

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate.

Remarks Prior to a Cabinet Meeting
October 15, 2008

I called my Cabinet together for them to get a full understanding of the extraordinary actions we've taken. Many of the Cabinet members are involved with helping make sure this economy is strong in the future, no Cabinet member more involved than Secretary Paulson. And we have taken extraordinary measures because these are extraordinary circumstances.

As I said yesterday, it's very important for the American people to know that the program is designed to preserve free enterprise, not replace free enterprise. Decisions we took to enhance liquidity and make sure our financial instruments are strong is a temporary decision. For example, the equity purchases in the banks is designed so that these shares will eventually be sold back to the Government [banks].*

Secondly, the program is limited. In other words, the Government will buy only a certain number of shares in individual banks. These banks will be privately controlled. In other words, the liquidity measures being taken are structured such that the Government will be a passive investor. In other words, there won't be Government officials sitting on the boards of private companies.

These are extraordinary measures, no question about it. But they're well thought out, they are necessary, and I'm confident in the long run, this economy will come back.

Mr. Secretary, I want to thank you and your team for working hard during these extraordinary times.

We analyzed the situation very carefully. And the American people must understand that this carefully structured plan is aimed at helping you. If I'd have thought this situation would have been contained only to Wall Street, we'd have had a different response. But in our judgment, had we not acted decisively at the time we did, the credit crunch, the inability for banks in your communities to loan to your businesses, would have affected the working people and the small businesses of America. And that's unacceptable to me, and that's unacceptable to this Cabinet.

And so I'm looking forward to going to Michigan today to talk to small-business owners and community bankers and workers that have been affected by the economy. I'm looking forward to hearing what they have to say. And I'm looking forward to sharing my thoughts about why the Government has taken these temporary measures designed to make sure that their lives are, you know, have the best shot at dealing with this financial crisis.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:57 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House.

* White House correction.

Remarks Following a Video Teleconference With Iraq Provincial Reconstruction Team Leaders and Brigade Combat Commanders
October 15, 2008

I've just finished a meeting with our Ambassador and General Odierno, members of our—some of the PRTs, Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq, four folks who have been spending time in Iraq. We are having success in Iraq. And one of the main reasons why is we're implementing an innovative strategy that combines our military with civilian expertise to help people at the grassroots level build a society that will lay the foundations for peace.

And so it's been a fascinating discussion, and I come away with a couple of thoughts. One, America is fortunate to have courageous souls volunteer to help develop an ally in the war against extremists, to develop a democracy in a part of the world where a lot of people said a democracy could never flourish; and secondly, that we

are implementing a strategy in the Provinces which is effective.

The good thing about our military and our civilians in the PRTs, they're constantly looking at ways to make sure that we remain effective. And I have asked the press corps to come in here so I could, on TV, thank you all for what you're doing and thank you for your service. We are fortunate to have citizens such as yourself.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:32 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Ryan C. Crocker; and Gen. Raymond T. Odierno, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Business Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters in Ada, Michigan
October 15, 2008

The President. First of all, I want to thank leaders and small businesses and workers here in Grand Rapids for joining me. I explained to them why I felt the rescue plan was necessary. I explained to them that I was worried that if we did not do something about the financial situation, the economics would affect a lot of hard-working people all throughout our country, including right here in western Michigan.

So we moved with a plan big enough to make a difference, a plan with features in it that will cause investments to be temporary, because I frankly don't want the Government being involved with busi-

nesses, owning businesses. It's not—I don't think it's good for the country. It was necessary that the stock be purchased to help us through this financial crisis, but in the long run, it's not good for the country. And so the plan is structured to get Government in a position where these investments will be returned to the taxpayers. And it's likely, not only—by the way, that we'll not only get most of the money back, but in some cases, actually make a little money.

I made it a plan that is effective so it helps small-business owners. The man who owns the bike shop here, he's got to pay for his inventory. And yet because of the crisis, people are worried about whether