

I'm impressed by the fact that you want to take a strong stand against corruption. There's nothing more discouraging than to have the government of a people steal their money.

And so we stand with you. It's—you got a hard job. I understand that. But you bring the right spirit to the job. And so I want to welcome you to the White House and thank you for your conversation.

*President Lugo.* First of all, thank you very much for the invitation. It is a commitment and a joy to be able to reinforce our historic relationship with the United States.

Many people have asked, "Why now?" And I think that it's particularly important to visit President Bush in his last days in the White House because we think it's very important to impress upon the world the importance of democratic institutions.

*President Bush.* Thank you.

*President Lugo.* And also because we believe that we, as individual people, pass. We have written that our personal history is not as important as the history of our respective peoples.

In Paraguay, I have entered politics in order to change the history of our country. We have not come into politics in order to get into the smokeless industry that is to steal from the people of the country. We came in as Christians, because our Christian duty is to serve the poorest and the neediest of our people. And today, as President of Paraguay, we're taking on all of the challenges with the greatest serenity possible so that we can help our people.

We are profoundly hurt in our souls by poverty, by the exodus of our young people, by the lack of education, by people who don't have roofs over their heads. We are profoundly moved by those people. But that pain is also impregnated with courage and decisiveness. And we have said since the very beginning that if there was anything that was to distinguish our Government, it would be international solidarity.

I'll never forget that when I talked to one of our agricultural people, one of the people out in the country, a farmer who said: "What we need is bread. We don't care if it comes from the left hand or from the right hand. We just need somebody to give us food." And that's why we're here, because the Paraguayans have asked us to be here as President to try to recover Paraguay's dignity as a nation.

And I told President Bush that we have a lot of dreams, collective dreams, but also my personal dream. And our dream is that Paraguay be known not for its corruption, but for its transparency and for its dignity as a people and as a country. And we believe, we're convinced, that we will be able to achieve that.

Thank you.

*President Bush.* *Si. Gracias, señor.* Thank you, sir. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. President Lugo spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

## Remarks Honoring President Theodore Roosevelt's 150th Birthday October 27, 2008

Thank you all. Please be seated. Okay, don't be seated. Thank you all very much. Job, thank you for the fantastic performance. John Milton Cooper, we appreciate

you reading. I had an interesting piece of history dropped on me tonight by Mrs. Cooper. They met on Capitol Hill when she was an intern for Senator Prescott S.

Bush, father of President 41, grandfather of President 43. And we welcome you both here. Thank you for coming.

And of course, it's good to see President Roosevelt. [Laughter] Oftentimes people ask me, "Do you ever see any of the ghosts of your predecessors here in the White House?" I said, "No, I quit drinking." [Laughter] But we just saw one.

Members of the Cabinet, thank you for coming. Former Governor of North Dakota, now the Secretary of Agriculture, is with us. That last song must have made you feel pretty good, Governor.

I'm proud to be here with Congressman Pete King. Thanks for coming, Congressman. I appreciate you and your wife coming. The Roosevelt family—members of the Roosevelt family are here tonight. We welcome you back to the White House. Distinguished guests, Laura and I are thrilled that you came to celebrate the 150th birthday of one of the greatest statesmen in our Nation's history, Theodore Roosevelt. I call him Theodore. [Laughter] Occasionally, call him T.R. [Laughter]

We remember many of our Presidents as leaders made for a unique moment in our history. President Roosevelt, as John said, was a man for all seasons. He was a soldier who won the Medal of Honor, a peacemaker who won the Nobel Prize. He was one of the world's most daring big game hunters and a leading advocate for conservation of our country's natural resources. He was an intellectual who sometimes read several books a day, as John mentioned. And he wrestled here at the White House.

He was a man who felt at home on a sprawling ranch in the West. He believed

in the importance of a strenuous life of exercise. I can relate to that. President Roosevelt also was an advocate for simplifying spelling in America. During his Presidency, one Member of Congress said that President Roosevelt's efforts would create confusion and discord in the English language. I can relate to that. [Laughter]

Nearly 100 years after his Presidency, Theodore Roosevelt's legacy still endures here at the White House. Laura gave you an account of the legacy that still endures. He endures in the West Wing as well. Right across the door of the Oval Office is what was his former office, known as the Roosevelt Room. Above the fireplace hangs a portrait of the 26th President on horseback during the Spanish-American War. That portrait is a reminder. When I look at it I think about the character and courage that is necessary for any President. For the past 8 years, his legacy has been an inspiration to me. It will be an inspiration to the person who replaces me, and it will be an inspiration for all Presidents to come.

We thank you for joining us. And please now join us for a reception in the State Dining Room. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:05 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to entertainer Job Christenson; John Milton Cooper, Jr., professor of history, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and his wife Judith; Rosemary King, wife of Rep. Peter King; and Theodore Roosevelt impersonator Joseph Wiegand. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Masoud Barzani of the Kurdistan Region in Iraq  
October 29, 2008

*President Bush.* President Barzani, welcome back to the Oval Office. It's been a while since we have seen each other, but we have talked on the phone quite frequently, and the reason why is because you've played a very instrumental part in the development of a free Iraq. And I thank you for your leadership, and I thank you for your personal friendship.

We had a discussion today on several major topics. We talked about the progress on the election law and on the hydrocarbon law, but we also talked about the status of forces agreement, called the SOFA. President Barzani has been a very strong advocate of the Iraqi Government passing the SOFA, and I appreciate that.

I informed the President we received amendments today from the Government. We're analyzing those amendments. We obviously want to be helpful and constructive without undermining basic principles. And I remain very hopeful and confident that the SOFA will get passed. And, Mr. President, you get a lot of credit for your leadership on that issue.

So I'm proud to welcome you back here. Again, I thank you very much for your courage and your leadership.

*President Barzani.* Thank you very much, Mr. President. It's good that there has been another opportunity for us to visit with you again. I am here to convey the gratitude

of the Iraqi people in general and the people of Kurdistan in particular, for the brave decision that you've made to rid us of this dictatorship.

We are very grateful for all the brave souls, women and men in uniform, who paid their dear lives in the process. And we are very grateful to the American people and to you, Mr. President, for this sacrifice.

And despite the fact that there remain some major problems, we have also to look at all the big achievements that have been made thus far. Let's look at the elections and the Constitution that has been ratified. So these are major achievements that we are proud of. And we are determined to solve all the problems that still exist, according to the Constitution.

And in terms of SOFA, we do believe that it is in the interest of the Iraqi Government, it's in the interest of this country, and we have been and we will continue to support it and support its ratification.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

*President Bush.* Thank you, Mr. President.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:37 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. President Barzani spoke in Kurdish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks at a Graduation Ceremony at the Federal Bureau of Investigation Academy in Quantico, Virginia  
October 30, 2008

Thank you. Mr. Director, thank you for your kind introduction, and thank you for your leadership. Proud that you invited

your wife Ann here to be with us. I thank the Attorney General for joining us today.