

Remarks Following a Meeting With Economic Advisers on the National Economy

March 17, 2008

Mr. Secretary, thank you very much for coming by today to talk about the economic situation. We'll be meeting later on this afternoon with the President's task force on financial markets.

First of all, you know, the Secretary has given me an update. One thing is for certain: We're under—we're in challenging times. But another thing is for certain, that we've taken strong and decisive action. The Federal Reserve has moved quickly to bring order to the financial markets. Secretary Paulson has been—is supportive of that action, as am I. And I want to thank you, Mr. Secretary, for working over the weekend. You've shown the country and the world that the United States is on top of the situation.

Secondly, you've reaffirmed the fact that our financial institutions are strong and that our capital markets are functioning efficiently and effectively. We obviously will continue to monitor the situation and, when need be, will act decisively, in a way that continues to bring order to the financial markets.

In the long run, our economy is going to be fine. Right now we're dealing with a difficult situation. And, Mr. Secretary, I want to thank you very much for your steady and strong and consistent leadership.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:40 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland

March 17, 2008

President Bush. *Taoiseach*, welcome, and happy Saint Patrick's Day. It's always a joy to welcome the *Taoiseach* here to the Oval Office. And it's a reminder of the unbelievably powerful influence the Irish have had on the development and prosperity of the United States of America. We're a richer country because of Irish Americans. And, Mr. Prime Minister, Ireland is a great friend and ally, and I want to thank you for your friendship over these years.

We discussed a variety of issues. In particular, we talked about Northern Ireland. And the *Taoiseach* gets a lot of credit for showing a steady hand during a difficult period. And yet as a result of perseverance and hard work, Northern Ireland is a different place than it was last year. And we

congratulate the leaders there. And I just want the folks to know, what I told the *Taoiseach* is true, that the United States will continue to stay engaged and will be very supportive of helping the process move forward.

And there's more work to be done, we fully understand, in Northern Ireland. But also, there's a really interesting chance for people from our country to see the investment opportunities available in Northern Ireland. And this May, there's a Northern Ireland investment conference, which the United States will strongly support. And, *Taoiseach*, like I told you, we'll send a strong delegation to look at the opportunities available there.