

Statement on the Death of Milton Friedman *November 17, 2006*

America has lost one of its greatest citizens. Milton Friedman was a revolutionary thinker and extraordinary economist whose work helped advance human dignity and human freedom.

A champion of limited government and personal freedom, Friedman proposed bold ideas about school choice, tax reductions, and an all-volunteer army that serve as the foundation of many of America's most successful Government reforms. His work demonstrated that free markets are the great engines of economic development.

His writings laid the groundwork that transformed many of the world's central banks, helping deliver economic stability and improved living standards in countries around the world.

Milton Friedman, a recipient of the Nobel Prize, will be remembered as one of the most influential economists in history. The Nation is grateful for his profound contributions.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the Friedman family.

Remarks at a State Banquet Hosted by President Nguyen Minh Triet of Vietnam in Hanoi *November 17, 2006*

Mr. President and Madam Chi, the reason I'm smiling is because I'm really happy to be here, and so is Laura. And we thank you for your warm hospitality. First, I want to congratulate you for your success on hosting APEC. I'm confident our fellow leaders will have the same sense of gratitude and respect that we feel from the Vietnamese people.

Vietnam is a remarkable country. For decades, you had been torn apart by war. Today, the Vietnamese people are at peace and seeing the benefits of reform. The Vietnamese own their own businesses, and today, the Vietnamese economy is the fastest growing in Southeast Asia. Vietnamese students have great opportunities here at home and abroad. The Vietnamese people are traveling around the world and sharing this ancient culture with peoples of the world. And the United States, as well as other APEC partners, look forward to strengthening our ties.

The American people welcome the progress of Vietnam. And we want to continue to work together to better our relations. We will work with you to help combat avian flu and HIV/AIDS. We have signed agreements to protect religious freedom. We strongly support Vietnam in the World Trade Organization.

Vietnam is a country that's taking its rightful place as a strong and vibrant nation. Mr. President, your leadership is helping your country succeed. I can see it as I drive on the streets; the people of your country have hope. And I hope they know, as a result of my visit, they have the friendship of the American people.

And so, Mr. President, I would like to propose a toast to you and Madam Chi and to the fine people of Vietnam.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 7:15 p.m. at the International Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Tran Thi Kim Chi, wife of President Triet.