

Remarks Following a Cabinet Meeting on the Legislative Agenda
August 3, 2001

Good afternoon. The Vice President and I are pleased to welcome the Cabinet to the Rose Garden. Together with Congress, we are proving that a new tone, a clear agenda, and active leadership can bring significant progress to the Nation's Capital. We are ending deadlock and drift and making our system work on behalf of the American people.

Six months ago I chose a distinguished Cabinet, took a solemn oath, and promised to fight for the things close to my heart. My administration pledged to bring stability and high standards to Washington and to lead for the sake of all Americans.

Six months later I'm proud of my Cabinet and the White House staff, who have worked with such energy and have brought integrity to their jobs. I'm grateful for the good will shown by Congress, and I am pleased with the progress we have made together, progress that touches every American family.

We acted quickly to pass the first major tax cut in a generation to help families in an economic slowdown and to help rebuild the momentum of our economy.

Both Houses of Congress have passed major education reform legislation, which will bring a new passion for excellence to America's public schools.

We have broken 6 years of gridlock in the task of protecting patients from arbitrary medical decisions made by bureaucrats.

The House has passed a bill to promote the work of mentoring groups, homeless shelters, and drug treatment facilities. And I have had positive discussions with leaders in the United States Senate on this matter.

The House has also passed an energy plan that addresses current needs.

We have put our foreign policy on sound footing. We are strengthening our relation-

ships with our allies and moving to build a world that trades more freely.

We have taken the first steps toward revitalizing and transforming our military so it can meet the threats and challenges of the future.

Today the Senate joined with the House to provide our farmers with \$5.5 billion of emergency help.

We passed a budget resolution that, for the first time in recent memory, has been respected, not ignored. And we are on our way to the second largest surplus in history, as well as paying down a significant amount of U.S. debt.

On this path, we are headed for a year of strong, meaningful legislative achievements. And I want to express my thanks for every legislator who made tough decisions, every legislator who chose long-term progress over short-term political gain.

There's much more to do. In September the second stage of our work begins, and I will be guided by a few goals. First, we must finish the work we have begun. On the topics of education and the disadvantaged, our Nation has needs that will not wait. Americans, come September, will be watching. They want us to be principled, not partisan. They want us to look for agreement instead of looking for fights and arguments. Americans know obstructionism when they see it, and when necessary, I will point it out.

Second, the Congress must live within the generous limits of our budget. Irresponsible spending is a threat to our economy and a threat to the essential functions of our Government. I will protect Medicare, Social Security, and our Armed Forces. And I will protect the American taxpayers. The Congress, through its budget resolution, has given its word on spending. So far, Congress has kept its word, and it must continue to do so.

Third, within a limited budget we must have an active, compassionate Government. Beginning in September, I'll be proposing creative ways to tackle some of the toughest problems in our society. We must take the side of parents trying to raise responsible, motivated, and moral children. We must help disadvantaged Americans find opportunity and ownership and the tools to succeed in our free economy. We must show that our welcoming society values the ideals and contributions of immigrants. We must challenge Americans to be citizens, not

spectators, in the renewal of their neighborhoods and their cities.

In a few days, I'm headed home to the heartland to listen to the American people and to talk about the values that unite and sustain our country. Members of Congress are going home as well. When we all come back in September, so many accomplishments are within our reach, and I look forward to the work ahead.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:21 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Remarks in a Ceremony Honoring Tour de France Champion Lance Armstrong *August 3, 2001*

The President. Please be seated. It's my privilege to welcome you all to the White House and to welcome my friend, a true champ, a great American, Lance Armstrong. America's incredibly proud of Lance, and I know two people who are really proud of him as well—that's Kristin, his wife, and young Luke. Thank you all for coming as well.

We're also honored to have Chris Fowler of ESPN here. I'm so—thank you for coming, Chris. I was telling Chris a little earlier, it's one of the programs I can watch on TV that doesn't say anything about me at all. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank the members of my Cabinet who are here. Thank you all for coming. I want to thank the Members of the United States Congress and the Senate who are here. I see a lot from the Texas delegation here that are sure proud of you.

You all know the Tour de France is perhaps the most physically demanding event in sports. It lasts 3 weeks, stretches over 2,100 miles, and is often run in both sweltering heat and real cold weather. In the end, the race is won or lost in the moun-

tains during 5 days of climbs that are incredibly steep and hazardous. That's when the heart is tested, and that's when Lance Armstrong excels. In the hardest part of the race, Lance reveals an unbending will, uncommon determination, and unquestioned courage. He has shown that courage in sport. He has also shown that courage in life.

Just a few years ago, Lance was diagnosed with cancer. He was weakened by chemotherapy treatments and told he had a 50–50 chance of living. He has done more than survive. He has triumphed.

One observer commented that when you survive cancer, the French Alps start to look like speed bumps. [*Laughter*]

Lance's story from cancer diagnosis to a third straight victory in the Tour de France is one of the great human stories. It is a story of character, and it's a story of class.

Germany's Jan Ullrich, the 1997 Tour de France champion, is Lance Armstrong's chief competitor. The two of them were leading during a critical stage of this year's Tour de France when Ullrich lost control