

Week Ending Friday, August 9, 2002

The President's Radio Address

August 3, 2002

Good morning. We've had a month of accomplishment in Washington. Congress acted on several important proposals to strengthen our national security and our homeland security and our economic security. Republicans and Democrats worked in a spirit of unity and purpose that I hope to see more of in the fall.

I requested more money for our military and for our homeland security, and Congress provided crucial funding to continue military operations, to train and equip medics, police officers, and firefighters around America, and to support the Coast Guard operations that protect our ports and coasts.

I proposed tough new standards for corporate executives and accountants and increased penalties for fraud and abuse. Congress responded with strong corporate accountability reforms, which I signed into law on Tuesday. And we are rigorously enforcing the laws against corporate crimes with new arrests just this week.

For nearly a year and a half, I've been pressing Congress for trade promotion authority so I can aggressively push for open trade with other nations. This week, the Senate followed the lead of the House by giving me that authority, which I will sign into law next week. Expanded trade will mean more business for America's farmers and ranchers and manufacturers, better buys for American consumers, and good jobs for America's workers.

Together, we made significant progress on national priorities. Yet, when Congress returns from its summer recess, important work remains. In March, I urged Congress in a time of war to pass the defense budget first. After 4 months, the House and the Senate have acted on their own bills—but they have not sent me a final bill that works out their differences. When the Congress returns

in September, its first priority should be to complete the defense budget so our military can plan for and pay for the war on terror and all the missions that lie ahead.

The Senate should also act quickly to pass a bill authorizing the new Department of Homeland Security, which it failed to do before the recess. This Department will consolidate dozens of Federal agencies charged with protecting our homeland, giving them one main focus: protecting the American people. And when we create this Department, the new Secretary of Homeland Security will need the freedom and flexibility to respond to threats by getting the right people into the right jobs at the right time, without a lot of bureaucratic hurdles. The Senate must understand that the protection of our homeland is much more important than the narrow politics of special interests.

Congress should also act to strengthen the economic security of all Americans. The Senate must pass reforms to protect workers' savings and investments and reform Medicare to include prescription drug benefits. Both Houses must reach a consensus on final terrorism insurance legislation to spur building projects and create construction jobs. And they must agree on a comprehensive energy bill that will increase production and promote conservation and reduce our dependence on foreign energy sources.

And as we work to strengthen America's economy, we must remember Americans who are struggling. The Senate should follow the House's lead and pass welfare reform that encourages work and promotes strong families. And they should pass legislation to promote the vital work of private and religious charities and helping disadvantaged children and people struggling with addiction, the homeless and many others.

I know, in the fall of an election year, the tendency is to focus more on scoring political points than on making progress. I hope the Congress will reject this approach. In the last

month we've proven how much we can get done when everyone in Washington works together on behalf of the American people. Come September, I look forward to working with the Republicans and Democrats to build on that progress.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:04 a.m. on August 2 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 3. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 2 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at a Reception for Senator Susan Collins in Prout's Neck, Maine *August 3, 2002*

Thank you all very much. Please be seated. Well, thank you all very much for that wonderful welcome. This probably is the first political event I've ever traveled to by boat. [Laughter] And I want to thank the boat's captain, "Number 41." You're never supposed to drive a boat wearing a tie. [Laughter] That's why he doesn't have one on. [Laughter]

But as you can see, we—the best of our family isn't with us. My mother is back there in Kennebunkport, and the great First Lady of the United States is in Texas. But if they were here, I can assure you, they would say what I'm about to say—that Susan Collins is a great United States Senator, and Maine needs to send her back to the Senate.

Both of us are really proud to be here to campaign on her behalf. We want to thank you all very much for helping her. We—I urge you to make sure that you continue working for her. For those of you who lick the envelopes and make the phone calls and put out the signs and turn out the vote, get your uniforms on, because you win in all States, but particularly in Maine, through grassroots politics. You win because you energize the voters. You win because you remind the people of what a fine person you have as a United States Senator. So thank you for what you have done on behalf of Susan Collins, and as importantly, thank you

for what you're going to do to make sure this fine lady returns back to the United States Senate.

And I appreciate her mother and dad driving all this way. It is a long way. [Laughter] That's a 5½ hour drive. But it's wonderful to meet the Collins family, all of them. And it says something to me that, you know, Mom and Dad and brothers are willing to stand by their sister and/or child to do whatever it takes to help out. To me, that's what family is all about, and I appreciate so very much the Collins family for being here today, and thank you for supporting your little girl.

Maine's got two fantastic United States Senators. Olympia Snowe is a capable lady. Olympia and Susan make a formidable team on behalf of the citizens of Maine, and it would be wise for Maine not to break that team up. It would be wise for the people of this State to make sure that they send somebody back to Washington who understands that to get things done, you've got to work with people of both parties, and who solidly rejects, like I reject, the same old, tired politics of tearing somebody down to get ahead.

Susan Collins, she's a breath of fresh air in Washington, DC. She's kind of an independent thinker, I might add. [Laughter] I don't do everything she says. [Laughter] She doesn't do everything I say. [Laughter] But she's an ally, and I'm proud to call her friend.

I want to thank very much Steven Joyce and Kevin Raye for tossing their hats in the ring. Steven is running for the Congress, Maine 1; and Kevin is running for Congress, Maine 2. Thank you all for coming; we hope you win. We look forward to seeing you in Washington—appreciate it.

It's nice to be here with the next Governor of the State of Maine, Peter Cianchette. [Laughter] I want to thank the party officials who are here. I want to thank Kathy Watson, who's the chairwoman of the Republican Party of Maine—Kathy, thank you for your hard work—and Jan Martens Staples, who's the national committeewoman.

I want you to know that in Washington, they've got a lot of pretty good talkers, you know, people who can give a fine speech. But somehow, behind all the rhetoric, they don't get much done. That's not the way