

NOTE: The President's third news conference began at 4:45 p.m. in the Green Top Camp Dining Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Blair's wife, Cherie; President Vladimir Putin of Russia; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Joint Statement With Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom

February 23, 2001

President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair reaffirm the uniquely close relationship that exists between the United States and the United Kingdom: a relationship rooted in common history, common values and common interests around the globe. We commit ourselves to the shared goals of a stronger Transatlantic alliance and to helping build a Europe whole, free and secure.

We affirm that NATO will remain the essential foundation of Transatlantic security. In this new century, NATO will continue to adapt itself to meet new missions and challenges by strengthening its capabilities; seeking to reinforce cooperation with Russia, Ukraine and other members of the Partnership for Peace; and continuing to admit to its ranks European democracies prepared to assume the responsibilities of membership.

We support efforts of NATO's European Members and other European nations to assume greater responsibility for crisis management in Europe by strengthening NATO's capabilities and developing the ability to manage efforts where NATO as a whole chooses not to engage. In this regard, the United States welcomes the European Union's European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), intended to make Europe a stronger, more capable partner in deterring and managing crises affecting the security of the Transatlantic community. The United Kingdom is committed to taking ESDP forward on the basis agreed by the EU at the recent Nice summit. This involves:

- Working with other EU members to establish and provide resources for an ESDP that improves Europe's capabilities and enables the EU to act where NATO as a whole is not engaged;

- Developing EU capabilities in a manner that is fully coordinated, compatible and transparent with NATO;

- Providing for the fullest possible participation of non-EU European Allies in the consideration of execution of EU-led operations, reflecting their shared interests and security commitments as NATO members.

The United States supports these efforts and welcomes the progress made toward our shared goals.

We reaffirm our commitment to promoting peace and stability in the Balkans. We declare our intent to work together and with our partners in the European Union and beyond to consolidate the peace so recently won. Our common vision is of a region, fully embedded in Europe, where commerce supplants conflict, where borders are venues for cooperation and not reasons for conflagration, and where the rule of law prevails and war criminals are brought to justice. Our two countries are committed to NATO-led military operations in the region and agree to work with allies and partners to build a region where the democratic leaders themselves take on the responsibility for implementing the peace, enabling the progressive drawdown of international military forces and in due course of the international civilian organizations.

We recognize the existence of a common threat stemming from the growing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and increasingly sophisticated missiles for their delivery. We are already working together in this area, and agree on the need for further substantive bilateral consultations, as well as close consultations with other allies. This consultation process, which will involve contacts with other interested parties, will include a review of our common strategic assumptions so that they reflect the contemporary security setting, and especially the growing threat from WMD-armed adversaries in regions of vital interest. We need to obstruct and deter these new threats with a strategy that encompasses both offensive and defensive systems, continues nuclear arms reductions where possible, and strengthens WMD and missile proliferation controls and counter-proliferation measures.

We reaffirm our determination to oppose the development or use of WMD and ballistic missiles by Saddam Hussein and the threat his regime poses to its neighbors, while seeking to protect the Iraqi people from the brutality of Saddam Hussein and his indifference to their humanitarian needs. We call on Iraq to comply with relevant UN Security Council Resolutions.

In the wake of the verdict issued by the Scottish High Court at Camp Zeist on January 31, we reiterate our condolences to the families of the victims of Pan Am flight 103, and call on the Libyan government to comply with the requirements of relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

The President pledges the continuing support of the United States for the Northern Ireland peace process. The Prime Minister welcomes that support.

We are both committed to taking advantage of the new possibilities for democratic development and free markets in Africa in order to address the problems of insecurity and poverty on the continent. We support the idea of a new partnership with Africa to address, in a systematic way, conflict and disease—especially HIV/AIDS—and to promote economic growth and good governance. It is in all of our interests to create a more stable and peaceful world and to make available the benefits of globalization to all peoples.

We recognize the depth of our nations' economic connection and the United Kingdom acknowledges the importance to European economies of measures designed to sustain economic growth in the United States. We commit to work together and with other European states to deepen Transatlantic economic relations and to seek solutions to trade disputes. To maintain support for the WTO, we recognize that it is important that we work for solutions to trade disputes which are in accordance with its rulings. We reaffirm our commitment to the multilateral trading system and strongly support the launch of a new Round of global trade negotiations this year. It is our goal to open markets, both regionally and globally. We agree to intensify our efforts to liberalize fully our bilateral civil aviation relationship. We reaffirm our commitment to increased coopera-

tion in the sphere of Transatlantic defense trade and the removal of unnecessary governmental barriers and impediments to such trade.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

February 24, 2001

Good morning. This coming week I will be making the trip up Pennsylvania Avenue to address a joint session of Congress. We have some business to attend to called the budget of the United States.

The Federal budget is a document about the size of a big city phone book and about as hard to read from cover to cover. The blueprint I submit this week contains many numbers, but there is one that probably counts more than any other—\$5.6 trillion. That is the surplus the Federal Government expects to collect over the next 10 years; money left over after we have met our obligations to Social Security, Medicare, health care, education, defense, and other priorities.

The plan I submit will fund our highest national priorities. Education gets the biggest percentage increase of any Department in our Federal Government. We won't just spend more money on schools and education; we will spend it responsibly. We'll give States more freedom to decide what works. And as we give more to our schools, we're going to expect more in return by requiring States and local jurisdictions to test every year. How else can we know whether schools are teaching and children are learning?

Social Security and Medicare will get every dollar they need to meet their commitments. And every dollar of Social Security and Medicare tax revenue will be reserved for Social Security and Medicare.

My budget blueprint will restrain spending, yet meet growing needs with a reasonable 4 percent growth rate, which is a little more than inflation. After paying the bills, my plan reduces the national debt, and fast. So fast, in fact, that economists worry that