

Our histories have diverged, yet we seek to live by the same ideals. We believe in free markets, tempered by compassion. We believe in open societies that reflect unchanging truths. We believe in the value and dignity of every life.

These convictions bind our civilization together and set our enemies against us. These convictions are universally true and right. And they define our nations and our partnership in a unique way. And these beliefs lead us to fight tyranny and evil, as others have done before us.

One of the greatest Germans of the 20th century was Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who left the security of America to stand against Nazi rule. In a dark hour, he gave witness to the Gospel of life and paid the cost of his discipleship, being put to death only days before his camp was liberated. "I believe," said Bonhoeffer, "that God can and wants to create good out of everything, even evil."

That belief is proven in the history of Europe since that day, in the reconciliation and renewal that have transformed this continent. In America, very recently, we have also seen the horror of evil and the power of good. In the tests of our time, we are affirming our deepest values and our closest friendships. Inside this Chamber, across this city, throughout this nation and continent, America has valued friends. And with our friends we are building that house of freedom for our time and for all time.

May God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:13 p.m. in the Bundestag at the Reichstag. In his remarks, he referred to President Johannes Rau, Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, and former Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany.

Statement on the Conference on Improving Forest Health and Reducing Risk of Wildfire

May 23, 2002

I commend Secretary Norton and Secretary Veneman for their strong leadership in addressing the widespread problems of declining forest health and the risk of destructive wildfires, particularly in the West. Today's conference, highlighting the completion of the Ten Year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan, marks an important new cooperative effort between the Federal Government, States, local governments, Native American tribes, and concerned citizens and organizations. Working together, we will promote sound forest management to restore forest health and make the recreational opportunities and resources of our forests more accessible. In many areas, this will require active forest management efforts to thin our forests of

excessive natural fuels and restore native vegetation to our forests and rangelands.

Our goal is to reduce the threat that wildfires pose to homes, communities, and the environment. Severe drought conditions in many areas of the United States make it essential that we cooperate in our efforts to fight fires and reduce the fuel loads that cause them. Cooperation will also enable us to move forward on other important endeavors, such as improving the performance of the Northwest Forest Plan. I thank Governor Kempthorne and Governor Kitzhaber for their help in crafting this bipartisan agreement and for hosting this important conference.

NOTE: The statement referred to Gov. Kirk Kempthorne of Idaho and Gov. John A. Kitzhaber of Oregon.

Statement on Congressional Action on Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Legislation *May 23, 2002*

I applaud members of both parties, including Congressmen Tauzin and Dingell and Senators Kennedy, Gregg, and Frist, for acting on my proposals to protect Americans against bioterrorism. This legislation strengthens food safety and security, improves the ability of Federal, State, and local authorities to coordinate their response to possible bioterrorist attacks, and enhances surveillance and security over dangerous biological agents.

I commend the House and Senate for their hard work and look forward to signing this important bipartisan legislation into law.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 3448, the proposed "Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002."

Statement on Senate Action on Trade Legislation *May 23, 2002*

Today's passage by the Senate of a vital package of trade legislation is a critical step in advancing America's trade agenda and strengthening the U.S. economy. As I begin my trip here in Europe, the passage of this bill sends an important signal to our trading partners that we are committed to free and open trade.

Restoring trade promotion authority will give me the flexibility I need to secure the greatest possible trade opportunities for American workers, consumers, families, and farmers. The administration also supports expanding the Andean Trade Preferences Act in a way that reflects the economic realities of the region. ATPA will help the

Andean economies grow through legitimate trade, while also enhancing our counter-narcotics strategy.

Every day the United States goes without trade promotion authority is another day the American people are deprived of the benefits of trade. Therefore, I urge the House and Senate to convene a conference committee immediately so they can resolve their differences and send me a trade promotion authority bill I can sign at the earliest opportunity.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 3009, the proposed "Trade Act of 2002."