

Remarks Honoring the 2002 World Series Champion Anaheim Angels  
May 27, 2003

*The President.* Thank you all. Please be seated, except for the players. [Laughter] It's my honor to welcome the world champion Anaheim Angels to the White House. Congratulations.

I understand some of the players were so excited that, well, like David Eckstein, who actually went out and purchased a suit. [Laughter] Fine looking. [Laughter] I don't know if David shared with the players here that I actually invited David for dinner. George Will and I hosted a baseball dinner here a while ago, and David came, and he didn't take any silverware. [Laughter]

I really want to congratulate the team owners. First, I want to congratulate you, Arte, for being an owner of the team. It's pretty quick how things happen here in America. You buy the team; now you're at the White House. [Laughter] But I think you and Carole will love baseball. I know Laura and I really enjoyed our time with the mighty Texas Rangers, although somewhat disappointed by the fact that we never actually got to come to the White House. But at least we're all in the American League West. How about that? So congratulations on becoming a new owner.

I also want to pay homage to Gene Autry. Gene was the owner of the team when I was fortunate enough to be in baseball, and he's an amazing guy. I know that he's smiling down now here on the—looking at the Rose Garden and realizing his beloved Angels have finally won the world championship. So I want to thank the players and the manager and the coaches for working hard to see to it that Gene Autry's dream came true.

I also want to give Jackie Autry my best, a person I got to know during baseball as well. She's a woman of strong opinions, but one of the things she did love most of all was the Angels.

And I'm glad my friend Sandy Alderson is here. It's good to see you, Sandy. He used to be the general manager of the Oakland A's, which was an unpleasant experience for not only the Angels but the Texas Rangers, playing the A's. But you're doing a great job as—running baseball operations. Sandy served our country in the Marine Corps. He's a guy that when the country called, he served. And I know you're as proud of the Marine Corps as I am, as how they handled their business in Iraq and freed the Iraqi people from the clutches of a barbaric regime. So, welcome.

I do want to congratulate Bill Stoneman, who's a fine executive. He's a good, steady fellow who did a great job. I called him after you all won, to pass on my congratulations. I know you're proud of the job he did, as well as all the business folks here, to make sure the operation runs well.

I want to congratulate Mike Scioscia. He's turned out to be a pretty good fellow, it looks like, you know—[laughter]—Manager of the Year, a good, steady guy. It's hard to bring a team from being 41 games down the year before to become the world champs. It says something about focus and desire and willingness to win. It speaks a lot about hope, and that always happens because you've got good management. Mike Scioscia is a—obviously, a good manager. I want to congratulate Mike.

I also want to say hello to my friend Mickey Hatcher. Obviously, we didn't do a very good job about checking the security of every person that came. [Laughter] I got to know Mickey when he was working for the Rangers. He was a breath of fresh air. I suspect you're still a breath of fresh air—[laughter]—occasionally a bad breath of fresh air. [Laughter] It's good to see you, Mick. Thanks for coming.

I want to thank all you all for being here. I particularly want to thank members

of my Cabinet, California fans Ann Veneman and Tony Principi, who are here to celebrate with you. I didn't realize we had this many Anaheim Angel fans in the White House. I see Ari Fleischer somewhere around here. He's not exactly an Anaheim Angel fan, but—as a matter of fact, he's a Yankee fan, and I appreciate the message you delivered him. [Laughter]

I want to congratulate the Texans who are on the team. [Laughter] You've got a boy from west Texas—no wonder you're the world champs—from Abilene, I believe Lackey is from. Good to see you, John. And Weber—Weber is not from—

*Manager Mike Scioscia.* We don't know where Weber is from.

*The President.* That's right. [Laughter]

*Manager Scioscia.* Web, where you from in Texas?

*Ben Weber.* Beaumont.

*The President.* Yes, that's good.

Where's Benji Gil? Oh, there he is. Benji Gil, I remember when he was fresh-faced rookie. [Laughter] He came up with the Rangers. It's amazing what facial hair does. [Laughter] But it's good to see you, Benji. Congratulations.

Where is the rally monkey? [Laughter]

*Audience member.* Woo-hoo!

*The President.* Oh, there he is. [Laughter] Keep your remarks short, please. [Laughter] I want to—first of all, I hope the players here forgive me for being the one owner who voted against the wild card system in baseball, if you know what I mean. [Laughter] There have been two teams in the history of Major League Baseball that have gone from the wild card to the world champs, and Anaheim is one.

I mentioned what that said to me. It was something about character that can overcome odds. The players here showed a lot of character. Baseball really is a team sport. The capacity for people to work together for 162 games, a long and grueling season, is an important part of being successful, which means players have to be willing to put aside their selfish interests,

that you have to be willing to work for something really greater than yourself.

And so one of the reasons why we like to host world champs here in the White House is to be able to remind our fellow citizens that there are certain ingredients necessary to become a champion. One of the key ingredients is to serve the team and not the individual statistic, and that's precisely what the members of the California Angels did.

It also gives me a chance to remind people who come to the White House that when you're a champ, you have a responsibility to the communities in which you live. There are a lot of kids who look at the world champs and wonder about the example you set. They look at you and say, "Is it okay to curse or drink or carouse?" And I hope the answer you give them, loud and clear, is, in order to be a champ, you've got to make right choices in life.

A champion is somebody who sets high standards and lives to those standards. A champion is somebody who assumes responsibility of a champion, which is to not only set a good example but, when you're in your community, use the spotlight that you've achieved to encourage our fellow citizens to love a neighbor just like you'd like to be loved yourself. I know many of you do that, because you're not only champions on the field, you're champions off the field as well.

Welcome to the White House. God bless your talents, and may God continue to bless America.

*Manager Scioscia.* Mr. President, it took us 42 years to say this, but we'd like to present you with a World Champion Anaheim Angel jersey that I know you'll wear proudly, and we apologize for going through your beloved Texas Rangers in the American League West. [Laughter] But thank you very much.

*The President.* Thank you, Mike. Good to see you all.

*Manager Scioscia.* Thanks for inviting us.

*The President.* Congratulations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:53 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to columnist George Will; Anaheim Angels owner Arturo Moreno and his wife, Carole; Jackie Autry, widow of former Angels owner Gene Autry; Sandy Alderson, executive vice president of baseball

operations, Major League Baseball; and vice president and general manager Bill Stoneman, manager Mike Scioscia, shortstop David Eckstein, starting pitcher John Lackey, relief pitcher Ben Weber, and second baseman Benji Gil, Anaheim Angels.

Remarks on Signing the United States Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003  
*May 27, 2003*

Thank you all very much. I'm so pleased that so many could be here to witness this historic moment, as our Nation sets forth a great mission of rescue. The United States of America has a long tradition of sacrifice in the cause of freedom, and we've got a long tradition of being generous in the service of humanity. We are the Nation of the Marshall plan, the Berlin airlift, and the Peace Corps. And now we're the Nation of the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.

HIV/AIDS is one of the greatest medical challenges of our time. The disease has killed more than 20 million people. Today, 42 million more are living with HIV. Across Africa, this disease is filling graveyards and creating orphans and leaving millions in a desperate fight for their own lives. They will not fight alone, because they will have the help and the friendship of the United States of America.

The legislation I sign today launches an emergency effort that will provide \$15 billion over the next 5 years to fight AIDS abroad. This is the largest single upfront commitment in history for an international public health initiative involving a specific disease.

America makes this commitment for a clear reason, directly rooted in our founding. We believe in the value and dignity of every human life. In the face of prevent-

able death and suffering, we have a moral duty to act, and we are acting.

I want to thank Tommy Thompson and Colin Powell for their leadership on this crucial issue. There are no better people than to trust in seeing that the great heart and compassion of America is recognized in our world through accomplishment.

I appreciate Tony Fauci, who's here. Tony has been on the frontline of the war against HIV/AIDS for a long time. And I appreciate you representing the National Institute of Allergies and Infectious Diseases. I appreciate Rich Carmona, who's the U.S. Surgeon General, for joining us. Thank you for being here, Rich. I want to thank a member of my staff, the Director of the Office of National AIDS Policy, Dr. Joseph O'Neill, for his leadership.

It is my honor to recognize Dr. Kenneth Kaunda; the former President of Zambia is with us today as well.

I'm grateful that the Ambassadors and the senior officials from African and Caribbean nations are with us. I appreciate their leadership. Send a message back home that we are earnest and determined to help you wipe out AIDS in your country.

I want to thank all the faith-based and community activists and leaders who are here who share our passion and desire to help those who suffer. Your efforts took