

So I don't know who, specifically, you're referring to, but people are being treated incredibly humanely here—and in Guantanamo Bay, by the way. Perhaps you're referring to maybe some citizens there. I will just assure you, like I've assured the President, that people are getting fantastic health care, much better health care today in Guantanamo Bay than they were getting in Afghanistan, I can assure you.

And so our country is mindful of the need to respect people's rights. But I want to assure you, we will do, within our power, within the Constitution of the United States, what it takes to defend the American people. My most important job is to protect innocent Americans, and this is exactly what I'm going to do.

Listen, thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:34 a.m. in the Cross Hall at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq and Minister for Education Zubeda Jalal of Pakistan. A reporter referred to President Vicente Fox of Mexico. The President also referred to the Bonn Agreement, an agreement reached at a United Nations sponsored meeting of Afghan representatives on transitional political arrangements for the future of Afghanistan, which concluded December 5, 2001, and led to the Interim Afghan Administration; and the Tokyo donors conference, January 20–21, 2002, a meeting of 61 nations which pledged \$4.5 billion for the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

### **Statement on Senate Action on the “Farm Security Act of 2001”**

*February 13, 2002*

I am committed to sound farm policy that supports America's farmers and ranchers and am disappointed that the Senate-passed bill doesn't get the job done. This bill front loads spending into the first 5 years, leaving vital programs underfunded in the years that follow. I look forward to working with conferees to produce a plan that will benefit farmers in the long term by encouraging conservation, establishing farm savings accounts, and promoting open markets and new opportunities for producers.

### **Executive Order 13257—President's Interagency Task Force To Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons**

*February 13, 2002*

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, (22 U.S.C. 7103) (the “Act”), and in order to combat trafficking in persons, a contemporary manifestation of slavery whose victims are predominantly women and children, to ensure just and effective punishment of traffickers, and to protect their victims, it is hereby ordered as follows:

**Section 1.** (a) The President's Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons is hereby established.

(b) The Task Force shall consist of:

- (i) the Secretary of State;
- (ii) the Attorney General;
- (iii) the Secretary of Labor;
- (iv) the Secretary of Health and Human Services;
- (v) the Director of Central Intelligence;
- (vi) the Director of the Office of Management and Budget;
- (vii) the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development; and
- (viii) any additional officers or employees of the United States as may be designated by the President.

(c) The Task Force shall be chaired by the Secretary of State.

**Sec. 2. Activities.** The Task Force shall, consistent with applicable law and the constitutional authorities and duties of the President, carry out the following activities:

(a) coordinate the implementation of the Act;

(b) measure and evaluate progress of the United States and other countries in the areas of trafficking in persons prevention, protection, and assistance to victims of trafficking in persons, and prosecutions and other enforcement efforts against traffickers, including the role of public corruption in facilitating trafficking in persons;

(c) assist the Secretary of State in the preparation of the annual reports described in section 110 of the Act;