City, I don't know what percentage, but

I would say clearly 95 percent of the people were there to stage a peaceful protest about a variety of issues. Some anarchists wanted to make it difficult for the Canadian Government to conduct a meeting.

And in all due respect, those who try to disrupt and destroy and hurt are really defeating the cause of—their cause, it seems like to me. I think a lot of people in the world are just kind of sick of it. There is one thing to have an open dialog. It's another thing to try and hurt and destroy.

You know, secondly, as I said, the people who are protesting are hurting the poorer nations. If they're trying to undo trade, it seems like to me, their strategy and their philosophy will lock people into poverty. And I strongly disagree with them, and I made that clear in a speech today. You need to get the exact wording in the transcript. *[Laughter]*

There should be no question about my view, about what these voices of isolationism and protection are doing. They can couch it in any words they want, but they're condemning people to poverty, as far as I'm concerned. And you know what? They need to go and ask the people. Ask the African nations; ask what their hope is. Find out from the people that they're supposedly speaking on behalf of exactly what their opinion is, and they're going to find a different point of view.

I thought Quebec City was—first of all, I got to see Quebec City in kind of a near-empty state, which was beautiful. It was a fantastic venue. But obviously, any time you're meeting and you've got issues to discuss and there is tear gas wafting through the air, it kind of changes the atmosphere somewhat. But that's not going to prevent me from having a good dialog with the leaders.

The truth of the matter is, the discussions inside the halls of these buildings are fairly immune to what's going on. And the other thing is, there are some there, they

just want to get their picture on TV. And TV cameras are powerful incentive.

Thanks, everybody.

Argentina

Q. Are you concerned about Argentina?

The President. I am concerned about Argentina. I am concerned about Argentina, Marc [Marc Hujer, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*]. And our Nation is very much—you know, watching the situation very carefully. Late last night off the news—I'm sure the news reported—it looked like there was an agreement between the governors and the central government as to how to rein in spending, which is a very important step in a—direction that Argentina needs to go. We don't believe that the Argentinean situation—first of all, we think if the de la Rúa government continues to push for reform, we believe they can settle and calm the situation down so there is a platform for growth.

We also are watching very carefully this whole notion of contagion and don't believe it's going to be contagious if, in fact, it doesn't go the way that we hope it goes. But yes, we're concerned about it. We're also watching Turkey very carefully, as well.

Anyway, thanks. Enjoyed it.

NOTE: The interview began at 10:43 a.m. in the Old Family Dining Room at the White House, and the transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 18. In his remarks, the President referred to former President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland; European Union Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy; Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; President Vladimir Putin of Russia; President Vicente Fox of Mexico; and President Fernando de la Rúa of Argentina. Participants in the interview were: Patrice DeBeer, *Le Monde*; Ben

MacIntyre, Times of London; Barrie McKenna, Toronto Globe and Mail; Maurizio Molinari, La Stampa; Marc Hujer, Suddeutsche Zeitung; Masanori Matsui, Nihon Keizai

Shimbun; Andrei Sitov, TASS; Stephen Sackur, BBC-TV; and Giulio Borrelli, RAI-TV. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Exchange With Reporters in London, England July 19, 2001

Bipartisan Foreign Policy

Q. Mr. President, any comment on Senator Daschle's comments this morning, saying he was concerned about U.S. isolationism?

The President. One of the things that America has prided itself on is a bipartisan foreign policy, and I would hope that that tradition continues. It's a very important tradition. I think the people of America appreciate the foreign policy positions we've taken, that we're not retreating within our borders. But I'll represent the American interests.

And secondly, the world leaders have found that I'm a person who speaks plainly and openly about key issues. We're willing to listen, but I will still continue to stand for what I think is right for our country and the world.

I happen to believe missile defense is important to keep the world more peaceful, and I believe we need to work together to reduce greenhouse gases. But I refuse to accept a treaty that will harm our country's economy.

Q. Did Tom Daschle go too far? Did he break the tradition?

The President. I think that's going to be up for Tom Daschle to make up his own mind whether he did or not. I do believe it's important to have a bipartisan spirit when it comes to foreign policy. I would hope that tradition continues.

National Missile Defense/President's Schedule

Q. Putin backed off a little bit on the possibility yesterday of a missile defense thing.

The President. We're having a good discussion with President Putin on missile defenses. I was pleased to see his comments. Remember, I want you all to remember that he was the first world leader to indicate that perhaps we needed to think differently about the new threats of the 21st century.

He clearly talked about theater defenses, as well as the capacity to develop technologies to intercept missiles on launch. I still believe he understands that need. I look forward to discussing that with him in Genoa. It's going to be part of our dialog.

Now I'm going to go see Her Majesty. I look forward to renewing a friendship. I met her when she came to visit Washington, DC. My mother and dad kindly invited Laura to, and me, to the—a private lunch with her. And it's such an honor to go represent my country there at Buckingham Palace. And of course, we're off to see Prime Minister Blair. I'll be glad to visit with you after I visit Prime Minister Blair.

1991 Meeting With Queen Elizabeth II

Q. Is the "black sheep" story true, sir?

The President. You need to ask my mother. [Laughter] Yes. Very good research. Well researched.