

and I believe it to be the threat that we have to take on and defeat. I really do.

President Bush. Good job. Thank you. I appreciate your coming. [*Inaudible*]

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 5:29 p.m. in the Cross Hall at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to

Cherie Blair, wife of Prime Minister Blair; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority; and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel. Prime Minister Blair referred to Sergio Vieira de Mello, U.N. Special Representative for Iraq. A reporter referred to John Walker Lindh, convicted American Taliban fighter.

Statement on the Death of Celia Cruz *July 17, 2003*

Celia Cruz was an international artist whose voice and talent entertained audiences around the world. Her success in the years following her departure from her beloved Cuba was a tribute to her perseverance, compassion, and love for life. Laura

joins me in sending our thoughts and prayers to her family and friends.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this statement.

Remarks on the HealthierUS Initiative in Dallas, Texas *July 18, 2003*

Thanks a lot. Please be seated. Thanks. It is nice to be home.

I am honored to be here at Lakewest YMCA. I've got to tell you, the facility is overwhelming. It is a beautiful facility, and I appreciate so very much the hospitality and the dedicated staff here.

Listen, we're here to talk about a health care plan that makes a lot of sense. And it's a health care plan that says if you exercise and eat healthy food, you will live longer. I mean, there is a lot of talk about treating chronic diseases and finding treatments and research and development. And that's great, and the country is on the leading edge of all kinds of new discoveries. But we've already discovered what works. And what works is to encourage people to exercise on a regular basis and to eat good foods. It's called preventative medicine. An integral part of any health care plan is to

encourage people to adapt the habits necessary to avoid disease in the first place. And that's what we're here to talk about, and that is what the YMCA does, and I'm grateful for that.

And there's no better place to start in encouraging healthy choices and exercise than with our children. And so Lynn and I were honored to go to the—some of these exercise classes and were pleased to see little youngsters doing jumping jacks—with enthusiasm, I might add—[*laughter*—counting out the number of stretches.

I mean, look, the YMCA is an integral part of a healthy America by encouraging our youngsters to exercise, to have fun, to get outside, to learn to eat good foods. We're really here to thank the Y, thank the Y here in west Dallas and thank the