

The White House,
November 1, 2005.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D
at the end of this volume.

Message to the House of Representatives Returning an Enrolled Bill for Technical Corrections *November 1, 2005*

To the House of Representatives:

Consistent with House Concurrent Resolution 276, I am hereby returning the enrolled bill H.R. 3765, “An Act to extend through December 31, 2007, the authority of the Secretary of the Army to accept and expend funds contributed by non-Federal public entities to expedite the processing

of permits,” to the House of Representatives for the purposes of making necessary corrections.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
November 1, 2005.

Interview With Foreign Print Journalists *November 1, 2005*

The President. A couple of comments, and then I’ll answer some questions, two apiece. Then I’ve got to go back to work.

I’ve always felt that good foreign policy starts in your neighborhood. So this trip is a continuation of the United States working with different countries and me working with leaders to have a good relationship in the neighborhood. I remember the first Summit of the Americas I went to, which was in Canada. And in the opening comments, it struck me that it’s an amazing neighborhood when there’s only—every country is a democracy except for one.

And so part of the reason, to me, and part of the reasons to have multilateral diplomacy, which this is, coupled with a lot of bilateral action, is to continue to foster democracy. Democracy is the best hope of all. Democracy is the form of government that can best respond to the demands of the people.

I also strongly believe that we have a great opportunity to deal with job creation or poverty by putting a system in place

that encourages economic growth and entrepreneurship. At the first Summit of the Americas we talked about the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas, which basically says that a trading hemisphere is one that is more likely to be able to address the needs of people, more likely to be able to address poverty, more likely to be able to help countries’ balance sheets be firmed up.

Since then, we’ve entered into bilateral trading agreements with Chile, multilateral trading agreements with—through CAFTA-DR, and we’ll continue to pursue trading agreements bilaterally, multilaterally, as well as worldwide. And I’m looking forward to speaking to all my fellow friends and leaders down there about the Doha round, particularly President Lula. And we can talk about that, if you like, later on. But he’s played a very constructive role and can continue to play a constructive role in getting the Doha round up and running. The United States has an obligation to make

sure that we put forth policies that encourage the process to move on, and we've done so, particularly on agriculture, which is—people who follow this very closely understand this is a very difficult issue for some. And we took a leadership position on that.

But I'm looking forward to talking about that. And the reason why trade is so vital is because, particularly when addressing poverty, that, you know, grants and loans and—pale in comparison to the amount of good that can be done as commerce develops at all levels of government—at all levels of society, as a result of trade. The World Bank estimates that 300 million people will be eliminated from the poverty rolls as the result of a successful Doha round. And so that's going to be an important subject.

And finally, good governance is an important subject. One of the most interesting policy initiatives that this administration has put forward is called the Millennium Challenge Account, which basically says that if you're a poor country, that we want to participate in helping you, so long as you're honest and invest in the people through health and education. It's a good governance initiative that goes hand in hand with job creation, eliminating poverty, and democracy.

And so those are important subjects. So I'm looking forward to going. It's going to be a—I've never been to Argentina. I'm looking forward to going to Argentina. I hear it's a spectacular country. I've never been to Brazil. I'm looking forward to going to Brazil. And I've never been to Panama. So this will be a great experience for me to continue visiting these magnificent countries in our neighborhood.

With that, we'll start. Jorge [Jorge Elias, La Nacion], *como yo?*

Argentina-U.S. Relations/International Monetary Fund

Q. Mr. President, in Argentina, you will have a bilateral meeting with President Kirchner.

The President. Si.

Q. What I want to know—sources of the government told me that they would ask you about more cooperation on support for Argentina, you know, in the IMF fund—

The President. IMF.

Q. Exactly.

The President. Please don't tell me that the government leaks secrets about conversations to the—

Q. Well, I have my sources in the government.

The President. You do? Okay, well, I'm not going to ask you who they are, of course. [Laughter]

Q. No, please.

The President. Inside joke here, for my team. [Laughter] First of all, I was more than happy and my government was more than happy to help Argentina with the IMF crisis. We became involved with the government in trying to get the issue resolved. I think any objective observer would say that the U.S. participation was helpful. And we were more than pleased to do so. And by the way, our help was justified by the economic recovery of the country. It's been noteworthy for those who were skeptical about U.S. involvement in the IMF to see that the economy is growing robustly and that the government is stewards of the people's money and that Kirchner and his government did a good job of negotiating on behalf of the people of Argentina. So we've got a record of involvement.

Secondly, since he has proven himself to be capable of performing, it seems like to me that the best policy ought to be for the Argentina—Argentine Government to deal directly with the IMF, without the U.S. having to be a middleman. And so that's what I'll tell—I guess I just told him what's going to happen in the private meeting—[laughter]—is that—no, we will, of course, listen to any request from a friend. But it seems like to me that President Kirchner and his economic team, his financial team, has laid the groundwork for

being plenty capable of dealing with the IMF directly.

Paulo [Paulo Sotero, O Estado de San Paulo].

Brazil-U.S. Relations/Trade

Q. Mr. President, you have been very positive, sometimes even effusive about your relationship or your dialog with President Lula, and Brazil-U.S. relationship in general. But not much has come out of this, in terms of concrete initiatives. For instance, our main joint project, FTAA-ALCA has gone sort of backwards; it's stalled. So why is that so? Why is this dialog that superficially seems so good, doesn't produce more in terms of complete results?

The President. Well, first of all, we do have a good relationship, and I think that started with a lot of the observers. I'm not suggesting it started with you, Paulo, but nevertheless, I think people had this vision about George W. one way, and Lula the other, and that there's no way that these two men could possibly find common ground. I think that's—at least I sense that, particularly coming out of some of the South American press.

And yet our first meeting in the Oval Office was very warm and cordial. We shared the same deep concern to help alleviate hunger and poverty. We may have a different kind of political sense of things initially, but nevertheless, we share the same goals, and therefore have established a good, cordial, frank relationship.

Secondly, trade between Brazil and the United States is growing. That's important. That's not a given. Secondly, Doha—you're right, the FTAA has stalled; I agree. On the other hand, at this point in time, the Doha round really trumps the FTAA as a priority, because the Doha round not only involves our neighborhood, it involves the whole world. And I spoke to President Lula yesterday, and I thanked him for the spirit of cooperation on the Doha round. Brazil is a very important player in Doha. It commands the respect of not only the United

States and the EU but also other countries which may or may not follow its lead. But nevertheless, when Brazil speaks, people listen carefully.

And one of the parts of the strategy has been to make sure that—and, obviously, the Brazilian agriculture is an important issue for President Lula, as it is for the Brazilian people. And he has expressed concern in the past that the United States would be unwilling to make a subsidy—a statement on subsidies that is profound, which I just did. He appreciated it. Both of us were somewhat disappointed in the EU response, because the whole theory has been the EU and the United States show good faith on agriculture, the rest of the world will show good faith on services and intellectual property rights and the other issues that are important to get Doha moving.

But my only point is, there's been good cooperation. I mean, this—Doha hasn't finished yet, but it's important for the world, not only Brazil and America but for everybody else that Doha move forward, and there is a spirit of cooperation between Brazil and the United States to see if that can't get done. As a matter of fact, the previous ministerial on WTO—I remember speaking to President Lula about getting our trade ministers together. He agreed; I agreed, and so the process moved forward.

Thirdly, in our own hemisphere, we have issues such as Haiti. Brazil has been the leader of the peacekeeping force, has done very good work through the U.N.—through the United Nations. The United States is supportive of that process. As you know, we've got a lot of equity in Haiti, as does Brazil. It's important for us to work closely together, and we will. And we're involved with the democracy movement there, as is Brazil. So in other words, there's a collaborative effort to promote democracy in the neighborhood. So whether it be trade, or potential of even further trade, or whether it be working together on the science and

technology, sharing of science and technology, or whether it be in promoting democracy in the neighborhood, the relationship is vital and important.

Brazil is a big, big, important country in this world, and the United States recognizes that.

Betty [Betty Brannan], *La Prensa*.

Panama

Q. Yes, Mr. President. Do you see parallels between the U.S. invasion of Panama and the invasion now of Iraq? And does that—has that motivated your choice to go to Panama at this time?

The President. They're totally different circumstances, in that, obviously, one happened in our own neighborhood, one happened far away; one happened after fair warning, one happened after a long stay in the United Nations. Both actions, hopefully, will lead to democracies and a better world for the citizens in those countries in which they live.

And, no, I'm not going to Panama for that reason. I'm going to Panama because Panama is a friend. I'm going to Panama because I want to see the canal and thank the government and the Panamanian people for being such good stewards of the canal, of being smart on security matters, recognizing the importance of the canal for trade, and for doing a fine job. And I want to see the canal firsthand, which I've never seen.

I told the President when he was here, that I would consider coming. He's a good Texas A&M graduate, as you might know. We had a very cordial discussion, and I thought it would be a good thing to go there. I'm looking forward to it.

Secondly, I want to talk about trade. Panama is not a part of CAFTA. It makes sense for Panama to be a part of the trading process that's going on. CAFTA is very important. It's important for countries south of the CAFTA region. It's important for countries north of the CAFTA region. It's important that these young democracies

have a—you know, have the opportunity to sell products into our market, and we have an opportunity to sell products into their market on a level playing field, so as to create opportunities for people. Opening markets creates more markets. It could be markets for Argentina, markets for Brazil. The more available customers there are to businesses large and small, the more commerce will flow. And so CAFTA is important, and it makes sense for Panama to be considered to be a part of these trading agreements that are growing. And so I'm going for a lot of reasons. Thank you.

Macarena [Macarena Vidal Lij, EFE News Services].

U.S. Relations With Latin America

Q. Like the song.

The President. Si. Where do you live, Macarena?

Q. I live here.

The President. Oh, good. Where are you from?

Q. From Spain, but I ran away from that song 15 years ago. [*Laughter*] It's following me all over the world.

You have talked about the importance of having good relationships within the neighborhood, and yet there seem to be worrying signs for the U.S. and Latin America. The polls trend to growing anti-Americanism feeling in the region; the Secretary General in the OAS is not the man you backed at the beginning; either American summit that took place recently finished with a declaration that was not fully to the taste of the United States. Is the United States at risk of losing its influence in Latin America?

The President. Well, one reason why we have summits such as this is to remind people that we want to be good neighbors and good friends. And we share a lot of values, common values together. I mean, I'm going to a country, Argentina, that's a proud democracy. I'm going to a country, Brazil, which is—which has had a peaceful election, which was a very important step.

I'm going to Panama, which wasn't always a democracy and now is a flourishing democracy.

And it's a chance to say to people in the neighborhood, "We share values, rule of law, justice, human rights, human dignity, the right for women to participate equally in society." These are very powerful messages. I will come and say to the people, the leadership, and whoever is listening down there, that our markets are open, so long as you open your markets. In other words, let's have open markets. The United States has got a strong economy, and it makes sense for countries to want to trade with us, and we want to trade with them.

And so the message is one of jobs and democracy and honesty and open government. Look, I understand not everybody agrees with the decisions I've made, but that's not unique to Central or South America. Truth of the matter is, there's people who disagree with the decisions I've made all over the world. And I understand that, but that's what happens when you make decisions.

And so I feel like relations are good. I think just so long as America never abandons her principles, that are universal in application, that this country will be fine. And listen, politicians come and go, but what doesn't change is the importance of standing on principle and working with our friends in Central and South America that agree with the same principles.

As I repeat, I'm going to three countries that stand squarely on the principles. We may not agree on every issue. I understand that. And I don't expect people down there to—first of all, I don't think good relations necessarily mean somebody has to agree with America 100 percent of the time. That's not the definition of good relations. Good relations is mutual respect and a desire to work together to solve common problems and, most importantly, though, adherence to common values. I keep saying that.

Democracy is not an American value; it's a universal value. Human rights and human dignity is not uniquely American; it's important. It's important in Argentina as the history of your country has shown. It's very important in Brazil. It's been equally important in Panama, the notion of human rights and human dignity. There was a period of time in your country, just like there was a period of time in my country, where there wasn't a great adherence to human rights universally.

And so, the concept of democracy, as working through these issues, sharing experiences, and working together to continue the march of decency and freedom, is a very important part of this agenda.

Jorge, *uno mas*.

Venezuela/Energy

Q. Okay. Mr. President, President Chavez asked the Argentine Government to build a nuclear reactor for energy in Venezuela. Is that a danger for the region? Is that a danger for the United States?

The President. Repeat that again. Asked the Argentine Government to build a nuclear reactor?

Q. The Argentine Government to build a nuclear reactor for energy in Venezuela?

The President. Well, it's—my view is, is that there are international safeguards that are very important that all nations adhere to, that there must be total transparency. I have proposed that we think of an international concept of sharing highly enriched uranium necessary for the running of a nuclear powerplant, for power, with countries, and that—collecting that material and disposing of it in a reasonable and a sound way. It's—I guess if I were a taxpayer in Venezuela, I would wonder about the energy supply that Venezuela has.

But maybe it makes sense; I haven't really studied the proposal. And I look forward to—hope President Kirchner shares with me the concept, the notion, the idea.

Q. You will talk with him about this?

The President. If he wants to talk about it, I'd be curious to know. It's the first I've heard of it, and it's an interesting question.

President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil

Q. Mr. President, about relations, the building of democracy in our hemisphere, and for ideological—apart to the ideological reasons, apart for reasons relating to Brazil's own interest, President Lula has very close, friendly relationships with leaders that are considered enemies of the United States—Fidel Castro, Chavez, Evo Morales in Bolivia, that may become a President. But the U.S., and you reiterated that, continues to view Brazil as spark of the construction of democracy in our hemisphere. Could you explain to us how this dynamic works between you and President Lula, of having those different partners?

The President. Well, first of all, it's certainly not the role of the United States, nor me, to say to President Lula, "Here's your list of friends. You can't talk to somebody." He's the duly elected leader of a great country, and he can make decisions to discuss matters with whomever he chooses. And frankly, it may make sense, in his position as a giant country in South America to have relations with every leader on the—in South America or the Caribbean.

And so I've never really discussed with him who all his friends are. I never had that discussion. On the other hand, I do think it's useful at times if I've got concerns about matters in the hemisphere, to be able to pick up the phone to President Lula and say, "I've got a concern with so-and-so. I've got a concern about this. Would you mind looking into that," or, "Is there a chance we can work together to resolve a problem?"

Q. —would have done it.

The President. I've talked in general about my concerns about people eroding democratic institutions—I will never reveal a private conversation with another lead-

er—but I have. And frankly, it's—he's in a unique position, let's put it that way, and I respect that. And I think it's important that he be in a position of influence with a lot of countries in the hemisphere to promote the common values that we agree in.

No, I've got respect for President Lula. He's an interesting man. Obviously, we've come from different backgrounds and different perspectives, obviously different countries. And yet, he's—again I repeat to you my first—I'm kind of getting way off base here, but just to share some color. One of my most important initiatives is this Faith-Based and Community-Based Initiative here in the United States. I believe that oftentimes government is limited in its capacity to help save lives. And I know that there are grassroots programs that are more likely to be able to go into some of the most hopeless neighborhoods and to corners of despair and be able to help save lives by, first of all, being motivated by love, and it's sometimes helpful to have people motivated by love have access to money in order to be able to solve problems. And I felt like we ought to open up government funding to competitive bidding by faith-based organizations.

And I shared this with President Lula. And the reason—I shared this vision and this concept as a way to deal with some of society's intractable problems. And he was sharing with me his vision about dealing with his hunger initiative, for example. And so I was impressed by a person who is willing to take on some of these tough issues in order to make his respective country a better place, as I'm trying to do in mine.

Yes, Betty.

Panama-U.S. Relations

Q. My question is about security, Mr. President, in the region. Panama is a strategic location, which has been both a strength and a vulnerability. And whenever Panamanians hear talk about canal security

and frontier—border security with Colombia, there is the suspicion that perhaps the United States would like to reestablish a military presence on the isthmus, or at least recreate a military out of the police force we have, because we eliminated the army after the fall of the dictatorship. Could you address those concerns, please?

The President. We have no plans for a base, and sovereign governments are just that, they're sovereign. And if they say, "We'd like to work on some kind of security arrangement," that's not the case with Panama right now, but if that were the case, we'd be openminded. But we have no specific plans at all for a base. And let me ask my National Security Adviser to make sure I don't get out on a limb that you would then immediately saw off. [Laughter]

Q. Not I.

The President. Good. But, no, I mean, one reason why you have good, strong diplomatic relations is that you're able just to share thoughts and talk about issues that matter. But no, there's no plans for that.

Q. Or for some kind of military presence that is less than a base, or forward operating location or something?

The President. I'm not aware of that, if that's the case. I presume the President, if he is interested in discussing that with me, like a forward operating base, would be—will bring it up to me. Let me just say, it hasn't made it to the Oval Office yet, and so if there's any rumors to that effect, I would chalk them up as rumors.

Q. Thank you.

The President. But I'm confident that if this is on his mind, he'll bring it up. I don't recall he brought it up the last time he was in the Oval Office. Again, violating the principle of telling private conversations to journalists.

Macarena.

U.S. Relations With Latin America

Q. I promise I won't dance.

The President. You can dance here. You'd be the first person to dance on the Roosevelt table since I've been the President.

Q. I'm not supposed to be the star. [Laughter]

The President. Pretty good sense of humor there, Macarena. Very good.

Q. Thanks. What do you think about the prospective of—in the Bolivian election, the victory of an overtly leftist candidate, Evo Morales, of his peasant movement? And in that case, are you worried about a possible "axis of evil" in Latin America—Venezuela and Bolivia?

The President. Macarena, one thing is, is that I've learned not to make political forecasts and prognostications, whether it be here at home or elsewhere. The thing that we're interested in is fair elections, free and fair elections where people have the chance to express themselves at the ballot box. And that's what democracy is all about—free from foreign influence, free from corruption, open elections, so that people can feel free and comfortable to vote. And that's what we look at. We don't—I don't speak out trying to interfere in the local process.

And so, we will see how the people vote. With our Embassy, of course, we'll be there involved with—at least to the extent asked to be involved, with making sure the elections are free and fair. And that's all you can ask. And then the people will decide who they want, and that's what democracy does. Democracy—and that's what, by the way, differentiates democracy from other forms of government. Sometimes you've had different forms of government in our own hemisphere and around the world, where the people don't decide but an elite decides, a handful of people gets to decide the fate of the people. And that, throughout history, has led to resentment and hatreds and turmoil and conflict.

And that's why this trip is important, because it will give us a chance to, again,

speak to these universal values and universal truths. And one of the universal truths is, democracies lead to peace. Democracies don't fight each other. Democracies are capable of having different types of leaders be able to work in concert to solve common problems. Democracies respond to—and by responding to the will of the people, democracy tends to be able to more likely lift up people, give people a chance to succeed. I strongly believe that. And I believe that these concepts are applicable to all peoples.

I believe freedom is universal. It's not contained within one country or one religion or one type of person. There's a universality to freedom. I believe mothers around the world desire their children to grow up in freedom. It doesn't matter whether you're Muslim, Christian, Jew, Hindu. That's what I believe. And I believe if you speak Spanish or English—it doesn't matter—you want to be free—or Portuguese.

And so these are valuable lessons that we should have—that we must learn around the world. And to the extent that people adhere to those principles, the United States of America says, the people matter. On the other hand, if we think that people are disrupting the normal course of democracy, unwinding institutions

such as the free press, not allowing people to worship freely, we'll speak up. We'll speak up, as I hope others do as well.

As I say, there's universality to freedom that's important, and those of us who are fortunate enough to live in free and democratic societies should work to encourage others to make sure they hold those institutions dear. There are just some institutions that are vital for a society to be free and open and transparent, for the good of the people, for the good of the people.

Listen, thanks for coming by. Looking forward to the trip.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 1:18 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to President Nestor Kirchner of Argentina; and President Martin Torrijos Espino of Panama. Journalists referred to Secretary General Jose Miguel Insulza of the Organization of the American States; President Hugo Chavez Frias of Venezuela; President Fidel Castro Ruz of Cuba; and Evo Morales, Presidential candidate in Bolivia. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 2. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this interview. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks at a State Dinner Honoring Prince Charles and Duchess Camilla of the United Kingdom

November 2, 2005

The President. Your Royal Highness, it is a great honor for Laura and me to host you and Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Cornwall at the White House. Your visit is a reminder of the unique and enduring bond between the United Kingdom and the United States. Americans know that we have no greater friend than the United Kingdom. And it's my sincere hope that

the United Kingdom knows it has no greater admirer than the United States.

Our nations are intimately linked through deep historical and cultural ties, through active commercial and political bonds, and through shared values. Nowhere are those shared values more nobly expressed than in our common commitment to expanding freedom in this world.