

with us. And Senator Harkin, thanks for being here.

Senator Thomas R. Harkin. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. You know, these are tough times for the people of Iowa City and Cedar Rapids and a lot of other communities in Iowa. Some of them are, you know, real tiny communities. And this—obviously, as you can see here, they're still going through a recovery phase. The mayor was telling me that she had the—part of the city evacuated and now some folks are able to come back in.

I brought a lot of Federal officials with me because it's really important that as the rebuilding phase begins, there's a coordinated effort between the Federal Government and the State and the local governments. And Michael Chertoff is going to be handling the coordinating effort with the Governor. And the Governor will make sure that the affected communities are represented as well.

We passed a—or the Congress is contemplating passing a supplemental, and a big chunk of that supplemental will be disaster relief money. And I want to thank the Members of Congress—hope we can get that done quickly.

Representative David W. Loebsack. It will get done.

The President. The—one of the things that happens in a disaster such as this is that citizens from around the country want to know how they can help. They see the picture of this kind of flooding on TV and they know that people are hurting and they

want to know how they can participate in helping the rebuilding. Well, one way that the people can do is they can go on their computers and dial up volunteer.org [volunteer.gov].*

And you know, if you want to try to figure out how to send something, you can—there will be ways to—ways to direct your compassion. If you want to give money, there are organizations that could use your contributions; organizations such as the Red Cross. And I'm—again, I'll repeat to you: volunteer.gov; I think I might have said “org,” I meant “gov.”

And I really again want to congratulate the local folks here for really showing great compassion and working hard and hugging people and giving people hope. And, Governor, you've been out front. You and your first lady are working hard, and the mayor has been very much engaged in helping people deal with the initial response. And now we all got to come together and help people deal with the rebuilding of Iowa.

Anyway, thank you for your hospitality. I'm sorry we're going through this. I tell people that oftentimes you get dealt a hand you didn't expect to have to play, and the question is not whether you're going to get dealt the hand; the question is, how do you play it? And I'm confident the people of Iowa will play it really well.

Anyway, thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Regenia Bailey of Iowa City, IA; and Gov. Chester J. Culver of Iowa and his wife Mari.

Message on the Observance of Juneteenth

June 19, 2008

I send greetings to those celebrating Juneteenth.

On Juneteenth, we commemorate the arrival of Major General Gordon Granger in

* White House correction.

Galveston, Texas, and his declaration that slavery had been abolished and the blessings of liberty were finally extended to African Americans.

On this occasion, we recognize the many contributions that African Americans have made to our great Nation and honor the legacy of diversity that America has embraced. Today is an opportunity to recommit ourselves to confronting injustice wherever we find it and upholding the dignity

of all people. By doing so, we protect the freedom and democratic ideals that will keep America strong for generations to come.

Laura and I send our best wishes on this memorable occasion.

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Remarks at a Celebration of American Jazz June 19, 2008

Welcome to the East Room of the White House. I welcome members of my Cabinet and my administration; a music lover, Senator Orrin Hatch from the great State of Utah; distinguished guests. We're so pleased you're here to celebrate a great American art form: jazz. And we hope you're jazz lovers, because you're going to hear some good music tonight.

The story of jazz mirrors the story of our Nation. This proud musical tradition was born of the songs brought here by African slaves. Decades later, it absorbed the waltzes that accompanied immigrants from Europe. Over time, jazz helped break down barriers of prejudice between blacks and whites and even defined an age that brought new liberty to America's women.

In a twist of history, the music that came to America in chains ultimately helped America spread freedom abroad. In 1956, the State Department sent American jazz musician Dizzy Gillespie around the world on a mission to trumpet American values. He was in Turkey when word came that a group of Cypriot students stoned the U.S. Embassy in Athens. And so he was sent to the Greek capital to soothe anti-Amer-

ican hostility with a jazz performance. The concert atmosphere was tense. The students stormed the stage. People were nervous, until the students put Dizzy Gillespie on their shoulders and shouted "Dizzy! Dizzy! Dizzy!" [*Laughter*]

With its spontaneity and energy and innovation, jazz expresses the best of America's character. And through a—its role in fostering freedom and equality, jazz reflects the best of America's ideals. Tonight this magnificent art form will be brought to life by some jazz masters. Grammy award winning guitarist Earl Klugh will play for us after dinner. And before dinner, we're honored to hear from saxophonist Davey Yarborough, vocalist Esther Williams from the Washington Jazz Arts Institute.

Before Davey and Esther take the stage, please join me in a toast to American jazz, but more importantly, to the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:36 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.