

NOTE: The President spoke at 2 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mark Yudof, president, and Don Lucia, head men's ice hockey coach, University of Minnesota; Kathryn Martin, chancellor, and Shannon Miller, head women's ice hockey coach, University of Minnesota-Duluth; Geno Auriemma, head women's basketball coach, University of Con-

necticut; and Dan Mote, president, and Gary Williams, head men's basketball coach, University of Maryland. The President honored the University of Connecticut's women's basketball team, the University of Maryland's men's basketball team, the University of Minnesota's men's ice hockey team, and the University of Minnesota-Duluth's women's ice hockey team.

## Statement on the Peace Process in Sudan *May 21, 2002*

Senator Danforth has made considerable progress in helping to bring both sides in Sudan's peace process closer to the negotiating table. I am grateful for Senator Danforth's efforts, and I have asked him to continue to serve as my envoy. The road ahead will be difficult. Lives continue to be lost, and conditions for the people of Sudan are hard.

Achieving peace will require verifiable action by both sides. We must see deeds, not just words. The Government of Sudan cannot make empty promises while con-

tinuing to wage war against its own people. It must stop interfering with food deliveries. It must stop attacking civilians. It must honor fully its commitments to Senator Danforth. It must accept that it cannot win the war. It must seek peace.

The United States is committed to helping the aggrieved people of the Sudan. We will continue to urge the parties toward peace at the talks in Kenya. To achieve a lasting and just peace, all parties at the talks must make every effort to ensure the discussions are a success.

## Statement on the Establishment of East Timor *May 21, 2002*

The United States salutes the establishment of East Timor, the first new nation of the millennium. With those in Dili, we celebrate the successful conclusion of the long struggle of the people of East Timor for an independent nation. We are heartened that the people of East Timor have embraced the path of democracy that will lead their nation to peace and prosperity. On behalf of the American people, I con-

gratulate Xanana Gusmao, who was sworn in as East Timor's first President.

The United Nations has played a pivotal role in bringing East Timor into the family of nations. We praise the contributions and efforts of the international community which helped make the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor a success.

May 21 / Administration of George W. Bush, 2002

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting  
Requests for Supplemental and Emergency Appropriations  
May 21, 2002

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed request for an FY 2002 supplemental appropriation for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This request is for an increase in the mandatory cost of disability compensation and pension benefits for veterans.

During the current year, VA has made dramatic improvements processing claims, significantly accelerating the rate of payments. This supplemental request for \$1.1 billion is needed to help pay the benefits associated with reducing the backlog of claims from previous years.

Absent this adjustment, there would be insufficient funds in September to pay the 2.5 million veterans who are entitled to benefits.

This transmittal also contains requests for FY 2002 supplemental appropriations for the legislative branch. As a matter of comity, appropriations requests of the legislative branch are transmitted without change.

Furthermore, in accordance with provisions of Public Law 107-63, the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2002, I hereby request and make available \$54.0 million in emergency appropriations for the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management. These emergency funds will be used to undertake necessary rehabilitation projects on lands damaged by wildland fires and to support fire suppression activities. I hereby designate this amount as an emergency requirement in accordance with section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as amended.

The details of these requests are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget. I concur with his comments and observations.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

Interview With European Journalists  
May 21, 2002

*The President.* I have a couple comments, and I'll answer some questions, obviously.

This is a trip that I've been looking forward to. I've never been to Germany; I'm looking forward to it. I've prepared a speech to the Bundestag, which is going to be a very interesting opportunity for me to talk about a very important relationship.

In my speech I'm going to refer to my trip to Russia as well, about how I view this as an opportunity—my trip to Russia and Germany and France and eventually

Italy—as a way to confirm the importance of our relationship bilaterally as well as institutions like NATO but as a way to talk about how welcoming Russia, Russia's vision into the West is important for all of us.

I look forward to my bilaterals with Gerhard Schroeder. We've got a good relationship. I look forward to my bilaterals with Jacques and Prime Minister Berlusconi, who is—three friends. As you know, I rely upon personal diplomacy a lot. I think it's easy, when people find areas