

say that the Voice of America still speaks strongly and clearly.

To people whose governments broadcast messages of bigotry and hate, the Voice of America sends a message of tolerance and respect. To people who are told that democracy is soft and weak, the Voice of America shows freedom's strength and determination. To people who live under governments that sustain their power with lies, the Voice of America brings truth.

Under some regimes, like that in North Korea, simply listening to the Voice of America is treated as a crime. And the fears of these regimes are well-founded, because tyranny cannot survive forever in an atmosphere of truth. The Voice of America is not neutral between America and America's enemies, between terrorism and those who defend themselves against terror, between freedom and between tyranny. The Voice of America is a broadcaster with a special purpose, a special mandate, and a special trust.

As President Reagan said, "Freedom is not the sole prerogative of a lucky few but the inalienable and universal right of all human beings." The Voice of America spreads that message throughout the world, with special emphasis on those countries where information is restricted and free voices are silenced.

The Voice of America broadcasts in 53 languages, to nearly every country on Earth, reaching an audience of over 90 million listeners. Many are listening right now, exercising their God-given right to freedom, free access of information. And their numbers are growing every day. The Voice of America's new Middle East Radio Network will offer music, reliable news and information in Arabic, and an opportunity to better understand American principles and American actions.

And I want to thank Norm Pattiz for his perseverance and dedication to this project. Even before our Armed Forces helped bring freedom to the Afghan people, the Voice of America was bringing them the news in languages of Dari and Pashtu. Since September the 11th, Voice of America has increased its programming in these two languages, serving as a vital partner in helping rebuild that country.

Throughout its history, Voice of America has applied the power of technology to the

advance of liberty. It has used every means possible—shortwave, television, and now the Internet—to bypass the barriers of tyrants. Radio waves are not hindered by borders, and as technology improves, the Internet will become less vulnerable to the censor's hand. No one knows what new information technologies will be available 60 years from now, but two things we do know: First, that the Voice of America will find a way to use them; and second, though these means of delivery may change, the message never will.

It's a simple message. It's a message of freedom, and freedom is worth defending. And the truth, no less than the force of arms, is needed for its defense.

Since 1942, you have defended freedom by speaking the truth to millions. You not only have the ear of the world; you have the gratitude of your country.

May God bless your efforts, and may God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:16 p.m. in the Wilber Cohen Auditorium at Voice of America headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to Robert R. Reilly, Director, Voice of America; and Marc B. Nathanson, Chairman, and Norman J. Pattiz, member, Broadcasting Board of Governors. The President's remarks were broadcast live on the Voice of America.

Remarks to the National Governors' Association

February 25, 2002

The President. Thank you all. Welcome back. I've got a few remarks I'd like to make. I understand a couple of Governors are going to make some remarks, and then I'll be glad to answer some questions if you have any.

First, I again want to say what I said last night. This has been a trying time for all of us. We've been tested here in the Nation's Capital, but you all have been tested, as well. And I want to congratulate you on your great leadership.

You know, the people of our country looked to all of us to determine how we'd react after September 11th. And I was impressed by the calm demeanor of the Governors and the steady resolve to lead the people. The country cried for leadership, and

you all provided it. And thanks a lot for doing that.

I also love to welcome Governors because Governors are problem-solvers. In this town, there's a lot of talkers and kind of problem-shufflers. But Governors are problem-solvers. And it's going to be good to be able to talk to each other about how to solve problems that we face, budget problems, the issue of homeland security, education, as well as welfare reform.

And I want to talk about three of them briefly today, and that's homeland security—first, I appreciate the Governor, the leadership. I want to thank Engler, and Governor Patton for you hosting the NGA here and coming by the White House.

I also want to thank my friend Tom Ridge. You know, he was doing pretty good as the Governor of Pennsylvania, just sitting around—[laughter]—looking for something to do. And I called him, and I said, "We've got a problem. We've got to secure our homeland." I said, "This is an enemy that wants to hit us again," and I said, "We'd better be ready." And I said, "Would you come and be a member of my Cabinet, be sitting at my right hand there, and design a national strategy for homeland security?" And fortunately for the country, he said yes, and he's doing a fine job.

And we've begun, as you all know, an extensive program to have a better first-responders initiative. And we've got \$1.6 billion of new money in the budget for that—no—yes, 3.5—right. But I mean—for homeland, for first-responders is how much?

Director Ridge. We're going—different parts of it are going up, but this is 3.5.

The President. Three-point-five, and then we've got 1.6 for bioterrorism. And we're working on a border security initiative, and we're reforming the INS.

As I like to tell people, we now need to know who's coming in and when they're leaving, for the good of the security of the country. I remember going up to Maine and talking about strengthening the Coast Guard, which matters to those of you who live on the oceans and on the Gulf of Mexico. The Coast Guard is such a valuable part of our homeland security piece, and our budget in-

cludes increases for the Coast Guard, a modernization of our fleet.

And so I'm real proud of the efforts we're making. And obviously, you all play a crucial role in not only helping develop a homeland defense strategy but the implementation of the strategy. And I think you'll find—I guess Tom has talked to you already—that we understand the need to coordinate. And both of us were Governors, and we simply do not want the Federal Government to be—seem distant and removed on this important issue.

And then education, we passed a great education bill. As I used to—I tease people, I said it came as a complete shock to people in Crawford, Texas, that I would say that Ted Kennedy did a great job on a bill, but he did. This is a good piece of legislation because it sets clear priorities, it encourages accountability so that no child is quit on, that people—we focus on each individual child.

It also provides States more flexibility than ever before, and it's got some money in it. It's got more Title—\$1 billion in more Title I money. It's got a substantial increase for the reading initiative. It is a good piece of legislation. And now, obviously, it depends upon its implementation. And so we're working closely with Rod Paige and the Department of Education to make sure that the intent of the law is now implemented fully. And we look forward to working with you on that.

Obviously—I used to say that education is to a Governor what national defense is to the President. It is by far the most important priority for a Governor. And I know that, and I understand that. And this bill is—it reflects that. And we'll make sure the implementation of it reflects that, as well.

And then welfare reform, welfare authorization is coming up. I start with the idea that the '96 bill was a really good piece of legislation. And it changed welfare for the better, primarily because it relied upon Governors. It had a substantial local control element in it. And so as we reauthorize welfare, we want to make sure that there is substantial authority at the local level.

We'll talk about funding. The budget I laid out for welfare reform holds the grants constant. Actually, it increases the—as a result of the supplemental and the contingency fund, it increases funding by—let's see, 3.2

billion over the next 5 years, on top of the grants that are already in place.

And so the fundamental question is, will there be enough local authority, enough flexibility at the local level to meet what I hope Congress passes, which are new work requirements. See, I think work ought to be the core of welfare reform. I think in order to make sure that welfare reform works, that there's flexibility at the States, that there's recognition people need training or drug rehabilitation, but work ought to be the centerpiece of a good welfare law.

And the bill I'm going to outline tomorrow, with Tommy at my side—where are you, Tommy? There he is—is going to take the positive pieces of the '96 welfare law, changing welfare as we know it, and we're going to make it better. There's more to do, and we look forward to working with you on that, as well.

And so those are the things that are on my mind. I know you've got things on your mind, and I look forward to hearing them. And we can have a good discussion today.

I want to welcome you back. I recognize I'm not exactly Bernadette Peters—[laughter]—but she did a fabulous job last night to fill this hall. It was such a joyous night, and it's particularly joyous for me and Laura to be with our old friends, the Governors.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:12 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. John Engler of Michigan; Gov. Paul E. Patton of Kentucky; and entertainer Bernadette Peters.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus

February 25, 2002

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

In accordance with Public Law 95–384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I am providing a report prepared by my Administration on progress toward a negotiated solution of the Cyprus question covering the period December 1, 2001, through January 31, 2002. The previous submission covered October 1 through November 30, 2001.

On January 16, Greek Cypriot leader Glafcos Clerides and Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash began direct talks on the island under the auspices of the United Nations. As in past reporting periods, Special Cyprus Coordinator Thomas G. Weston and U.S. Ambassador to Cyprus Donald K. Bandler continued to provide diplomatic support to the process. The United States remains committed to the United Nations effort to find a just and lasting settlement to the Cyprus problem.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives on the Reallocation of Emergency Response Funding

February 25, 2002

Dear Mr. Speaker:

In furtherance of the provisions of Public Law 107–38, the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Recovery from and Response to Terrorist Attacks on the United States, FY 2001, today I am notifying the Congress of my intent to reallocate funds previously transferred from the Emergency Response Fund to the Department of Defense. This reallocation reflects revised requirements in light of changing security needs in the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

As provided in Public Law 107–38, \$33 million will be made available 15 days from the date of this transmittal for continued deployment of the National Guard at our Nation's airports through the end of March.

The details of this action are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget. I concur with his comments and observations.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 26.