

ratified by the Iraqi people. And by the end of next year, the Iraqi people will elect a parliament and establish a Government that is fully representative and truly free.

Difficult work in creating a new Iraqi Government remains. Yet Iraqis are equal to the tasks before them. The Iraqi people have shown the world that they are fully capable of living in freedom.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 3:51 p.m. on March 4 at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on March 6. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 5 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his address, the President referred to senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

The President's News Conference With President Vicente Fox of Mexico in Crawford, Texas

March 6, 2004

President Bush. Hola. Que tal? Bienvenidos.

President Fox. Gracias.

President Bush. Mr. President, Laura and I are pleased to welcome you and Marta to Crawford. I was honored as my first trip abroad as President to accept your invitation to your home in San Cristobal. We've met many times since. Today I'm pleased to host you here at our ranch.

Mexico and the United States are more than neighbors. We are partners in building a safer, more democratic, and more prosperous hemisphere. In this age of terror, the security of our borders is more important than ever, and the cooperation between Mexico and American border and law enforcement is stronger than ever.

Through the Border Partnership Agreement, our two nations are improving the infrastructure at ports of entry along our common border. We're using technology to allow law-abiding travelers to cross the border quickly and easily, while officials concentrate on stopping possible threats. Our Mexican and American officials are working together to arrest dangerous criminals, including drug smugglers and those who traffic in human beings. President Fox and I

are determined to protect the safety of American people and the Mexican people.

President Fox and I are continuing our efforts to support democracy in the region. I support the President's help in bringing order and stability to Haiti. As our efforts move forward, I welcome Mexico's further support.

Our two nations will continue to cochair the Bolivia Support Group to protect the institutions of democracy in that country. We will work with the Organization of American States to help ensure the integrity of the Presidential recall and referendum process underway in Venezuela.

I am committed to working with President Fox to expand free and fair trade between our nations. We've seen trade lift both our nations and both our economies. Over the past decade, trade between the United States and Mexico has nearly tripled to about \$230 billion. Today, Mexico is America's second-largest trading partner, and we are Mexico's largest.

We will continue to work together and with Canada to enhance our common prosperity. Selling American goods and services in foreign markets is vital to the American

economy. Selling our products abroad creates jobs for America. We must reject economic isolationism. There is no future in walling America off from the rest of the world. American workers and families, no less than the people of Mexico and the people of all nations, benefit from free and fair trade.

We will work to ensure a system of safe and orderly migration. Earlier this year, I proposed a temporary-worker program, not an amnesty program, that will offer legal status as temporary workers to undocumented men and women who were employed in the United States when I announced this proposal.

Under this program, America will also welcome workers from foreign countries who have been offered jobs by American employers that no American has filled. I oppose amnesty, placing undocumented workers on the automatic path to citizenship. This program will match willing workers with willing employers without disadvantaging those who have followed the law and waited in line to achieve American citizenship.

This new temporary-worker program will strengthen both the American and Mexican economies. The United States will benefit from the labor of hard-working immigrants. Mexico will benefit as productive citizens are able to return home with money to invest and spend in their Nation's economy.

This system will be more humane to workers, who will be protected by labor laws and able to establish their identities. It will live up to the highest ideals of free nations.

Mr. President, thank you for the excellent dialog we had today. Thank you for the leadership you provide for our neighbor and friend. And thank you for being a friend to Laura and me. *Bienvenidos*.

President Fox. Good morning. I would like to thank the President and his wife, Mrs. Laura Bush, for inviting us here to spend some time with them here at the

ranch at Crawford, some time for friendship and some time for hard work.

We have a long tradition of relationships and meetings with Presidents Bush and Fox, starting with the meeting in the ranch at San Cristobal, where we developed a work agenda. We spoke—both Presidents continue to review, looking forward to what lies ahead.

We know the value of the open relationship, commercial relationship, and the impact that it has had on both these nations and the unprecedented levels of prosperity that it brings to our people. It's a two-way street, a two-way commercial street. It's a buying and selling operation.

I would like to point out that Mexico buys from U.S., the United States, in volumes that equal the volumes of Germany, Spain, Italy, and France. All of this creates employment. And that's why we continue to revise the commercial agenda, and we can see that things are going well in this direction.

Immigration is a subject that is of shared responsibility between both our nations. But we have a shared definition about immigration. We have to work together to develop a legal system that is orderly and safe and respects the dignity of those involved. It is clear to us that the people who come to this country make a significant contribution to the American economy. And I underline the fact that I refer to those who are working to contribute to the economy.

And that is why we welcome President Bush's proposal that he made in January. And that is why, in our meetings, we worked to advance this proposal, and that's what we have been doing today. We welcome the news that was confirmed today with regard to visitors to the U.S. from Mexico. We recognize the value to those who come to the United States to work, to study, to contribute. And we appreciate what this will do to the flow of visitors now that they will not have to be photographed or fingerprinted at the frontier for

short visits to the United States. We appreciate what that will do to the flow of people coming to this country.

The other good news this year is the—about the NAFTA visa for professionals, that allows professionals to come and work in either country and contribute to both.

We also appreciate the recent visit of Secretary Ridge, talking about the cooperation in security between our countries. And we understand that this is progressing well and we have a solid and good basis to move forward, always respecting the security issues that are essential to both countries. We have spoken about competition and productivity and jobs. In order to allow the initiative of the United States, together with Canada, this will allow us to protect jobs in the region and, through the North American Initiative, contribute to the economies and to the workforce on both sides of the border.

In the fields of energy and industrial products, food products, sanitation systems, and systems for the protection of food products, the contributing opportunities for businesses, these are all subjects which are moving forward well. And we look forward to agreements with Canada in the near future that will contribute to the North American Initiative, which will benefit the three nations in this region.

Then in the area of the international relations, specifically in the Caribbean, we have been revising our joint efforts in that area. And we will continue to work in the areas of Haiti and Venezuela, Bolivia, and others in the region to promote democracy and human development and sustainable economic systems.

Thank you.

President Bush. How many questions, Scott? Two questions? *Dos preguntas por cada lado.*

Jennifer [Jennifer Loven, Associated Press].

National Economy

Q. Thank you, sir. Senator Kerry has been hitting you pretty hard on job growth. And yesterday's report gave his arguments a little bit more traction. Can you tell the American people why they shouldn't listen to his arguments and vote for you?

President Bush. The economy is getting stronger. We've overcome a lot. We've been through a recession. We've been through an attack. We've been through corporate scandals. We've been through war. And yet our economy is getting stronger. And the question is, who brings forth the best progrowth policies? You've heard us talk about the advantages of trade. This Nation must reject economic isolationism. We need less regulation. We need tort reform. We need to make sure the tax cuts are permanent. Raising taxes will make it harder for people to find work. We've got a pro-growth, pro-entrepreneur, pro-small-business agenda that is making this economy stronger.

Do you want to translate that? Okay. You don't have to. [Laughter]

[At this point, a translation was provided.]

President Bush. Make sure you tell them: Don't raise taxes. [Laughter]

[A translation was provided.]

President Bush. Like some others want to do.

[A translation was provided.]

President Bush. Okay, thank you. [Laughter]

[President Fox spoke in Spanish, and no translation was provided.]

President Bush. Blame it on me. [Laughter]

Corporate Responsibility

[A question was asked in Spanish, and no translation was provided.]

President Bush. Si, si. I understand. Comprendo.

First of all, President Fox has made it very clear that democracy and transparency and rule of law are integral values of Mexico. And where there is corruption, there will be law and justice, no matter who is responsible. And that is a commitment of this President, and it's a commitment I share because in our own country we've had corporate scandals. And what's important in both countries is to deal with these issues through rule of law and to hold people to account when they're guilty of betraying the trust.

Who do you want, Scott? Okay, how are you?

Q. Hi.

President Bush. Welcome. *Pelo roja.* [Laughter]

September 11

Q. Mr. President, some firefighters and families of the 9/11 victims—of the 9/11 victims want you to pull your campaign ad focusing on the tragedy. Are you prepared to honor their wishes?

President Bush. First of all, I will continue to speak about the effects of 9/11 on our country and my Presidency. I will continue to mourn the loss of life on that day, but I'll never forget the lessons. The terrorists declared war on us on that day, and I will continue to pursue this war. I have an obligation to those who died. I have an obligation to those who were heroic in their attempts to rescue, and I won't forget that obligation.

How this administration handled that day as well as the war on terror is worthy of discussion. And I look forward to discussing that with the American people. And I look forward to the debate about who best to lead this country in the war on terror.

Por fin.

Immigration Policy

[A question was asked in Spanish.]

President Bush. *Vamos a ver. Vamos a ver.* Go ahead, want to translate? To make sure I got all of it.

Interpreter. The question is on the immigration policy. The Government of Mexico wanted to know what the date certain would be for this new program or what proposals you have for temporary immigrants, and how do you believe it will affect the upcoming election process?

President Bush. Well, we just—the President just discussed the border crossing cards, the issue of the border crossing cards, and he discussed the professional visas. And so we're making progress.

I put forth what I think is a very reasonable proposal and a humane proposal, one that is not amnesty but in fact recognizes that there are good, honorable, hard-working people here doing jobs Americans won't do. And I certainly hope the Congress takes this issue up. But there's no telling what's going to happen in an election year, so it's very difficult to give a date. The date that matters to me is the date in which I laid out what I think is a reasonable plan, which was in January.

Mr. President, thank you.

President Fox. *Gracias.*

President Bush. Thank you all. Enjoy the rest of your day.

Attorney General Ashcroft

Q. Any word on John Ashcroft?

President Bush. I talked to him last night.

Q. How is he?

President Bush. He sounded groggy but optimistic that they'd get the pancreas settled down.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan. President Fox and some reporters spoke in Spanish, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks at a Bush-Cheney Luncheon in Dallas, Texas
March 8, 2004

Thank you all very much. Thanks for coming. I told Louis I like a short introduction. *[Laughter]* He didn't let me down. I'm glad you all are here. Nothing like spending the weekend in Texas, and there's nothing better than being with a bunch of friends. I'm so pleased that you all came. Thanks for being here. If you can't count on your home State in politics, you're in deep trouble.

Texas is going to be the cornerstone of the victory that Dick Cheney and I are going to achieve in November of 2004. And I appreciate so very much your loyal friendship. It just means a lot to Laura and me. Speaking about Laura, she is in New Orleans. She's eating lunch at Galatoire's, and you're stuck with me. *[Laughter]* But she's doing great. She's a fabulous First Lady.

And Dick Cheney is a great Vice President. I'm proud to have him standing by my side. I oftentimes say Dick Cheney is the country's greatest Vice President ever. Mother says, "Wait a second." *[Laughter]*

I appreciate my friend Louis Beecherl. He's been a longtime friend, and you can count on Louis. And Louis, I want to thank you for being the Dallas regional finance chair.

I'm honored to be on the stage with a man who's doing a fabulous job as the Governor of the great State of Texas, Rick Perry.

Texas is blessed to have two really good, fantastic United States Senators in Kay Bailey Hutchison and John Cornyn. I'm proud to call them friends. Thank you all for coming.

I want to thank Fred Meyer and Jeanne Johnson Phillips and Roger Williams and all the regional chairs and all the people who worked hard to fill up this hall. Thank you for your hard work. I want to thank my friend Mercer Reynolds from Cincinnati, Ohio, who is the national chairman

for Bush-Cheney '04. He's doing a really good job.

I want to thank the Members of the United States Congress who are here, starting with Ralph Hall. Ralph, I'm for you in tomorrow's primary. I wish you all the very best. Thank you. Glad you're here.

Chairman Joe Barton is with us. Joe, thanks for coming. I'm proud you're here. Appreciate you coming. Sam Johnson is with us today. Sam, thanks for coming. Good to see Shirley. I appreciate Pete Sessions. I'm glad you're here, Pete. Pete has got a big race. I'm pulling for him. Got to make sure you turn out to vote for this good Congressman.

I appreciate Michael Burgess being here as well. Michael, thank you for coming. Finally, a man who is making a mark as a good freshman Congressman, Jeb Hensarling. I appreciate you coming, Jeb.

I saw my friend Agricultural Commissioner Susan Combs. Thank you for being here. I know Victor Carrillo is with us today, railroad commissioner. Good to see you, Victor. Michael Williams is with us. Mike, good to see you. One time I was Michael's campaign chairman in the Republican primary in Midland County and helped him come in third. *[Laughter]* He got rid of me as his campaign chairman, and now he's doing big things statewide in the State of Texas. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank very much the speaker of the house who is with us today, Tommy Craddick from Midland. Where are you, Tommy? Thanks for coming. You're doing a fine job. All the members of the house and senate who are here, local officials.

But most importantly, I want to thank the grassroots activists. I want to thank you for what you're fixing to do, which is man those phones, put up the signs, and turn out a huge vote. We're counting on you.