

newest democracies, in Afghanistan and Iraq. I want to thank you for that as well.

I also appreciate the progress you've made in implementing the Ohrid Agreement. You've showed the world that it's possible for people of different backgrounds to live together in peace. I want to thank you for your leadership. I also compliment you on the progress you've made toward implementing the reforms necessary for consideration in NATO and the EU. I know this is a big concern to you. I want to thank you for sharing your thoughts with me about your country's desire to join NATO and your aspirations for the EU. I appreciate that very much. Thank you for your confidence.

All in all, I'm impressed by your leadership and welcome you to the Oval Office.

Prime Minister Buckovski. Thank you, Mr. President. I feel be here in the White House with President Bush—and the historic 10th anniversary of the U.S.-Macedonian bilateral relations, which I must say, have never been closer. We have agreed that today Macedonia is a success story in building a stable, multiethnic democracy in the Balkans.

I thanked President Bush for the continued U.S. support of our democracy, specifi-

cally for the U.S. role in the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, and to also express the gratitude of the people of Macedonia for U.S. recognition of our constitutional name, Republic of Macedonia.

And I told the President that we are proud to have our soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan, and that we intend to stay there as long as it is needed. We highly appreciate the leadership of President Bush—and advancing freedom and democracy throughout the world. We have both emphasized the importance of Macedonia's NATO integration and EU candidacy in cementing our progress and helping the region make the final step on the path of the Europe.

And finally, I told President Bush that Macedonia will continue to play a positive and constructive role in the Balkans, especially now, when Belgrade and Pristina, together, lead the international community, will start negotiation about eventual permanent status of Kosovo.

President Bush. Thank you. Appreciate you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:46 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks at the White House Conference on Helping America's Youth October 27, 2005

Thank you all. Thanks for the warm welcome to Laura. Please be seated. Thank you. I am the introducer—[laughter]—a rare role for me these days but one I've been looking forward to.

First of all, thank you all for coming. I want to thank Howard University for hosting this important summit. I love to be with the armies of compassion. At my State of the Union last year, I asked Laura to lead an initiative to help young people grow up to be successful adults. And since

that State of the Union, she has taken me up on my request, and she has traveled the country to observe and find best practices and programs that are changing people's lives for the better.

And so she called this summit to serve as a catalyst to continue to rally decent, honorable people who are working hard to make sure young Americans have a chance to realize the promise of this country. She is a great leader of this cause, a wonderful

wife, and a wonderful First Lady for our country.

Laura Bush.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:35 a.m. at Howard University. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Remarks During a Tour of Areas Damaged by Hurricane Wilma in Pompano Beach, Florida

October 27, 2005

I have come here with the Governor and the mayor of this area because I wanted to thank all the volunteers who've come down to help people in need. And it's—there's an amazing spirit after a disaster, and that spirit is the spirit of people willing to give of their time. I've also come to make sure the Federal response dovetails in with the State efforts. And people here—what I've heard are people concerned about gasoline. A lot of the gasoline—the lines that people are standing in will be alleviated by new ships coming in, and they'll be able to off-load the gasoline and make sure the stations have got fuel. But a lot of the gasoline issues relate to the fact that the electricity is not up and running.

I know people are frustrated because they don't have power on yet, but I've been told by Jeb and others that there are at least 6,000 people from out of State working with the power people here in-State to get people's lines up as quick as possible. In other words, this is a priority. People are working hard to get your electricity back on.

The mayor wanted me to make sure that I told the citizens here that water and ice

are moving quite rapidly, and that one of her concerns is generators. And Jeb and I spoke to her about the generators that are being moved from a central location to parts of Florida that need the generating capacity to get their life up and running.

Things don't happen instantly, but things are happening. Right here on this site people are getting fed. Soon, more and more houses will have their electricity back on and life will get back to normal. In the meantime, the Federal Government, working with the State and local governments, are responding as best as we possibly can.

Again, I'm impressed by the deep compassion and care of our fellow citizens. Out of these disasters oftentimes comes some good. And one of the good that comes out of a disaster is it gives people a chance to love a neighbor, to help somebody in need.

So thank you all for giving me a chance to come by.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:45 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; and Mayor Kristin D. Jacobs of Broward County, FL.