

Exchange With Reporters in Waco August 8, 2001

President's Construction Injury

Q. Mr. President, how's your finger?

The President. It must be a slow news day if you're worrying about my finger.

Q. Let's see it.

Q. Does it hurt much?

The President. Hurt? [*Laughter*] No. As I said, I dropped a little blood for voluntarism.

Q. From a hammer or a nail?

The President. It's the real world. It's part of keeping one's perspective. Washington's a wonderful place, but it's not exactly the real world, if you know what I mean.

President's Vacation

Q. Some of these folks say you're—when you're in Texas—you're taking too long of a vacation.

The President. They don't understand the definition of work, then. I'm getting a lot done. Secondly, you don't have to be in Washington to work. It's amazing what can happen with telephones and faxes.

Q. What are you doing the rest of the day?

The President. Karen Hughes is coming over. We're working on some things. And—

Q. Any in particular?

The President. She'll be over here; we'll work on a few things that matter.

Q. Oh, come on, you can tell me.

The President. I'm working on some initiatives. You'll see. There will be some decisions that will—I'm here, and we'll be announcing them as time goes on.

Stem Cell Research/National Security Issues

Q. Stem cell next week, maybe?

The President. It's a possibility.

Q. Where do you want to make that decision? Where do you want to announce it? Have you decided?

The President. I've got a lot of national security concerns that we're working on—Iraq, Macedonia, very worrisome right now. Kind of a blowup last night, and yesterday it looked like we had a peaceful resolution. It's now in doubt. Urge all—we're urging all the parties to get back to the table and renounce the violence. The Secretary of Defense and I are working on some projects. There will be some announcements.

Q. Have you thought about the kind of forum you'd like to announce the stem cell—what do you think would be appropriate?

The President. You're trying to get me to talk about it. My answer is still the same as it was the last 2 months.

Q. If I keep trying, you might slip.

The President. Well, I might—[*laughter*]—but I'm getting better disciplined than that. That was during the campaign that you caused me to slip. Now that I've figured you out—[*laughter*].

All righty, listen, it's good to see everybody. I hope everybody is enjoying themselves here. It's not that hot compared to Washington.

Q. That's actually true.

The President. What?

President's Vacation

Q. [*Inaudible*—before you run?

The President. When it gets to be 100. We ran yesterday around noon, which was good. And I'm probably not going to run today.

Q. Does the heat slow you down?

The President. A little bit, but the wind—there's wind on the prairie, and we go down the canyons. It's pretty cool down there.

Q. Mr. President, any plans to go back to Austin anytime soon?

The President. No, not this trip. Laura is going down, I think, to see some friends, but I'm not going. I'm going to Denver and Albuquerque next week, be going to Milwaukee, another city that we haven't announced yet after Milwaukee—[laughter]—hint—[laughter]—and then giving a speech in San Antonio.

Q. Tell us why you like the heat down here.

The President. I like the State. I love Texas; it's my home. And as I explained to people yesterday, this is where we're going to live. And just because my office is in Washington doesn't mean my home is not still in Texas. I love the people. I love the culture. I told the people in Midland when I left, I said, "We may have changed address, but my heart will still be in Texas." And you probably realize that we haven't spent much time in our new home, and there's kind of a settling-in period. And this is part of the adjustment to our new home, and the house is adjusting to us. And our builder is adjusting to our phone calls to come over and fix—parts of the new home. [Laughter]

Look, I'm sure it's going to be 95 in DC when we get back there in September, late August. I don't make my decisions based upon the temperature; I make my decisions based upon where I can get my job done and the fact that I'd like to be back in Texas. And I'm never going to leave Texas. This is where I like to go. Some people like to go to the East Coast; some people like to go to the West Coast; I like

to come to Texas. It's where I rest. It's where I do my work. It's where I see my friends. And that's just me, and people are going to have to adjust to it.

President's Construction Injury

Q. Sir, did you hit your finger while you were hammering?

The President. I may have hit it, or somebody may have hit it. I'm not telling. [Laughter]

Q. You've got good hand-eye coordination.

The President. You noticed—did you see that? Seven pounds per nail.

Q. Is that right?

The President. Yes.

Want a picture? All right, let's do it. We've got to get a family picture.

So how long have you been in this house, for 12 years? It's a beautiful home. You've got a new neighbor, Gladys. I volunteered Bubba to come and mow the lawn. [Laughter]

NOTE: The exchange began at 9:55 a.m. in front of the Gowan residence, following the President's participation in Habitat for Humanity's "World Leaders Build." In his remarks, the President referred to Otis and Thresa Gowan, Habitat for Humanity homeowners; and their neighbors Gladys Evans and her son, Edwinn "Bubba," whose home the President helped build. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Exchange With Reporters in Crawford, Texas August 8, 2001

Agriculture Assistance Legislation

The President. I've got some of the local farmers here. I'm going to explain to them the 5.5 supplemental I'm signing here pretty soon, emergency supplemental for—

President's Vacation

Q. How does it feel to be here with the people of Crawford?

The President. It's great to be here with the people of Crawford.