

Statement on Senate Failure To Permanently Repeal the Death Tax *June 12, 2002*

Today's failure by the Senate to permanently repeal the death tax is a disappointment to the American people. It is wrong that, as a result of a quirk in the law, millions of Americans will be subject to the

death tax beginning at the end of the decade. The Congress must fix this unfair tax and provide families with certainty so they can plan for the future.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Business Leaders *June 13, 2002*

The President. Thank you all for coming. And I want to thank the—some of our country's great corporate leaders for joining us in helping to save people's lives.

These leaders create value for their company, but they're also willing to work to create values in America. And for that, the country is better off.

You know, there's been a lot of talk about corporate responsibility here in America, and there needs to be. People who run their businesses need to do so in a way that treats their employees with respect and treats the communities in which they live with respect as well. And that's precisely what is happening as—with these companies. These leaders understand that there is more to just a balance sheet. They understand that value comes from encouraging their employees to make a difference in somebody's lives.

It's my honor to herald some of the—some of the really true leaders in our coun-

try, and I want to thank them for coming. I want to thank you all for your vision. I want to thank you for agreeing to work to expand the circle of corporate America that's willing to commit itself to improving our Nation so that pockets of despair become places of light and hope.

Steve Case is going to say a few comments, and Michael.

[*At this point, Stephen Case, chairman, AOL Time Warner, Inc., and Michael Eisner, chairman and chief executive officer, the Walt Disney Co., made brief remarks.*]

Q. A few business-related questions, sir? Sir, could we get a business-related question in this morning?

The President. I'll see you this afternoon.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:17 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister John Howard of Australia and an Exchange With Reporters *June 13, 2002*

President Bush. We're going to have an opening statement; the Prime Minister will.

I will call upon an American reporter. The Prime Minister will call upon an Australian

reporter. I will then call upon an American reporter. The Prime Minister will finish by calling on an Australian reporter.

Mr. Prime Minister, welcome.

Prime Minister Howard. Thank you.

President Bush. The United States has got a great friend in Australia, and I've got a personal friend in the Prime Minister. And I want to thank you for your steadfast support when it comes to fighting terror.

I reminded the people here in the meeting that the last time the Prime Minister and I visited here in America was on September the 10th, and our world was changed forever the next day. I found it really interesting that one of our best friends was with the President of the United States the day before the attack. And our best friend will be with us at the end of this war, too, and that's really comforting to know.

I look forward to working with you on a variety of issues. I look forward to coming to your country one day. The Prime Minister invited me to go down to Australia. I'd love to go. But I want to welcome you very much—an honor to call you friend.

Prime Minister Howard. Thank you very much, Mr. President. There is something rather poignant about us meeting again in this Oval Office and remembering the last time was the 10th of September. I said to the Congress yesterday that America had no better friend anywhere in the world than Australia. I want to put on record the admiration of the Australian people for the tremendous leadership that you've displayed, Mr. President, over the past 9 months.

Australia is a firm and faithful friend, and we are in there with you in the fight against terror. It still has a long way to go, and I think it's very important that the people don't imagine that the fight is anywhere near complete. And there will be a lot of commitment on our part, and we do respect and admire the contribution that you're making as the leader of the world's response.

And personally, can I thank you very warmly for your welcome and that of your administration. It was a real honor to address the other part of the United States Government yesterday and to talk to some of the Congressmen and to understand the processes of your form of democracy. We each have our own challenges. You have yours; I have mine. [Laughter]

But it's great to be here. And I said yesterday that Americans and Australians like each other and they find it easy to relate to each other. And I've certainly found that, at a personal level, with you, Mr. President. And thank you very much.

President Bush. Stretch [Richard Keil, Bloomberg News].

Future Palestinian State

Q. Mr. President, Secretary of State Powell has been talking to Arab and Middle Eastern media in recent days about you very soon having a timeline for Palestinian statehood. And he's also raised the possibility of a provisional or temporary Palestinian state to get the ball moving. Do those statements reflect your views? And how soon could we anticipate something from this?

President Bush. I'm—listen, I'm listening to a lot of opinion. I met today with the Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia. The Prime Minister and I talked about the subject. And I think it's probably wise for people not to spend a lot of time speculating.

I'm going to lay out my vision at some point in time. It's going to be a vision that will help lead toward two states living side by side. People are going to have to be—in order to achieve that vision, people are going to have to take responsibility. Israelis are going to have to be responsible; Palestinians are going to have to be responsible; the Arab world is going to have to assume responsibility to achieve this vision.

And there's one thing for certain that I strongly believe, and that is that we must build the institutions necessary for the evolution of a Palestinian state which can live

peacefully in the region and provide hope for the suffering Palestinian people.

Mr. Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Howard. [Inaudible]

Iraq

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, Vice President Dick Cheney has said in recent days that the problem of Iraq requires a direct response from both the United States and its allies. I just wonder whether you discussed that issue, whether, Mr. President, there was any timeline on what you would require from Australia?

Prime Minister Howard. Well, we discussed it. I think what's been said by the administration earlier on this was repeated. Clearly, Iraq's behavior has been—in relation to the weapons of mass destruction—has been offensive to many countries, including the United States and Australia. But the question of any action by the United States is a matter for the United States. And I've indicated before in Australia, and I repeat now, that if there are any approaches made to Australia, we'd consider them in the circumstances, at the time, if they occur.

President Bush. Yes, I told the Prime Minister there are no war plans on my desk. I haven't changed my opinion about Saddam Hussein, however. He is—this is a person who gassed his own people and possesses weapons of mass destruction. And so, as I told the American people and I told John, we'll use all tools at our disposal to deal with him. And of course, before there is any action—military action—I would closely consult with our close friend. But there are no plans on my desk right now.

Yes, John [John Roberts, CBS News].

New Source Review

Q. Mr. President, on the New Source Review changes that were announced by the EPA today, environmental groups say that this is a giveaway to industry that will actually increase pollution at these dirtiest

powerplants. One former member of the EPA who joined that organization under "Bush 41" said today that the new rules are disgraceful, sir. And I'm wondering what your opinion is.

President Bush. They're absolutely wrong. The New Source Review reforms, coupled with the clear skies legislation, will reduce pollution by approximately 70 percent. This administration is committed to clean air, and we're going to work vigorously to achieve clean air.

Trade Promotion Authority

Q. Mr. President, if Congress gives you trade approval, will a trade deal be a priority with Australia? And will Australian farmers get better access to American markets?

President Bush. Yes. I talked to John about the importance of trade. The qualifier was, if Congress were to give me trade promotion authority; I appreciate you qualifying it that way. I urge Congress to give me trade promotion authority, so—

Prime Minister Howard. So do I. [Laughter]

President Bush. —so we can have fruitful discussions with our friend. But first things first. And as you know, a bill passed the House, and one passed the Senate. And now it's time for them to get together and get the bill to me. And I would—more than willing to ask my man Zoellick to talk to the Australians, but only until and after we get TPA.

Listen, thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:41 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, President Bush referred to Minister of Foreign Affairs Saud al-Faysal al Saud of Saudi Arabia; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and U.S. Trade Representative Robert B. Zoellick.

Remarks to the 21st Century High Tech Forum
June 13, 2002

Thank you all. So I give Kvamme a salary, and he leads a standing ovation. Thank you. [*Laughter*]

Thank you all very much. I'm honored you're here. I particularly want to thank our panelists for sharing their wisdom. And I want to thank you all for taking time to come and visit about how to make sure our Nation is secure and strong and hopeful. I want to thank the members of my Cabinet who are here, Don Evans and Elaine Chao. I want to thank John Marburger for being here as well.

You know, we—these are extraordinary times. I remember campaigning, and somebody said, "Would you ever deficit spend?" I said, "Only if there was a war or a recession or a national emergency." [*Laughter*] I didn't think we were going to get the trifecta. [*Laughter*] But there's no doubt in my mind we can and will solve all three. And one of the keys to recovery on the economic side is a strong and vibrant high-tech industry. I know that; I understand the importance of productivity gains and what it means for average Americans.

My attitude is, as long as somebody's not working, we've got a problem. I know people here in Washington like to look at statistics, and that's fine. But so long as somebody wants to work and can't find work, people in Government need to think about ways to expand economic opportunity. And one way to do so is to make sure that our country is still on the cutting edge of productivity gains.

There's a practical application to high tech, by the way, one that's really come home to roost recently. And that is, you know, when it comes to the defense of our country, our high-tech gains have made a enormous difference.

Let me take a step back. We fight an enemy which is cruel and heartless and relentless. You just need to know that. And

even though we've made some progress—and we have; as I said the other night, we and our friends have hauled in about 2,400 of them. There's still a lot of them out there, which means this country is in for a long war. Particularly—and it's necessary because we're defending freedom. That's what you've got to know. And it's real, and we're going to have to deal with it.

And we can deal with it diplomatically, which we'll do. We've got a great coalition we've put together, and we'll keep the coalition together. We'll share intelligence, which we will continue to do, to make sure that we can find these killers wherever they try to hide. And at the same time, we'll continue to fight a guerrilla war with conventional means, because we're the best in the world with high technology.

The first battle in the war—first war of the 21st century—was in Afghanistan, as you know. And a lot of people said, "Well, it's impossible to fight that war there because of past experiences." And of course, we were somewhat mindful of history. And yet what people didn't realize was that because of precision-guided weapons, we were really accurate, which was bad news for the enemy, good news for the civilian population and coalition forces.

We fly a Predator airplane. Probably some of you all designed the programming and all the materials that make it work. We fly a Predator airplane now that has got the capacity on a real-time basis to send signals back to the United States about what's going on on the ground. It can fly at night; it flies at day. It gives people a pretty good look about what the enemy may or may not be doing. This Predator saves time, saves lives, is an incredibly important part of fighting a guerilla war with conventional means. It means our targeting is a heck of a lot more accurate.