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emergency. The executive branch shall construe section 2(c) in a manner consistent with the President's authority under the Recommendations Clause of the Constitution to submit for the consideration of the Congress such measures as the President shall judge necessary or expedient.

George W. Bush

The White House,
August 18, 2003.

NOTE: H.R. 1412, approved August 18, was assigned Public Law No. 108–76.

Memorandum on Resumption of U.S. Drug Interdiction Assistance to the Government of Colombia

August 18, 2003

Presidential Determination No. 2003–32

Memorandum for the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense

Subject: Resumption of U.S. Drug Interdiction Assistance to the Government of Colombia

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by section 1012 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1995, as amended (22 U.S.C. section 2291–4), I hereby certify, with respect to Colombia, that: (1) interdiction of aircraft reasonably suspected to be primarily engaged in illicit drug trafficking in that country's airspace is necessary because of the extraordinary threat posed by illicit drug trafficking to the national security of that country; and (2) that country has appropriate procedures in place to protect against innocent loss of life in the air and on the ground in connection with such interdiction, which shall at a minimum include effective means to identify and warn an aircraft before the use of force is directed against the aircraft.

The Secretary of State is authorized and directed to publish this determination in the *Federal Register* and to notify the Congress of this determination.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., August 22, 2003]

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 19, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on August 25.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters in Crawford, Texas

August 19, 2003

Proposed Energy Legislation/Power Blackout

The President. Good morning, everybody. How are you? Last night I talked to Pete Domenici and Billy Tauzin. Pete is the chairman of the Senate committee dealing with energy and Billy is the chairman of the House committee dealing with energy. Pete believes they can get the conference up and running in 20 days to deal with this very important energy bill. Both Members are very optimistic about reaching agreement, obviously, on infrastructure modernization but, as importantly, other issues related to energy.

One thing is for certain. There is—very confident they'll have mandatory reliability standards in the energy bill. What that means is that companies transmitting energy will have to have strong reliability measures in place; otherwise, there will be a consequence for them. There will be incentives in the new bill to encourage investment in energy infrastructure.

So I'm very pleased with the attitude of the two Members, their desire to get a bill done quickly and get it to my desk. I have been calling for an energy bill for a long time. And now is the time for the Congress to move and get something done.

I also talked to Energy Secretary Abraham. Tomorrow the joint inquiry with the Canadians will begin. I don't know how long it's going to take to find out what went wrong, but I know it's not going to take long to get the meeting started to determine what went wrong.

I'll answer a couple of questions; then I've got to get moving.

Former Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan of Iraq

Q. They've just captured Saddam's Vice President. Does that give you hope that we're closer to catching Saddam?

The President. Well, I don't know the facts of where he was, what was going on. I'm really pleased that we've captured the Vice President. Slowly but surely, we'll find who we need to find. It's just a matter of time. Listen, we've got a lot of brave people doing a lot of hard work in Iraq. And it's—because Iraq was terrorized and dominated by a dictator, it's going to take a while to get this country to understand what's necessary to be a free country. But we'll find him, and we'll bring him to justice.

Stevenson [Richard Stevenson, New York Times].

Proposed Energy Legislation

Q. Sir, I realize it's early to find out what went on with the blackout, but do you know enough at this point to be able to say whether there's anything new or different that you would like in the energy bill beyond what you proposed——

The President. Well, listen, I thought the energy bill was very comprehensive. We particularly liked the House—a lot of the House bill. The Senate, as you know, in order to get out of town, expedited a piece of legislation. The House bill is a very comprehensive bill. And I'm confident the two bodies can work out differences. If they do what's in the—if they do what's in the House bill, for example, and what's in the—a lot in the Senate bill, we'll get us a good bill.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Sir, the cease-fire by the Palestinians runs out in a few weeks. Do you think it should be extended, and why?

The President. Well, you know, look, here's my view on cease-fires and—I'm happy there's calm, and I think that's important. But the most important thing is to—for the parties that care for their—for peace to dismantle terrorist organizations that want to kill. That's how we're going to achieve a peaceful settlement in the Middle East. Calm is good. The fact that people aren't dying is good. But the ultimate solution—and this can happen quickly, in my judgment—is to find those who would—who believe killing is the best approach to dealing with the very difficult problems in the Middle East.

Q. Sir, Israel has kind of eased off of their request for actual dismantling the terrorists, and they're putting their faith in the Palestinian Authority to contain these guys. Do you have——

The President. I don't want to put words in the Israelis' mouth, but I can assure you that they're interested in dismantling organizations such as Hamas.

Q. But do you think that the Palestinian Authority right now can contain these——

The President. I think that the Palestinian Authority needs to continue to work with the United States and others who are interested in dismantling terrorist organizations and ask for the help necessary so they can go and do what they need to do, which is dismantle and destroy organizations which are interested in killing innocent lives in order to prevent a peace process from going forward.

Tax Cuts/National Economy

Q. Mr. President, your budget director gave an interview to the Wall Street Journal suggesting that there won't be any corporate tax cuts to deal with this World Trade Organization trade dispute—about $100 billion in tax cuts making its way through Congress. Are we done with tax cuts for the foreseeable future?

The President. Well, we'll see. As I said the other day, as we stand right now, I believe the tax relief packages we have in place are doing their job. But I'm a flexible person. I want to make sure that the conditions for economic growth and vitality are strong. But we'll take a look and see. I'm pleased the markets have responded. I'm pleased that there's economic vitality and growth. But until everybody finds a job who wants one—today—and can't find one, is able to work, then I'm going to continue working on the economy.

Coalition Operations in Iraq

Q. Sir, given the decreasing likelihood of there being another United Nations resolution on Iraq, should the American people be

prepared for a longer and larger deployment of American forces there?

The President. Well, one of the things that's happening is that international forces are now coming into Iraq. There's a significant reconstruction effort going on in which other nations besides the United States and our initial coalition partners are participating.

In other words, there is an international effort going on that will help Iraq reconstruct itself and help Iraq develop into a peaceful, democratic country. And that's in our country's interest, that Iraq become a peaceful, free, democratic country. Part of the war on terror is to promote freedom in the Middle East. I like to remind people that a free Iraq will no longer serve as a haven for terrorists or as a place for terrorists to get money or arms. A free Iraq will make the Middle East a more peaceful place, and a peaceful Middle East is important to the security of the United States.

Listen, I've got to go. Thank you. I hope you all have a wonderful morning.

First Lady Laura Bush/President's Vacation

Q. How's the First Lady?

The President. She's great. Thanks. She actually suggested maybe bringing the press corps out to the ranch. Her idea.

Q. Good idea.

The President. What?

Q. Good idea.

The President. Well——

Q. What is she keeping busy with?

The President. You know, she's—you'll see, if you ever get out there, that she's got a lot of wildflowers. And she's restoring a lot of the area around the house, the native grasses. By the way, we've got quail back—bobwhite quail has now returned around our house. It wasn't there when we first bought the place. And because the grasses have been restored, we've got a nice little family of bobwhites. It's a fantastic experience to hear them call in the morning.

My friend Blossman caught about a 6-pound bass yesterday. So the bass are growing, and they're getting healthy. Life out there at the ranch is just fine. It gets a little toasty about 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon, though.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:40 a.m. at the Fina gas station. In his remarks, he referred to former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. A reporter referred to Office and Management and Budget Director Joshua B. Bolten. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on the Bombing of the United Nations Headquarters in Baghdad, Iraq, in Crawford

August 19, 2003

Today in Baghdad, terrorists turned their violence against the United Nations. The U.N. personnel and Iraqi citizens killed in the bombing were in that country on a purely humanitarian mission. Men and women in the targeted building were working on reconstruction, medical care for Iraqis. They were there to help with the distribution of food. A number have been killed or injured. And to those who suffer, I extend the sympathy of the American people.

A short time ago, I spoke with Ambassador Bremer and directed him to provide all possible assistance to the rescue and recovery effort at the United Nations headquarters. I also spoke to Secretary-General Kofi Annan about the personal loss the U.N. has suffered, about the assistance my country has offered, and about the vital work in Iraq that continues.

The terrorists who struck today have again shown their contempt for the innocent. They showed their fear of progress and their hatred of peace. They are the enemies of the Iraqi people. They are the enemies of every nation that seeks to help the Iraqi people. By their tactics and their targets, these murderers reveal themselves once more as enemies of the civilized world.

Every sign of progress in Iraq adds to the desperation of the terrorists and the remnants of Saddam's brutal regime. The civilized world will not be intimidated, and these killers will not determine the future of Iraq. The Iraqi people have been liberated from a dictator. Iraq is on a irreversible course toward self-government and peace. And America and our friends in the United