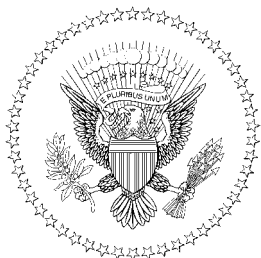


Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



Monday, October 27, 2003
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Editor's Note: The President was at Camp David, MD, on October 24, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* is published pursuant to the authority contained in the Federal Register Act (49 Stat. 500, as amended; 44 U.S.C. Ch. 15), under regulations prescribed by the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, approved by the President (37 FR 23607; 1 CFR Part 10).

Distribution is made only by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* will be furnished by mail to domestic subscribers for \$80.00 per year (\$137.00 for mailing first class) and to foreign subscribers for \$93.75 per year, payable to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The charge for a single copy is \$3.00 (\$3.75 for foreign mailing).

The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* is also available on the Internet on the *GPO Access* service at <http://www.gpo.gov/nara/nara003.html>.

There are no restrictions on the republication of material appearing in the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*.

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SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS
Washington DC 20402

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Week Ending Friday, October 24, 2003

Statement on Congressional Passage of the Supplemental Funding Request To Support the War on Terror

October 17, 2003

I applaud the House and Senate for passing my supplemental funding request to support our mission and our troops deployed in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere. These funds will provide the resources necessary to make Iraq more secure and support its transition to self-government, which is critical to winning the war on terror. They will also continue our efforts to help build an Afghanistan that is prosperous, democratic, and at peace, and that contributes to regional stability.

I commend the House for wisely rejecting a proposal to convert part of the reconstruction funds to loans. It is unfortunate that a closely divided Senate voted to partially substitute loans for grants. Loans are the wrong approach—they would slow the reconstruction of Iraq, delay the democratic process, and send the wrong message to both the region and the world. The loan provision must be removed in conference.

I thank Chairmen Stevens and Young for their efforts and urge the conference committee to work to resolve their differences, fully fund my request, and send me legislation I can sign quickly.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Interview With Taro Kimura of Japan's FUJI TV

October 14, 2003

The President. Glad you're here. Ready to go.

Japan's Reconstruction Aid for Iraq

Mr. Kimura. Thank you very much, Mr. President, for this interview. I'm sure Prime

Minister Koizumi is looking forward to have you over there. Actually, he is preparing a package for Iraqi reconstruction which includes \$5 billion aid for the next 4 years and sending a couple of hundred Japanese self-defense forces over there for the humanitarian operation. Do you think Japan fulfilled her responsibility with this package?

The President. Yes. I'm very pleased. Prime Minister Koizumi and I are good friends. I admire him a lot, and I spoke to him about Japan helping in Iraq, just like Japan helped in Afghanistan. And he assured me he would work hard to develop a good package. It sounds like he has done so, and I'm grateful and thankful.

We've got great relations between America and Japan. We will keep them that way. And part of good relations is we see problems, and we work together, and see opportunities. And a free Iraq is a—a peaceful Iraq is a wonderful opportunity for Japan and the United States to work together to achieve because a free and peaceful Iraq will change the world in a positive way.

North Korea/Japanese Abductees

Mr. Kimura. Another subject, Mr. President, that the Prime Minister will bring up is the North Korean problem.

The President. Yes, yes.

Mr. Kimura. And he is working very hard to resolve the issue of abductees, Japanese.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Kimura. What could your administration do to help him realizing the reunification of the abductees' status?

The President. Well, that's a very interesting question. The primary objective of the five countries who are now engaged with North Korea is to get rid of nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula. That's our primary objective, and that ought to be our focus.

A major issue with the Prime Minister, of course, is the abductees. I've always said that

the fact that North Korea kidnaped or abducted these people talks to the nature of the administration in North Korea. And of course, we will send strong signals that we object to that kind of behavior, that that is not a civil behavior.

But the first objective is for all of us to work together for the sake of peace and security, particularly in your part of the world, to get rid of any nuclear weapons and/or ambitions for nuclear weapons.

Mr. Kimura. For example, do you think it's possible that your administration demand North Korea to include this abduction program in whatever the comprehensive package—

The President. Well, I think it's very important. I'll talk to the Prime Minister about this, of course. I know this is a very sensitive subject, and I've spoken out about this terrible practice, a terrible part of history, that the North Koreans abducted. But the first thing we got to do is focus on our overall objective, and that is to make sure that the peninsula is nuclear weapons-free. And that's in Japan's interest, of course. And right now that's where our focus is.

Mr. Kimura. I understand—or I read Bob Woodward's book. And you've said you loathe Kim Chong-il. Do you still feel that same way?

The President. When I know a leader starves his people, allows his people to starve, and know there's detention camps and it's not a free society—it's a very, closed totalitarian society—he and I don't agree, obviously, on freedom and peace. And I hope that Kim Chong-il realizes that when five nations speak, we're very serious, and that it's in his country's interest to get rid of nuclear weapons and/or programs to develop nuclear weapons. Because the five countries that are now speaking in one voice are saying as clearly as possible to Mr. Kim Chong-il, "You need to change for your good and for the good of the country."

Monetary Policy

Mr. Kimura. There is speculation in Tokyo that you will speak to Mr. Koizumi to let dollar-yen rate float and not let the

Japanese financial institute to intervene in the market. Is this the case?

The President. Well, I will talk to him about, one, our Government's strong dollar policy. And I will remind him that our position when it comes to currency exchanges is that the market ought to decide the relative values of currencies based upon the fiscal policy of each government, the monetary policy of each government, the future economic picture of each country. And that's what I will remind him. This will not be the first time that we have discussed dollar policy and/or trade matters.

Mr. Kimura. Lastly, I remember you've enjoyed yakitori when you were in Tokyo, the barbecued chicken.

The President. Yes, I did. [Laughter]

Mr. Kimura. And I wonder whether you will bear tasting sushi this time. I know you're not really particularly in favor of the raw fish.

The President. Well, I'm a beef man. You know I like good beef. Japan's got some of the greatest beef in the world. And—but I'm also, hopefully, a good enough guest not to demand a particular menu from my host. The Prime Minister and I have eaten a lot of meals together. And I'm confident that he will put together a good meal for both the First Lady, Laura, and me. And I really am looking forward to seeing him. He is—he is a great friend. He is an interesting man. I really enjoyed being around him. You know, one of the—he came to my ranch. And he and I sat down apart from the house in a beautiful part of the ranch and had a very long discussion just on a personal basis. And it meant a lot to me. He's a leader of a great country and a great friend of the United States. And I'm grateful for our relationship.

Mr. Kimura. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

The President. Yes, sir, you're welcome.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 3:10 p.m. in the Library at the White House, and the transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 18. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Interview With Antonio Baltazar V. Nebrida, Jr., of the Philippines' NBN TV-4

October 14, 2003

The Philippines' Role in the War on Terror

Mr. Nebrida. Mr. President, the Philippines has taken a position behind just about every initiative that the United States Government has taken against the global fight against terrorism. As a partner in this endeavor, what do you see the Philippines doing further?

The President. First of all, Gloria Arroyo, the President, has been very strong, and I appreciate that. And I appreciate my friendship with her. Secondly, the Philippines has recognized that there is a problem in parts of the country and have asked for some help, some training. And we're more than happy to provide it, because there's no question in my mind the will of the Government is to bring people to justice, and the Government has. In other words, there's a recognition of the problem and a willingness to deal with it.

I think that our relationship is such—it's a very close, longstanding relationship—is such that we will see opportunities to work together, and we will work in concert. I would never ask the Philippines to do something that the Government was comfortable doing, but our relationship is good.

And one key thing that people need to understand is that the war on terror goes on, and therefore, it's important to have leaders who understand that. And the President understands that, and I appreciate her courage.

Upcoming Elections in the Philippines

Mr. Nebrida. Continuing with the program, the Philippines is coming into a very critical phase. We're getting our national and local elections in 2004. Are there apprehensions over the exercise itself, or the outcome of the election?

The President. Well, first of all, there's no apprehension over the outcome of the election. The people—we trust the people in America. We've got our own elections, by the way, coming up in 2004. I would hope that the Philippines would continue to serve

as a good example of democracy in the region, in other words, that there be an inclusiveness and, of course, that the elections be carried off in a peaceful way. It will be a very important election for others to watch, and watch the example of the Philippines' elections. And the people will make the right decision. I know my friend is running again, and she's got a strong agenda to run on.

Filipino Americans

Mr. Nebrida. All right. Close historic links between the United States and the Philippines are seen in the very large and significant Filipino community in the United States.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Nebrida. How do you see the contribution of that particular community in nation-building here in the United States?

The President. Well, first of all, there's roughly 2 million Philippine Americans, which is a wonderful contribution to our country. These people are great people. And I know; I work with them right here in the White House. We've got some great Philippine Americans here that are proud of their country but most of all love America, because we stand for freedom and justice and opportunity. And the Philippine community has provided great contributions in business and arts and civic participation. And I'm really proud that there are that many Philippine Americans who are citizens of our great land.

Upcoming APEC Summit

Mr. Nebrida. You're heading for Thailand. The Philippines—our President is also heading for the APEC meeting there. You will be meeting each other. There are apprehensions over the emergence of bilateral agreements, trade agreements, and regional trading blocs. Is APEC still a relevant organization as far as the United States sees its allies and its partners?

The President. Yes, that's a very good question. It needs to be relevant, because APEC has—that room will fill up with leaders that can do a lot to shape a more peaceful world and a more prosperous world. Trade is a central element of our foreign policy, and many of our trading partners, like the Philippines, will be in that room. And we've

got to talk about free trade and open trade. We cannot—you know, we must advance the agenda of the WTO.

There is a great opportunity to discuss ways to enhance prosperity. And I might remind everybody that this war on terror continues. There's a lot of wonderful leaders that will be in the room who have dedicated themselves to the proposition that we must deal with terror now or be dealing with it in more violent forms later. And President Arroyo is such a leader. So I'm looking forward to having a very frank discussion and a good discussion with APEC. I think APEC is relevant, and I think this meeting will help make it more relevant.

Mr. Nebrida. Mr. President, thank you so much.

The President. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Nebrida. Thank you for this opportunity to be with you, and it's indeed an honor and privilege.

The President. My honor, too. You're welcome. Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 3:17 p.m. in the Library at the White House, and the transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 18. In his remarks, the President referred to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of the Philippines. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Interview With Thepchai Yong of Thailand's Nation TV

October 14, 2003

Thailand-U.S. Relations

Mr. Yong. Mr. President, I understand that during your visit to Bangkok you'll be announcing that your administration will designate Thailand as a major non-NATO ally. What does it mean to Thailand and to Thai-American relations?

The President. First of all, you're a pretty darn good reporter. Secondly, it's probably best that I not reveal what the Prime Minister and I are going to talk about until after we talk about it.

However, having said that, Thailand and the United States are very close friends. The level of cooperation has been really strong, particularly in matters of common interests.

We have a common interest to make sure our countries are secure from terrorism. As you know, the Thai Government very capably—I emphasize “capably”—brought to justice Mr. Hambali, the planner of the Bali bombings in Indonesia, the killer of hundreds of innocent lives. And I really—and it was a piece of really good work. My only point is that we value our relationship and friendship on this key matter.

Of course, I'll be talking economics as well. Our non-NATO ally status is something I want to speak to privately first with the Prime Minister and not on your TV screen, if you don't mind, but it's a very good question. [Laughter]

President's Upcoming Visit to Thailand/ Demonstrations

Mr. Yong. Some of the public opinion in Thailand, like in your country, doesn't always support what the Government does.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Yong. You may admire Thaksin, the Prime Minister, for being supportive of the antiterror campaign. But there are people in Thailand who are not happy with that, against the war in Iraq and, again, your policy of preemption. And there are people who plan to stage a demonstration to demand that you be arrested during your visit in Bangkok. How do you respond to these critics?

The President. [Laughter] Well, I'm—first of all, a society which allows for people to express themselves is the kind of society I admire. I don't expect everybody to agree with my policies, and I appreciate the fact that they are able to express themselves. I'm not so sure I agree with their desire to have me arrested.

Look, some people disagree with my decision to take action against a thug who had been torturing his own people. We've discovered mass graves with hundreds of people that had been buried there, but it's also a man who used chemical weapons. And the United Nations—I didn't act alone. The critics must understand that I was acting in concert with the U.N., who for 10 years—which for years had said, “Disarm.” And finally, I went to the U.N. and said, “Wait a minute. This is time to—let's take care of this man one way or the other, and give him a chance

to disarm.” And he didn’t. So I said, “There ought to be serious consequences for not disarming,” and we acted.

I’m going to tell you something, people have got to understand I’m not going to forget the lessons of September the 11th, 2001. These are coldblooded killers that received their support from different governments, and this Nation will act to protect our people, and just like I hope the people of Thailand would expect the Prime Minister to act to protect the people in Thailand.

Prime Minister Thaksin Chinnawat of Thailand

Mr. Yong. There is an increased recognition among South Asian countries that Prime Minister Thaksin of Thailand is gradually emerging as a new regional leader. You have met him. You have talked to him. You see him being different from the other ASEAN leaders?

The President. Well, I certainly don’t want to compare him to other leaders. I think that would be unfair. But I do see him as a very strong leader and a very capable leader. He’s got a good grasp of the issues. He understands how economies work. He is not afraid to make tough decisions. He stands his ground in the face of criticism. And so I think he is a very interesting, dynamic leader.

Iraq

Mr. Yong. I think there are people in Thailand who doubt whether we made the right decision to send Thai troops to help in the reconstruction of Iraq.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Yong. With mounting casualties on the part of the American troops, there are people who doubt that it’s worth the risk or not.

The President. Yes, well, I think—of course, in a free society, there are doubters. But people ought to understand that a free and peaceful Iraq is necessary for world security. A peaceful society in the midst of a part of the world that’s been troubled is going to, for the long run, help—will help change the world in a positive way. And therefore, the idea of helping to rebuild a country ought to be something the Thai people accept.

You’ve got to understand, the people in Iraq lived under incredible tyranny and torture and rape rooms, the kinds of things the people in Thailand reject. These people were—the tyrant brutalized them and at the same time built up weapons and didn’t spend the money on social services. And so not only are we making the world more secure and peaceful; we’re actually making life better for people who had been brutalized by this man. And surely the people who respect human rights and decency understand the need to help.

Now, our troops are—we’re in the process of hunting down these killers. And the more progress there is in Iraq, the more the terrorists get angry, because they can’t stand freedom. So I look forward to making the case of the United States about why it was important to Thailand to contribute. It’s important for humanitarian reasons, at the very minimum. But for the long term, it’s important for peace and security.

Mr. Yong. Thank you very much for your time.

The President. I’m really looking forward to coming to your beautiful country.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 3:23 p.m. in the Library at the White House, and the transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 18. In his remarks, the President referred to Nurjaman Riduan Isamuddin (known as Hambali), Al Qaida’s chief operational planner in Southeast Asia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Interview With Malcolm Brown of Channel News Asia

October 14, 2003

Singapore’s Role in the War on Terror

Mr. Brown. Talking about your trip specifically to Singapore, how happy are you with the measures that Singapore has taken, specifically regarding terrorism? And what are your concerns about the residual threat in the region?

The President. First, I’m very happy with the Government of Singapore’s response to terrorism. They are strong, and they are resolute. They understand the task at hand, and they understand the dangers. Prime Minister

Goh and I have had some great conversations about the region. He is a very knowledgeable man. He keeps me abreast of his views of different players in the region and what's going on.

Of course we're concerned about terrorism in the region, because, after all, there's been attacks in the region. I remind our own citizens here that we're still focused on September the 11th as kind of the defining terrorist moment, but there have been a lot of attacks. And the Bali bombing is a classic example of the terrorist activities, and that happens to come in Southeast Asia. The Prime Minister and the Government are concerned, obviously, about those kind of attacks. We'll have a good discussion about it. He's got a lot to offer, a lot of advice to offer, a lot of wisdom, and I listen to it.

Role of APEC Partners in Iraq

Mr. Brown. Mr. President, have your APEC partners done enough to help the United States in Iraq?

The President. In Iraq? Well, we can always use more. And as a matter of fact, the Japanese are going to make an announcement. We're out there working hard to convince others to participate in the reconstruction effort in Iraq. It's in their interests that Iraq be free and peaceful. And the reason it is, is because the region needs democracy. The region needs an example of what can happen in a peaceful society. The region needs something alternative to a type of society which breeds terrorism. I firmly believe that Iraq will emerge to be that example and that leader.

North Korea and Iraq

Mr. Brown. Clearly, the region is also concerned about North Korea.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Brown. You've described Saddam Hussein as a madman and a danger, and he was deposed by force. You've also said that you loathe Kim Chong-il, and he has a known nuclear program. Why this disparity?

The President. Because, first of all, remember in Iraq, we spent 11 years' or so worth of resolutions and discussions and diplomacy trying to convince Saddam Hussein to disarm. He chose not to. I believe we can

solve the issue on the North Korean—with the North Korean issue on the Korean Peninsula peacefully.

As a matter of fact, we're making great strides toward that. You might remember, up until recent history, the whole issue is the United States and North Korea. And the Government signed an agreement with North Korea, and they didn't tell the truth. So I've decided to come with a new strategy, and that is, rather than just the United States being the interlocutor with North Korea, we convince others in the neighborhood, like the Chinese and the Russians and the Japanese and the South Koreans. And we're moving along. This will be a major part of our discussions in APEC, to keep this group together, to speak with one voice, and that is, to Kim Chong-il, "Get rid of your nuclear ambitions. No nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula." It's in all our interests we do so.

And we're making progress. Now he's hearing at least five voices, not just one. And I believe this can be solved peacefully. Force is the last resort for the United States, not the first resort. It's the last option, and I'm very hopeful that we can make good progress on this issue.

China's Space Program

Mr. Brown. On China, how do you see their space program? Is it a threat to the U.S.?

The President. No, it's an interesting development. I don't necessarily see it as a threat. I think it's a country that's now beginning to emerge as a sophisticated country, and it's got great potential. And I think it's interesting. I hope that they are able to make discoveries in space, like we did, that will—the technology that will come out of that will help mankind. No, I don't view it as a threat.

New Zealand-U.S. Relations

Mr. Brown. Finally, on a regional trade issue, with New Zealand, you'll meet Prime Minister Helen Clark on the sidelines, I understand, at APEC. Why does Australia have negotiations on a FTA, and New Zealand doesn't? Is it to do with their nuclear policy?

The President. No, not really. I mean, we haven't gotten started with New Zealand.

The nuclear policy, obviously, makes it difficult for us to have a military alliance, but we're friends with the New Zealanders. We respect the New Zealand people. But Australia is farther along the road when it comes to trade discussions. Prime Minister Howard and I discussed trade at my ranch in Crawford. We hope to get it done by the end of this year. The people of New Zealand shouldn't read anything into it other than, we just haven't gotten started. And I respect the people of New Zealand. I respect that great country.

Mr. Brown. I'm going to have to call it a day. That's all.

The President. I think you did a fine job.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 3:30 p.m. in the Library at the White House, and the transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 18. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong of Singapore; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea; and Prime Minister John Howard of Australia. Mr. Brown referred to Prime Minister Helen Clark of New Zealand. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Interview With Rosianna Silalahi of Indonesia's SCTV

October 14, 2003

Indonesia's Role in the War on Terror

Ms. Silalahi. Mr. President, thank you for your time. What specifically do you want to do by Megawati—President Megawati—in fighting terrorism? What—[inaudible]—some assistance to your country?

The President. First of all, President Megawati has responded to the war on terror, and I appreciate that. She's responded in a way that I think the people of her country ought to be proud—your country ought to be proud. Terrorism is such—it's such a stain. It's a horrible thing that people have to live with. The terrorists want to create fear. That's what they want to do. They want to kill innocent life to create fear.

And the Bali bombing was a terrible moment for Indonesia and obviously those who lost life. But President Megawati refuses to stand in fear of the terrorists. What I want

her to do is to continue to work closely with the United States and others, to share intelligence, find money as it floats around, and to bring people to justice.

Information Sharing on Hambali

Ms. Silalahi. How do you expect President Megawati or Indonesia to cooperate with the United States if we don't have a chance to question Hambali one on one?

The President. I think the thing on Hambali is—first of all, the good news is he's not a problem anymore. He's not a threat. And as I explained to the President that we will share any information with her. But right now, the key is to find out as much as we possibly can, and when we get information, we will share it with her.

Ms. Silalahi. Well, the problem is that Indonesia needs a chance that—the Indonesian police to question Hambali directly, not just to share information.

The President. Yes.

Ms. Silalahi. When are you going to give us this chance?

The President. Right now, we're going to get as much information as we possibly can.

Ms. Silalahi. So there's no way that Indonesia will have their chance to question Hambali?

The President. I wouldn't say, "No way." You said, "No way." I didn't say, "No way." I said, "Right now, we're going to get as much information as we can to make sure America is secure and Indonesia's secure. And any information we get, we'll be glad to share with the President." I've explained this to her, and she understands.

Situation in the Middle East/Terrorism

Ms. Silalahi. Sir, Indonesia is a moderate and—[inaudible]—Muslim society. But the way U.S. handle terrorism issues and by the U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East is distancing society. Aren't you concerned that this moderate society could be militant eventually?

The President. Well, first of all, terrorism—the Bali bombers decided to kill innocent people based upon their own ideology of hatred. And our foreign policy in the Middle East is based on the same principles that I just discussed with you on the war on terror.

In order for there to be a peaceful Palestinian state, people have got to fight terror. A few people are trying to destroy the hopes of a lot of people in the Palestinian territory.

And so I gave a speech—first of all, I'm the first President ever to articulate a Palestinian state and to support a Palestinian state. But to get there, it's very important for people to assume responsibilities, and one of the key responsibilities is for the Palestinian leadership to stand up and fight terror. And we've got a good man getting ready to do that. As you know, we had the meeting in Aqaba, Jordan, and we were making progress. And then he got eased out, pushed aside by the old guard, which has failed the Palestinian people. And so they're not assuming their responsibilities.

But I wouldn't—I think you can make all kinds of excuses for terror, but terrorists are interested in one thing, creating fear in free societies. That's what they want to do. The only way to deal with them is to bring them to justice. And you can do that and protect your civil liberties.

Indonesia-U.S. Relations

Ms. Silalahi. How do you propose to change anti-American sentiment in Indonesia?

The President. Explain what we're all about, explain that we're a compassionate country, that we love freedom and human rights and human dignity, that we care when people suffer. We've got a great—very compassionate foreign policy. One of the things I hope to do is, when I go to your country, explain that just like I'm explaining to you now.

And one of the big scourges of the world is AIDS, and the United States of America is leading the fight against AIDS, particularly on the continent of Africa. We believe in decency and human rights. We've always been a leader on human rights. And we speak out for human rights, because we believe in the dignity of each person.

Situation in Papua and Aceh

Ms. Silalahi. Speaking about human rights, Papua and Aceh are struggling to be independent because the human rights has

become a critical issue. What is your standpoint about this?

The President. Our standpoint is that we don't think that—in Aceh, for example, that the issue should be solved and can be solved militarily. It ought to be solved through peaceful negotiations.

Ms. Silalahi. And how about Papua?

The President. Same, peaceful negotiations.

Ms. Silalahi. How about American citizens that got killed in Papua?

The President. We're not happy about that, of course, and I appreciate the Government's full cooperation with our Federal Bureau of Investigation that is now seeking out the evidence to determine who the killers were.

Ms. Silalahi. Does it change your military policy towards Indonesia?

The President. No, as a matter of fact, we're going to discuss mil-to-mil relations between Indonesia. And for a while, the Congress put restrictions on it. But now the Congress has changed their attitude, and I think we can go forward with a package of mil-to-mil cooperation because of the cooperation of the Government on the killings of two U.S. citizens.

Ms. Silalahi. Thank you, Mr. President. So many questions, but—

The President. So little time?

Ms. Silalahi. So little time.

The President. Well, give your mother my best.

Ms. Silalahi. I thank you very much.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 3:37 p.m. in the Library at the White House, and the transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 18. In his remarks, the President referred to President Megawati Sukarnoputri of Indonesia; Nurjaman Riduan Isamuddin (known as Hambali), Al Qaida's chief operational planner in Southeast Asia; former Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority; and Edwin Burgon and Rick Spier, American citizens killed in an ambush in Indonesia's Papua province on August 31, 2002. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Interview With Laurence Oakes of Australia's Channel 9 TV

October 14, 2003

President's Upcoming Visit to Australia

Mr. Oakes. Mr. President, thanks for speaking to us. What's the main purpose of your trip to Australia? Are you hoping for greater Australian contribution to the stabilization and rebuilding of Iraq?

The President. No, the main purpose is to thank the people of Australia and thank my friend John Howard for being strong in the face of terror and being understanding that we have a historic opportunity to bring peace and freedom to parts of the world that need peace and freedom. It really is the main purpose. Australia is a great country. I would define our relationship as a unique relationship. And I'm looking forward to it. I've been there. They tell me it's kind of like Texas, which is another reason I want to go.

Mr. Oakes. I think that's right. But not everyone agrees—in Australia, agrees with you on the war. Some members of the opposition are talking about possibly protesting when you address the Parliament by wearing white armbands or turning their backs. Would that concern you?

The President. Not at all. No, it means that democracy is alive and well. It's a—I don't expect everybody to agree with us, but one thing is for certain, the Prime Minister was strong. And the Australian military performed brilliantly; I mean brilliantly. And I've talked to a lot of our generals and commanders about how the Australians participated, and they were just—A-plus was the rating. And I think a lot of people would like to hear that from the American President, and I'm going to tell them. And if somebody feels like they want to express discontent, that's okay. That's democracy.

Iraq

Mr. Oakes. Well, what about the suggestion from your critics that while you won the war, the peace is being bungled?

The President. They're wrong. We're making great progress in Iraq. We've got a pretty steep hill to climb. After all, one, we're facing a bunch of terrorists who can't stand freedom. These thugs were in power for a

while, and now they're not going to be in power anymore, and they don't like it. And they're willing to kill innocent people. Their terrorist activities—we'd rather fight them there than here.

And secondly, that life is pretty darn good compared to what it was under Saddam Hussein. People aren't going to be tortured. They're not going to be raped. They're not going to be mutilated. There are not going to be mass graves. And plus, that the infrastructure is improving. I talked to our Secretary of Commerce today. His exact—he's in Baghdad. He said, "Look," he said, "Mr. President," he said, "You're not going to believe the world here is a lot different than some in America think it is. There's a burgeoning marketplace." He met with women businessowners. I mean, there's excitement there about a free society emerging, and it's in our interests that this society be free.

Australian Detainees in Guantanamo Bay

Mr. Oakes. Sir, there are two Australian citizens being held in Guantanamo Bay.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Oakes. What's going to happen to them? And what do you say to people in Australia who think they should be either charged or released?

The President. Well, we would be glad to work with the Government on the issue. And if John wants to discuss it, I'm more than happy to discuss it. We're working with a variety of countries that have got people in Guantanamo Bay. These are people picked up on the battlefield. We're trying to learn more about them to make sure we fully understand—

Mr. Oakes. Are they being tortured?

The President. No, of course. We don't torture people in America. And people who make that claim just don't know anything about our country.

Australia-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

Mr. Oakes. Another issue between the two countries is the—possibly the free trade agreement.

The President. Yes, sir.

Mr. Oakes. Do you think you will get it, and will you be using this to push it along?

The President. Yes. I told John that we'd like to get a free trade agreement done by the end of this year, and I think it's a good opportunity to say that again. And he and I won't sit down and negotiate the fine points. That's what we've got fine staffs to do, but at our level we can encourage the negotiators to move along. Let's get it done. Let's resolve our differences. Australia is an important friend, an important economy, and I think trade is in our national interests.

War on Terror

Mr. Oakes. Australians have spent this week at memorial services for the victims of the Bali bombing. Can you hold out any hope for them that this—that the war on terrorism is actually getting somewhere?

The President. Yes, Hambali is no longer a problem. He's the guy that organized the Bali bombing. He won't be bombing anybody anymore. That's a positive step.

First of all, I understand what it means to be in a country that grieves over the senseless death of innocent life. And the Australians suffered a mighty blow. And the—matter of fact, the other day I was in Kentucky, you know, politics for a guy running for Governor. And a mother—a fine looking couple walked up, a mom and dad, said, "You've got to know, our daughter died in Bali," and tears in his eyes. And I gave him a big hug. And he said, "Mr. President, whatever you do, don't stop, so it doesn't happen again."

The best way to deal with terror is to be on the offensive and to find these people and bring them to justice. That's why Australia is such an important partner, equal partner, in the war on terror. John Howard gets it. He understands. The Prime Minister knows that we've got to be tough and at the same time create the conditions where there's an alternative to terrorism, and that's freedom and peace.

Mr. Oakes. One final question.

The President. Sure.

Australian, British, and U.S. Leaders' Popularity

Mr. Oakes. You're in trouble politically, if you believe the polls.

The President. Why do you say that?

Mr. Oakes. The polls show you dropping in popularity.

The President. Well, actually, there's a poll that showed me going up yesterday. Not to be on the defensive, but go ahead. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Oakes. Well, I was going to ask why you think you and Tony Blair seem to have lost support, but John Howard hasn't?

The President. Well, it must be his charisma. [*Laughter*] I don't know. Actually, I'm in pretty good shape politically. I really am. I didn't mean to sound defensive.

Mr. Oakes. No, sir.

The President. I am. Politicians, by the way, who pay attention to the polls are doomed to be kind of chasing—trying to chase opinion. What you need to do is lead, set the tone. And I've taken some tough decisions. And I will look forward to making the case that the decisions I have taken will make America more secure, make the world more peaceful, and make this country more prosperous. And so I'm upbeat about it. And as to why Howard is maintaining his popularity and—he married well, and he's smart.

Mr. Oakes. Sir, thank you. And I look forward to seeing you in Australia.

The President. Yes, sir. Looking forward to it. Thanks.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 3:44 p.m. in the Library at the White House, and the transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 18. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister John Howard of Australia; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Secretary of Commerce Donald L. Evans; Nurjaman Riduan Isamuddin (known as Hambali), Al Qaida's chief operational planner in Southeast Asia; and Kentucky gubernatorial candidate Ernie Fletcher. Mr. Oakes referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Proclamation 7723—National Forest Products Week, 2003

October 17, 2003

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Our forests are a source of pride for our Nation. They benefit many Americans who depend on healthy forests for their livelihoods and quality of life. As we celebrate National Forest Products Week, we recognize the importance of our forest resources. We remain committed to sound, commonsense, forest management.

Beyond their scenic beauty, our forests are vital to our economy and our way of life. Numerous jobs in the manufacturing and construction industries, as well as in the forest products industries, rely on the health and sustainability of our forests. Forests provide lumber for building our homes, they provide paper for publishing our books and newspapers, and forests are the source of many other wood and paper products that Americans use every day.

We have a responsibility to maintain the health and productivity of our forests. In the past, forests have been spoiled by overgrowth, decimated by insects and disease, and devastated by wildfires. My Administration's Healthy Forests Initiative will help prevent this kind of destruction. Aided by this Initiative, we treated nearly 2.6 million acres of forests during the last fiscal year to reduce dangerous overgrowth and restore forest health. This is more than double the number of acres that were treated 3 years ago. My Administration is also committed to fulfilling the promise of the 1994 Northwest Forest Plan to protect our most sensitive forest areas, while supporting a viable forest products industry and jobs in rural America. By encouraging active forest management and sustainable timber harvesting, we strengthen our economy and ensure the lasting beauty of our woodlands.

Recognizing the importance of our forests in ensuring the long-term welfare of our Nation, the Congress, by Public Law 86-753 (36 U.S.C. 123), as amended, has designated the week beginning on the third Sunday in

October of each year as "National Forest Products Week" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this week.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 19 through October 25, 2003, as National Forest Products Week. I call upon all Americans to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:20 a.m., October 21, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 18, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on October 22.

The President's Radio Address

October 18, 2003

Good morning. During the decades of Saddam Hussein's oppression and misrule, all Iraqis suffered, including children. While Saddam built palaces and monuments to himself, Iraqi schools crumbled. While Saddam supported a massive war machine, Iraqi schoolchildren went without textbooks, and sometimes teachers went unpaid. Saddam used schools for his own purposes: to indoctrinate the youth of Iraq and to teach hatred.

Under Saddam, adult illiteracy was 61 percent, and for women it was a staggering 77 percent. Iraq is a nation with a proud tradition of learning, and that tradition was betrayed by Saddam Hussein.

As part of our coalition's efforts to build a stable and secure Iraq, we are working to rebuild Iraq's schools, to get the teachers back to work, and to make sure Iraqi children have the supplies they need.

Six months ago, nearly all of Iraq's schools were closed, and many primary schools lacked electrical wiring and plumbing and

windows. Today, all 22 universities and 43 technical institutes and colleges are open, as are nearly all primary and secondary schools in the country. Earlier this year, we said we would rehabilitate 1,000 schools by the time school started. This month, just days before the first day of class, our coalition and our Iraqi partners had refurbished over 1,500 schools.

Under Saddam, textbooks were so rare, six students had to share each one. So we're working with UNESCO to print 5 million revised and modern textbooks free of Ba'athist propaganda and to distribute them to Iraqi students. By the end of the school year, there will be enough textbooks for each Iraqi student. And for the first time in years, they will get to read the work of great Iraqi writers and poets—much of it banned by Saddam's regime.

We have assembled more than a million school supply kits, including pencils and calculators and note pads for Iraqi schoolchildren. We have distributed tens of thousands of student desks and teacher chairs and chalkboards. And to assure the health of students, we have delivered over 22 million vaccinations for Iraqi children.

In many cases, American soldiers have intervened personally to make sure Iraqi schools get the supplies they need. Army First Lieutenant Kyle Barden of Charlotte, North Carolina, wanted supplies for the 11 schools in Laylan, Iraq. In response to Kyle's request for help, North Carolina schoolchildren, doctors, businesses, and others have donated thousands of dollars to buy notebooks and pencils and colored pens.

Army Major Gregg Softy of the First Armored Division sent an e-mail to friends about Iraq schools. The response was overwhelming. Hundreds of packages were shipped, and a web site was established to encourage other Americans to contribute.

All of our efforts to improve Iraqi education ultimately serve the cause of security and peace. We want young Iraqis to learn skills and to grow and hope, instead of being fed a steady diet of propaganda and hatred. We're making progress, but there is still much work to do. The request I made to Congress for Iraqi reconstruction includes

funds for additional health and training projects. I urge Congress to pass my budget request soon, so this vital work can proceed.

Our efforts will help Iraq reclaim its proud heritage of learning and bring it into the family of nations. An elderly man in Umm Qasr recently tried an Internet connection for the first time. He was stunned by the speed with which he could read newspapers from across the world. He said, "Our society has been cut off from the world, and now we are re-connected." As Iraq rejoins the world, it will demonstrate the power of freedom and hope to overcome hatred and resentment. And this transformation will make our Nation more secure.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 8:25 a.m. on October 16 in Riverside, CA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 18. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 17 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of the Philippines and an Exchange With Reporters in Manila, Philippines

October 18, 2003

President Macapagal-Arroyo. I'd like to thank President Bush for coming to the Philippines on this state visit. It affirms the warm and deep relations between our two countries. It's another building block in the revitalized and maturing alliance, rooted in shared histories and shared values, a common interest in global peace and prosperity, as well as a real commitment of combating terrorism and advancing freedom.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the United States for its support for the Philippines as a nonpermanent member of the Security Council for the term 2004 to 2005 and also for designating the Philippines as a major non-NATO ally.

I also welcome the Joint Defense Assessment named by our respective defense agencies. It recognizes that the world today requires a new perspective on political and economic security. The assessment recognizes the determination of the Philippines to take greater responsibility for its own political and economic security, even as it acknowledges that strong relations with the U.S. will contribute greatly to peace and prosperity, stability, and security, especially from terrorism. Indeed, we must close ranks and stand firm against terrorist threats, however grave, however armed, and from whatever quarter.

When those violence happened in May 2001, the Philippines chose to fight terrorism, compensating for such modest means that it commands with an unshakable resolve to defeat it once and for all.

I thank President Bush for continued security assistance which enhances the means to defeat terrorism. I also appreciate the help of President Bush for increased economic assistance to alleviate poverty and other socio-economic ills from which terrorism draws its strength. I take pride in the robust economic ties that bind the Philippines and the United States.

This past week, in preparation for this visit, we witnessed the launching in the Philippines of Convergys, the largest customer care service company in the world, which is hiring 3,000 workers in its first year of operation. We also witnessed the launching of a new \$50 million investment of Ford to launch the Philippines as an export hub for the world. We received \$33 million of new USAID money for educational assistance in the conflict-affected areas, and we celebrated the electrification of 1,650 barangays with a contribution of one million pesos per barangay from Mirant, CalEnergy, and San Roque, all in preparation for your visit, Mr. President.

I look forward to the rest of my talks with President Bush and the officials of his administration. Once again, thank you, Mr. President, and thanks to Mrs. Bush for making this state visit to the Philippines.

President Bush. Madam President, thanks. It's been a—this is going to be a great trip, thanks to your wonderful hospitality. I want to thank you and your Government for

such wonderful arrangements. And I want to thank the people of Manila for being so friendly to Laura and me as we drove through the streets. There was an outpouring of enthusiasm and waving that really made us feel great, and we want to thank your country very much.

I'm here to continue our important discussions. And I want to remind the people of this country what a great leader you've been when it comes to fighting terror. You've been strong and stalwart, and that's what's needed. The terrorists want to frighten people into inaction. They want to create fear and, therefore, have their way. And you have been strong, and I appreciate that very much. We want to continue to help you.

And I also want to thank you for your vision of understanding that freedom is important. It's a human right, and where there's human suffering and tyranny, that—at the same time, terrorist links—the free world must work to change conditions, hopefully in peaceful ways. But sometimes tyranny is so stubborn and ignores the reality that we have to take tough decisions. And Mr. President, you understand that, and I want to thank you very much for that.

I also want to continue to work on close ties, particularly when it comes to trade and jobs. We want the people of the Philippines working, and we want the people of America working. And by having good free trade and fair trade, we can help both countries.

And finally, I want to thank you very much for working together on matters of education. We've got a great education initiative, and you recognize, like I recognize, that education is the best way to fight poverty. And therefore, education is also a great way to enhance democracy.

Thank you for your leadership. Thanks for your hospitality. I'm looking forward to the rest of the day in this beautiful country.

President Macapagal-Arroyo. Thank you.

President Bush. If it's all right, we've got, obviously, some anxiety built up in our press corps there—[laughter].

Q. Mr. President—

President Bush. Yes. Speaking about anxiety, yes—[laughter]—the dean of the traveling crowd here.

Terrorist Threat in the Philippines

Q. How serious do you think the terrorism threat is here in the Philippines? And what specifically can you do to help President Arroyo deal with it?

President Bush. Well, I think the Abu Sayyaf is serious. It's serious because there are no rules when it comes to a crowd like the Abu Sayyaf. They kidnap. They kill. They maim. And there's only one way to deal with them, and that's to find them and to bring them to justice, which is precisely what the Arroyo Government has been doing.

I was briefed before you all came in about the progress made against the Abu Sayyaf group. Not only has the leadership been slowly but surely brought to justice, but many members of the Abu Sayyaf have been brought to justice.

The best thing we can continue to do with in our respective constitutions and/or budgets is to work in a close, cooperative way, starting with intelligence sharing and then providing the assets and the capacity and training to move quickly when a particular target is found. The cooperation between the United States and the Philippines is strong. The success against this particular group is a model for the region, as far as I'm concerned, and I want to thank the President for that.

President Macapagal-Arroyo. Thank you.

APEC Summit Agenda

Q. Mr. President, you're trying to put security on the agenda at APEC. Do you think some leaders of this region, some countries are not doing enough to crack down on terrorism?

President Bush. No, I think security is on the agenda. What I'm trying to do and will do is to remind people that the war on terror goes on. See, the easiest thing to do is to think the war on terror is over with. It's certainly the most comfortable approach. And I just will remind people that, in view of the United States, that the United States is still threatened and our friends are threatened, and therefore, we must continue to cooperate and work. And the good news is that I don't have to convince Madam President

of that. She understands that as well as anybody in the region.

We'll also, of course, talk about jobs. And I want our people working, and I know the President wants the people of the Philippines working. And trade is important. It's an important way to lift lives on both sides of the Pacific. But it's also important to have free—fair trade. In other words, we want the trade to be—markets to be equally open. And that's an important conversation that I will have with the members of APEC.

And the other thing, of course, is a chance to renew friendships and to be able to kind of continue discussions that I had been having in the past. The President and I, gosh, we've talked a lot. We've met a lot, and we've talked a lot. These meetings are important ways to keep our friendships going and to keep our common interests alive.

Q. Mr. President—

President Bush. Stretch. We call him Stretch. [Laughter]

President Macapagal-Arroyo. I can see why. [Laughter]

U.N. Security Council Resolution on Iraq

Q. You got a resolution through the U.N. this week, but some of the countries that opposed the war, going back to last year, France, Germany, Russia, still haven't come forward with any contributions. Do you think this—and some members of your administration cautioned us against assuming there will be any major inflow of contributions, troops, and money, as a result of this. Do you think that's a realistic outlook on things?

President Bush. Well, first, let me thank those countries for their vote at the U.N. That was a very important vote. And as a matter of fact, the first thing that the President and I discussed, and the first thing that Prime Minister Koizumi and I discussed was the vote at the U.N. It's important for these countries around the world to see the U.N. act the way the U.N. acted in a 15 to nothing U.N. Security Council resolution vote. It was a strong vote.

And as to whether or not they'll participate, time will tell. But I—take, for example, Germany. Germany is participating in the

aftermath of certain battles in the war on terror. And that is in Afghanistan; they're making a very serious, important contribution. And for that we are very grateful. And there will be other ways for nations to contribute in the overall war on terror.

And I'm pleased with the progress we are making in Iraq. The President and I discussed that progress, and it's measurable progress. For example, we had a goal of 1,000 schools to open after the end of the conflict, and it wasn't 1,000 schools that were refurbished and opened, but it was 1,500—1,500 schools. And the electricity is coming on, and the water is more pure. And I can cite a series of examples where life is improving for the Iraqi citizen.

It is still a dangerous place because there are still haters and thugs and terrorists who are willing to take innocent life. And the reason why is, is because they want America to leave. They want to create the conditions of fear, and therefore, we'll say, "Well, we've had enough." But we're not leaving. See, we're not leaving until we complete the task.

And I am pleased with progress. And one of the President's ministers was there, talking about education matters and the need for us to continue to work together to improve the lives of the Iraqi citizens, and we will. It's in our interest that Iraq be free and peaceful. It will help change the world.

And I want to thank the President for her strong support. There are Philippine citizens there today.

All right, thank you all.

NOTE: President Macapagal-Arroyo spoke at approximately 2:30 p.m. at Malacanang Palace. In his remarks, President Bush referred to Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan. Portions of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks to a Joint Session of the Philippine Congress in Quezon City, Philippines

October 18, 2003

Thank you all very much. Thank you. Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, Members of the Congress, distinguished guests, I thank you for your gracious welcome to the Republic

of the Philippines. I also want to thank the citizens of Manila who lined the streets today for their warm and gracious welcome to Laura and me. It warmed our hearts. And I want to thank you for inviting me to be the first American President since Dwight Eisenhower to address this body.

Earlier this year, Laura and I hosted President and Attorney Arroyo at the White House, the first state visit from an Asian country during my administration. Today we are honored to visit America's oldest ally in Asia and one of America's most valued friends in the world.

The great patriot Jose Rizal said that nations win their freedom by deserving it, by loving what is just, what is good, what is great to the point of dying for it. In the 107 years since that good man's heroic death, Filipinos have fought for justice; you have sacrificed for democracy; you have earned your freedom.

America is proud of its part in the great story of the Filipino people. Together our soldiers liberated the Philippines from colonial rule. Together we rescued the islands from invasion and occupation. The names of Bataan, Corregidor, Leyte, Luzon evoke the memories of shared struggle and shared loss and shared victory. Veterans of those battles are here today. I salute your courage and your service. Along the way and through the years, Americans have gained an abiding respect for the character of your nation and for the decency and courage of the Filipino people.

The Pacific is wide, but it does not divide us. Over 2 million American citizens trace their ancestry to these islands. The commerce between us is vibrant and growing. We work together each day in law enforcement and economic development and government reform. Our young people study at each other's universities. Many Filipinos teach in American public schools. And just this week, our two Governments launched a 6-year effort to extend greater educational opportunities to children in some of the poorest regions of this country. We understand—we both know that education helps defeat poverty.

The United States and the Philippines are warm friends. We cherish that friendship, and we will keep it strong. Our countries are

joined by more than a market, even more than an alliance. This friendship is rooted in the deepest convictions we hold. We believe in free enterprise, disciplined by humanity and compassion. We believe in the importance of religious faith, protected by religious liberty. We believe in the rule of law, made legitimate by the will of the people. And we believe that democracy is the only form of government fully compatible with human dignity.

These ideals speak to men and women in every culture; yet they are under attack in many cultures in many parts of the world. A new totalitarian threat has risen against civilization. Like other militarists and fascists before them, the terrorists and their allies seek to control every mind and soul. They seek to spread chaos and fear, intimidate whole societies, and silence all opposition. They seek weapons of mass destruction to complete their hatred and genocide. The terrorists will continue their missions of murder and suicide until they're stopped, and we will stop them.

Every nation in Asia and across the world now faces a choice. Nations that choose to support terror are complicit in a war against civilization. Nations that try to ignore terror and hope it will only strike others are deluding themselves, undermining our common defense, and inviting a future of catastrophic violence. Nations that choose to fight terror are defending their own safety and the safety of free people everywhere.

The Philippines and the United States have seen the enemy on our own soil. Americans witnessed the murder of thousands on a single day. Filipinos have known bombings and kidnaping and brutal murders of the innocent. We've endured the violence and grief of terror. We know the enemy wants to spread fear and chaos. Our two nations have made our choice. We will defend ourselves, our civilization, and the peace of the world. We will not be intimidated by the terrorists.

We're on the offensive against the terrorists, draining their funds, disrupting their plans, and bringing them to justice, one person at a time. Here in the Philippines, one face of the enemy is the Abu Sayyaf group. These killers torture and behead their victims while acting or claiming to act in the name

of God. But murder has no home in any religious faith. And these terrorists must find no home in the Philippines.

My Government and your Government pursue a common objective: We will bring Abu Sayyaf to justice. And we will continue to work together, along with our friends in Southeast Asia, to dismantle Jemaah Islamiyah, the terrorist network, as well as other groups that traffic in violence and chaos. As we fight the terrorists, we're also determined to end conflicts that spread hopelessness and feed terror.

The United States supports President Arroyo's campaign to establish a lasting peace with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. Shortly before his death, Ustaz Hashim Salamat wrote a letter to me professing his rejection of terrorism. Only that commitment to peace can bring a better future to the people in Mindanao.

I call on all the members of the MILF to reject terror and to move forward with political negotiations. When a lasting peace is established, the United States is prepared to provide development assistance to Mindanao.

Yet there can be no compromise with terror. Philippine security forces have the right and the duty to protect local communities and to defeat terrorism in every form. In the war on terror, U.S.-Philippines military alliance is a rock of stability in the Pacific.

And this afternoon, President Arroyo and I agreed to update our defense cooperation. We completed the comprehensive review of Philippine security requirements announced last May. Today President Arroyo and her Government committed to a 5-year plan to modernize and reform your military. I commend the President and your military leadership for taking this bold action. My country will provide technical assistance and field expertise and funding.

But success requires more than American assistance. The Members of this body must invest in the Philippine military to ensure that your forces have the resources needed to win the war on terror and to protect the Philippine people.

Free nations have faced a great challenge all around the world and a great challenge in Iraq. Saddam Hussein pursued weapons

of mass destruction, sponsored terrorism, oppressed his people, and for 12 years defied the demands of the United Nations. Finally, the U.N. Security Council in Resolution 1441 demanded that Saddam disarm, prove his disarmament to the world, or face serious consequences. Saddam Hussein chose defiance, and President Arroyo was one of the first world leaders to recognize the need for action. The Philippines joined the United States in supporting and enforcing the serious consequences. You rose to the moment, and the American people respect your courageous and principled stand.

Since the liberation of Iraq, we have discovered Saddam's clandestine network of laboratories suitable for biological and chemical weapons research, his design work on prohibited long-range missiles, his elaborate campaign to hide his illegal weapons programs. We've shut down terror camps, denied terrorists a sanctuary. By our actions, our coalition removed a grave and gathering danger. We also ended one of the cruelest regimes in our time. Saddam's rape rooms and torture chambers and children's prisons are closed forever. His mass graves will claim no victims. The world was right to confront the regime of Saddam Hussein, and we were right to end the regime of Saddam Hussein.

Now that the dictator is gone, Americans and Filipinos and many others share a common vision for that country. Coalition forces, including Filipino peacekeepers and medical workers, are working for the rise of freedom and self-government in Iraq. We're helping to build a free Iraq, because the long-suffering Iraqi people deserve lives of opportunity and dignity. And we're helping to build a free Iraq, because free nations do not threaten others or breed the ideologies of murder. By working for democracy, we serve the cause of peace.

Democracy always has skeptics. Some say the culture of the Middle East will not sustain the institutions of democracy. The same doubts were once expressed about the culture of Asia. These doubts were proven wrong nearly six decades ago when the Republic of the Philippines became the first democratic nation in Asia. Since then, liberty has reached nearly every shore of the western Pacific. In this region of the world and in

every other, let no one doubt the power of democracy, because freedom is the desire of every human heart.

Sustaining liberty is not always easy. The world saw this last July here in the Philippines. And all free nations rejoiced when the mutiny against this Government failed. People of this land fought too hard, too long to surrender your freedom to the conspiracy of a few.

All of you in this chamber are the protectors of Philippine democracy, charged with upholding the legacy of Rizal and Quezon. Members of the Philippine Armed Forces are commissioned to fight for freedom, not to contend for power. I'm certain that in the coming election, this nation will show its deep commitment to democracy and continue to inspire people throughout Asia.

In this city, on a January morning in 1995, Pope John Paul II addressed millions of the faithful. He spoke of the goodness of the Filipino people and the strength of your democracy and the example this nation has set for others. He said, "May your light spread out from Manila to the farthest corners of the world, like the great light which shone in the night at Bethlehem." Ladies and gentlemen, the world needs the Philippines to continue as a light to all of Asia and beyond.

There is so much to be proud of in your beloved country, your commitments to democracy and peace and your willingness to oppose terrorism and tyranny. The United States and the Philippines have a proud history. And we face the future bound by the strongest ties two nations can share. We stand for liberty, and we stand together.

May God bless. Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:50 p.m. in the Session Hall at the Philippine House of Representatives. In his remarks, he referred to Franklin M. Drilon, President, Senate of the Philippines; Jose de Venecia, Jr., Speaker of the Philippine House of Representatives; President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of the Philippines, and her husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo; Ustaz Salamat Hashim, former leader of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Joint Statement Between the United States of America and the Republic of the Philippines*October 18, 2003*

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo warmly welcomed President George W. Bush to Malacanang today for the first State visit of an American President to Manila in over 30 years. As the two Presidents highlighted during President Macapagal-Arroyo's State visit to the United States last May, the ties between the Philippine and American peoples are deeply rooted in shared history and values, as well as in a shared commitment to global peace, security and prosperity.

President Macapagal-Arroyo expressed her appreciation for the support extended by President Bush to the Veteran Equity bills pending in both houses of the U.S. Congress, designed to enhance benefits for Filipino veterans of World War II residing in the United States. Both Presidents noted that the American and Filipino fighting men of World War II remain a strong bond between the peoples of both nations. President Bush announced the doubling of U.S. funding for medical equipment at the Veterans Medical Center in Quezon City. President Bush highlighted his respect for the impressive contributions of Filipino-Americans to American social, cultural and economic life.

The two Presidents focused their discussion on the security challenges facing the United States and the Philippines, agreeing that the U.S.-Philippine partnership has taken on new vitality and importance in the context of the global war on terrorism. Presidents Macapagal-Arroyo and Bush reviewed recent successes in the war on terrorism, noting with satisfaction that a number of terrorist killers have been brought to justice. They agreed that while progress had been made in attacking terrorist organizations both globally and regionally, much work remains to be done.

President Bush praised President Macapagal-Arroyo's courage and strength in confronting terrorism in the Philippines and in Southeast Asia. He expressed particular appreciation for Philippine initiatives to improve and expand international counterterrorism cooperation and thanked

President Macapagal-Arroyo for her leadership working with key ASEAN partners to address the terrorist threat on a regional basis. The two leaders agreed that such cooperation, particularly in the area of information sharing, is an essential component of the war on terrorism.

In recognition of the strength and vitality of the alliance, as well as its vital role in promoting regional security and combating global terrorism, President Bush informed President Macapagal-Arroyo that he had designated the Philippines as a Major Non-NATO Ally (MNNA). President Macapagal-Arroyo thanked President Bush for this honor and expressed hope that this move would facilitate the modernization of the Philippine Armed Forces and the strengthening of our defense partnership.

In keeping with their May 19 pledge to conduct a comprehensive security assessment, the two Presidents also reviewed and endorsed the findings of the 2003 Joint Defense Assessment (JDA) of the Armed Forces of the Philippines' capabilities and requirements. The purpose of the JDA is to assist the government of the Philippines in developing a defense program that will improve the ability of the Philippine military to respond to threats to Philippine security.

President Arroyo noted the determination of her government to move forward on an ambitious program of military reform, including increased allocation of resources to Philippine national defense. President Bush committed to assist the Philippines in this effort.

The two Presidents agreed that their respective defense establishments would embark on a multi-year plan to implement the key recommendations of the Joint Defense Assessment. They agreed to direct their defense establishments to finalize details of the plan and begin its implementation.

President Macapagal-Arroyo welcomed substantial new U.S. programs of law enforcement training, equipment, and expertise in support of her efforts to strengthen the rule of law and to reform and strengthen the Philippines National Police and other law enforcement agencies.

President Bush commended President Macapagal-Arroyo for her steadfast leadership in pursuing economic reforms in the Philippines and welcomed her pledge to maintain resolve in pursuing reforms in revenue collection, energy privatization and intellectual property rights protection.

President Bush praised President Macapagal-Arroyo's determination to alleviate poverty and other socio-economic grievances that are too often exploited by terrorist organizations to recruit followers. President Arroyo welcomed the new, six year U.S. initiative to strengthen education in the poorest areas of the Philippines, particularly Mindanao, as supportive of her efforts. This new program complements the Philippine government's efforts to uplift the communities in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and expand their access to education and training.

The two Presidents discussed the Philippine government's efforts to establish a durable, effective peace with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). They expressed appreciation for Malaysia's role in facilitating the negotiating process. President Bush emphasized U.S. willingness to provide diplomatic and financial assistance in support of peace but emphasized that the MILF must first fully renounce terror and demonstrate its commitment to peaceful political negotiations.

Presidents Bush and Macapagal-Arroyo discussed the situation in Iraq. The two leaders reiterated their shared commitment to a free Iraq at peace with its neighbors and expressed unwavering determination to continue the important work of helping the Iraqi people build a stable, just and prosperous country that poses no threat to the world. President Bush thanked President Macapagal-Arroyo for the contributions made by the Philippines to security and reconstruction in Iraq. The two Presidents affirmed the vital role of the United Nations in postwar Iraq and stressed the need for more countries to contribute peacekeeping and humanitarian contingents to Iraq as that country prepares for sovereignty under a democratic regime.

The two leaders welcomed the six party talks in Beijing and reiterated their intention

to work with other members of the Asia Pacific region to ensure the complete, verifiable and irreversible elimination of North Korea's nuclear weapons program.

President Bush congratulated the Philippines on its nomination by Asian countries to join the United Nations Security Council and expressed confidence that the Philippines would contribute to global peace and security.

President Bush and President Macapagal-Arroyo concluded the visit by celebrating the impressive gains made in Philippine-U.S. relations under their administrations, expressing confidence that today's State visit marks another concrete step forward in the development of a modern, mature relationship between friends and equals.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks at a State Dinner Hosted by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in Manila

October 18, 2003

The President. Thank you very much, Madam President and Attorney Arroyo, for your gracious hospitality. Laura and I are really grateful for your warm words of welcome. We also appreciate the distinction you have bestowed upon us this evening, the Order of the Sikatuna and the Order of Gabriela Silang. We are honored to accept them on behalf of the American people.

I represent the oldest democracy in the Americas. And I'm proud to pay tribute to the oldest democracy in Asia. The friendship between our countries is strong and warm and enduring, and we reaffirm that partnership here tonight.

Today I was the first United States President since Dwight Eisenhower to address a Joint Session of your Congress. In 1960, President Eisenhower expressed America's firm support for a fledgling democracy. Two generations later, I am pleased to show my country's support for the great democracy you have become.

The Philippines and the United States are linked by shared values, by shared history, and by a shared commitment to the defense

of liberty. Only a few miles from this palace are the graves of 17,000 Americans who fought for freedom in the Pacific. Their lasting legacy and the legacy of the Filipinos who fought with them is a free and democratic Philippine nation.

Today, free nations are tested once again. Once again, we face determined enemies of freedom, the terrorists and their allies. Once again, we are depending on one another in an hour of need. Once again, we are relying on the strength of the great alliance between our two countries. Once again, we will prevail.

Madam President, I thank you for your friendship and counsel, for your courage and perseverance. And I offer this toast to you, to the great nation of the Philippines, and to the lasting friendship between our two peoples.

[At this point, the President offered a toast.]

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:45 p.m. at Malacanang Palace. In his remarks, he referred to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of the Philippines, and her husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Thaksin Chinnawat of Thailand and an Exchange With Reporters in Bangkok, Thailand
October 19, 2003

President Bush. Mr. Prime Minister, thank you very much for your grand hospitality. Our entire delegation is honored that you have worked so hard to make our stay comfortable and meaningful.

We just had a very good bilateral with our very close friend. I want to thank the Prime Minister for his strong support in the war on terror and remind our fellow citizens that because of his Government and his good work, Mr. Hambali, one of the masterminds of the Bali bombing, has been brought to justice. Mr. Prime Minister, the world is safer because of that. And I want to thank you, and I want to thank you for your support in Iraq.

I told the Prime Minister that this country is willing to grant major non-NATO ally sta-

tus to Thailand, which is a very important recognition of your friendship and your strong support. As well we discussed the fact that we want to move forward the free trade agreement. We have the intention to begin negotiations on our free trade agreement, which is a very important step in our bilateral relations. And I want to thank you for that.

We also talked about a wide range of issues, including Burma and our deep desire for freedom to take place in Burma. We care deeply about Aung San Suu Kyi and the status of Aung San Suu Kyi, and we would like to see her free. I appreciate the sympathetic hearing I got from the Prime Minister. We share the same goal; the Government assured us of that, and I thank him for that.

All in all, it was very constructive visit, perhaps made more constructive by the fact that the Prime Minister went to university at Sam Houston State in Huntsville, Texas—[laughter]—and therefore, we speak the same language. [Laughter]

Thank you, sir, for your hospitality.

I thought I'd take a couple of questions.

North Korea

Q. Mr. President, would you be willing to offer North Korea some kind of non-invasion or non-aggression agreement or pact, maybe something short of a treaty, if it would get out of the nuclear weapons business?

President Bush. Well, that's exactly what I'm going to talk to the leader of China about here in a couple of hours, how to move the process forward. I've said as plainly as I can say that we have no intention of invading North Korea. And I've also said as plainly as I can say that we expect North Korea to get rid of her nuclear weapons ambitions. And the progress we're making on this issue is that we've convinced other nations to say the same thing, including China and Japan and South Korea and Russia—and Thailand. The Foreign Minister recently has had a trip there, and briefed us on his discussions with the North Korean Government.

We would like to see the Korean Peninsula without any nuclear weapons. And we will also be willing to discuss with the Chinese and our other partners how to move the process forward. That's precisely what I'm going to do.

Holland [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Usama bin Laden Tape/War on Terror

Q. Sir, bin Laden is threatening new attacks. How serious a threat is this, and will this discourage other countries from stepping forward in Iraq?

President Bush. I think that the bin Laden tape should say to everybody the war on terror goes on, that there's still a danger for free nations and that free nations need to work together more than ever to share intelligence, cut off money, and bring these potential killers or killers to justice. And we've got to find them. And that's one of the discussion points that the Prime Minister and I just had. It's something I'll discuss with other leaders here at APEC. This is still a dangerous world, and that tape just points out exactly what I meant.

David.

North Korea

Q. Mr. President—

Q. Mr. President—

Q. Which one?

President Bush. Neither. [Laughter]
Both. [Laughter] The prettier one first. [Laughter]

Q. I'll let you go—

Q. I won't go there, Mr. President. If I could just follow up on your answer on North Korea. You've often said in recent days that you had made the decision on Iraq because you could not leave the security of the American people in the hands of a madman—

President Bush. Yes.

Q. You are now in a position where the CIA says, has long said that North Korea has maybe two weapons. There are some arguments they may now have four or six, while this slow diplomacy has gone on. Would you say that Kim Chong-il now poses as urgent and immediate a threat today as Saddam Hussein did a year ago?

President Bush. I would say that the situation is different between North Korea and Iraq, and that it's this, David, that we tried diplomacy for 12 long years in Iraq, and many Security Council resolutions for Iraq, and the world spoke clearly about Iraq. And Saddam Hussein ignored the world. And

therefore, we put a coalition together to deal with Saddam Hussein.

We're making progress on the diplomatic front. I'd like to resolve all issues in a peaceful way, without using our military, and I think we have an opportunity to do so—

Q. Even if they're still building weapons while you do it?

President Bush. Well, we'll find out if they are or not. We—the key thing we're going to do is now, for the first time, have started to speak with not one voice but five voices to convince Mr. Kim Chong-il that he ought to change his way.

And today is—we're furthering the process with my discussions with Mr. Hu Jintao on this very subject. China is now very much engaged in the process. And as you very well know as a student of this issue, that hasn't been the case up until recently. As a matter of fact, the bilateral approach to dealing with North Korea didn't work. We signed an agreement with North Korea prior to our arrival in Washington, DC, and the North Koreans cheated. And so we're trying another approach. And I'm hopeful this will work, and we're making good progress on this approach.

Yes.

Q. Sir, can I just follow on one aspect of that, which is you're making very clear again today that you have no intention of invading North Korea, and you want them to know that. But in your mind, is there a distinction between saying that publicly and putting that down on paper in a non-aggression pact? Is that something you are unwilling to do?

President Bush. I'm going to look at all options. But you know, first of all, it is very important for us to work with our partners on this issue. That's the difference. And the difference is that we've now got four other voices besides ourselves who say the same message to Mr. Kim Chong-il, and that is, "Disarm." And we want to explore these options with our—with China and Japan, South Korea, and Russia. And that's what I intend to do.

Q. [Inaudible]—that's an important idea, you may—

President Bush. First of all, what's important is that the burden is on North Korea, not on America. North Korea must get rid

of her nuclear ambitions. She must get rid of her weapons program. That's exactly the point we're trying to make—in a verifiable way, I might add. And we are—we think there's an opportunity to move the process forward, and we're going to discuss it with our partners.

We will not have a treaty, if that's what you're asking. That's off the table. Perhaps there are other ways we can look at—to say exactly what I said publicly on paper, with our partners' consent.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:21 a.m. at the Grand Hyatt Erawan Bangkok. In his remarks, he referred to Nurjaman Riduan Isamuddin (known as Hambali), Al Qaida's chief operational planner in Southeast Asia; Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the National League for Democracy of Burma; President Hu Jintao of China; Minister of Foreign Affairs Surakiat Sathianthai of Thailand; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at the Royal Thai Army Headquarters in Bangkok

October 19, 2003

Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. Thank you very much. Thank you very much. General Thammarak, commanders of the Royal Thai Armed Forces, members of the Royal Thai Army, veterans, members of the United States military, distinguished guests and citizens of Thailand, Mrs. Bush and I appreciate your kind welcome to the Royal Thai Army Headquarters. We are honored to be here.

We're honored to be in the Kingdom of Thailand. Today I'm pleased to convey the respect of the American Armed Forces and the good wishes of the American people. I'm grateful to His Majesty the King and Her Majesty the Queen for inviting us to this ancient and beautiful land.

Earlier today I met with Prime Minister Thaksin, and I was proud to reaffirm the great friendship between our nations. We share a belief in democracy and human rights and ethnic and religious tolerance. We also share a willingness to defend those values in

times of danger. Our alliance of conviction is also an alliance of courage.

The Thai people have proven your commitment to freedom many times. With us today are members of the Free Thai Movement, who showed such fierce courage during World War II. Other veterans have served in Korea and Vietnam, where the Americans and Thais fought and died together, and during the cold war, when our partnership was so vital to the stability of Asia. All the veterans hold an honored place in a great alliance, and I salute your service.

Today, our nations are challenged once again. We're threatened by ruthless enemies unlike others we have faced. Terrorist groups hide in many countries. They emerge to kill the innocent. They seek weapons to kill on a massive scale. One terrorist camp in the mountains of central Asia can bring horror to innocent people living far away, whether they're in Bali, in Riyadh, or in New York City. One murderous dictator pursuing weapons of mass destruction and cultivating ties to terror could threaten the lives of millions.

We must fight terrorism on many fronts. We must stay on the offensive until the terrorist threat is fully and finally defeated. To win the war on terror, we must hunt a scattered and resourceful enemy in dark corners around the world. We must break up their cells, shut off their sources of money. We must oppose the propaganda of hatred that feeds their cause. In the nations where resentment and terrorism have taken root, we must encourage the alternative of progress and tolerance and freedom that leads to peace.

Nations that choose to fight terror are defending their own safety and securing the peace of all mankind. The United States of America has made its choice. The Kingdom of Thailand has made its choice. We will meet this danger and overcome this evil. Whatever is asked of us, no matter how long it takes, we will push on until our work is done.

Three months after my country was attacked on September the 11th, 2001, Prime Minister Thaksin came to America and offered Thailand's help in the war on terror. Since then, Thailand has committed military

forces outside Southeast Asia for the first time in more than 50 years. Some of you have just returned from Afghanistan, where you gave many months of service. Thai engineers rebuilt Afghanistan's national airfield and helped restore much of that country's infrastructure. And the Afghan people and the American people are grateful for your service. The Thai task force is a vital part of the multinational division in Karbala, Iraq, once again helping a shattered country rebuild after years of oppression.

Inside your own country, you are pursuing dangerous terrorists and finding them, and America thanks you for ending the lethal career of the terrorist Hambali, who is suspected of planning the attack on Bali and other acts of terror. Thailand pledged to fight the war on terror, and that pledge is being honored in full.

Thailand is also a force of good throughout Southeast Asia. When East Timor was torn by violence, Thai forces joined with Americans and Australians to bring stability, and they helped establish the world's newest nation. This important work has brought dignity to the people of East Timor and greater security to this region.

Together, our two nations are fighting the drug trade by sharing intelligence that helps Thai law enforcement officials interdict shipments and catch drug traffickers. We're fighting the trafficking in human beings to abolish a modern form of slavery.

America supports your country's humane efforts to find, defuse, and dispose of landmines. And having cooperated for decades to fight hepatitis and malaria, we're now working together to turn the tide against AIDS.

America and Thailand understand that trade and growth are the only sure ways to spread prosperity and lift people and nations out of poverty. And this morning I'm pleased to announce that the United States and Thailand are planning to launch negotiations toward a free trade agreement. This region and our world must one day trade in freedom.

In all our common efforts, we are confident of the outcome. We're confident in the power of freedom to overcome hatred and uplift whole nations. We're confident in the strength of our alliance, and I have acted

to designate Thailand a major non-NATO ally of the United States. And we're confident in the character of those who defend us. American and Thai forces serve together and train together and study at military academies in each other's countries. We have come to know and respect one another.

America remembers and honors a young man named Kemaphoom Chanawongse, known to his family and friends as Ahn. He was born in Bangkok, the grandson of a Royal Thai Air Force veteran. He moved to America when he was 9 years old, fulfilled his great ambition to become a United States Marine. Ahn was part of the force that defeated the army of Saddam Hussein. He was killed in action near An Nasariyah. This son of Thailand, this American patriot, was buried among America's greatest military heroes at Arlington National Cemetery. This brave marine brought honor to the Nation he served and honor to the nation of his birth.

Thailand and the United States lie thousands of miles apart. Yet in the ideals we serve, we will always be close. America is grateful for your friendship. We respect the skill and valor of the Royal Thai military, and we're proud to stand by your side in the cause of peace. May God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:40 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. (Ret.) Thammarak Isarangkun an Ayuttha, Thailand's Minister of Defense; King Phumiphon Adunyadet, Queen Sirikit, and Prime Minister Thaksin Chinnawat of Thailand; Nurjaman Riduan Isamuddin (known as Hambali), Al Qaida's chief operational planner in Southeast Asia; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Hu Jintao of China in Bangkok

October 19, 2003

President Bush. President Hu and I have had a very constructive dialog. We talked about a lot of important issues. We talked about the issue of trade. We talked about the need to make sure that trade is open and that both countries benefit from trade. I congratulated China on its recent space launch. I thanked the President for his work on the

recent Security Council resolution for Iraq. We talked about our mutual desire to wage and win the fight against terror. We spent time, of course, talking about North Korea. We have a mutual goal, and that is that the Peninsula be free of nuclear weapons.

I want to thank the President for leading the Beijing talks. We talked about how to advance the Beijing talks. We talked about how to advance them to achieving a mutual goal, which is a weapons-free Peninsula as well as addressing the security concerns of North Korea within the context of the six-party talks.

So we've had a very constructive dialog, and I want to thank the President.

President Hu. I just had a friendly meeting with President Bush. This is our second meeting in this year. I think that in itself shows the very sound momentum of the development of our bilateral relations.

We discussed the questions such as the economy and trade, the terror question, counterterrorism, Iraq, and North Korean nuclear issue. We both agreed that the economic cooperation and trade between our two countries have benefited our two peoples tremendously, and we stated our readiness to resolve whatever questions that might emerge in our economic exchanges and trade through dialog.

President Bush restated his Government's position of adhering to the "one China" policy, the three China-U.S. joint communiques, and his opposition to Taiwan independence. And we both stated our desire to further intensify our cooperation against the terrorism.

About the North Korean nuclear issue, I said to the President that China will continue to strengthen our communication and consultations with various parties concerned, and we will continue to work to promote the Beijing six-party talks process, so as to strive for a peaceful resolution of this issue.

I'm ready to work together with the President to promote further development of our constructive and cooperative relationship.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:52 p.m. at the Grand Hyatt Erawan Bangkok. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Letter to President Hu Jintao on China's First Human Space Mission

October 19, 2003

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of the American people, I congratulate you and the Chinese people on the successful completion of China's first human space mission. I was pleased to learn that Lieutenant Colonel Yang Liwei returned safely to earth. This mission was an historic triumph for the Chinese people and a milestone in the continued exploration of space.

The United States of America warmly welcomes the People's Republic of China's achievement in becoming only the third country to launch an astronaut into space, and wishes you continued success in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Remarks at a State Dinner Hosted by King Phumiphon Adunyadet and Queen Sirikit of Thailand in Bangkok

October 19, 2003

Thank you, Your Majesty, for your warm and gracious welcome. Thanks also to Her Majesty the Queen for hosting this event. I thank as well the Grand Chamberlain who earlier today led us on a tour of the magnificent Temple of the Emerald Buddha. Laura and I have been seeing the famous hospitality of the Thai people, and we are most grateful.

The United States of America deeply values our alliance with the Kingdom of Thailand. Your Majesty, the world has changed greatly since your reign began 57 years ago. Yet thanks to your enlightened leadership and steady hand, the friendship between our two nations has remained constant.

Over the decades, we worked together to build the foundations of liberty in this region, rule of law, respect for human rights, free enterprise, and peace. Today, we continue to strive toward the same goals in the face of different challenges. Nations are working together in Afghanistan and Iraq. Royal Thai

troops have served well in both places, helping Afghans and Iraqis make the transition from tyranny to self-government.

The emergence of these free nations is a setback for terrorism and radicalism. By sharing the duties of our coalition, Thailand is contributing to peace and stability in those two countries and increasing the security of all free nations.

Thailand has played a vital role in East Timor, helping create a new nation to bring dignity to nearly a million people and to stabilize an entire region. You are fully joined in the fight against the drug trade and against HIV/AIDS and other diseases.

Thailand is a principled, generous nation, rising to meet the challenges of our time. Thailand's positive influence in the world is inspired by the fine example of service that Your Majesty and Her Majesty the Queen set for your people. It's also vivid in the great, humane traditions of this land. America is honored to have your friendship.

So I offer a toast to Your Majesties, to the royal family, and to your great nation.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:40 p.m. in the Chakri Throne Room at the Grand Palace. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Proclamation 7724—National Character Counts Week, 2003 *October 18, 2003*

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Many of our society's most cherished values, such as equal treatment for fellow citizens and respect for the law, depend in practice on individual character. During National Character Counts Week, we recognize the importance that good character has played in our history, celebrate the great character exhibited by our citizens, and reaffirm our commitment to promoting the values that will ensure a better future for all.

Throughout history, we see numerous examples of character in action. Great social reformers like Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, and Susan B. Anthony dem-

onstrated courage and resolve when they stood firm in the face of injustice and acted to right societal wrongs. Similarly, leaders like Abraham Lincoln and Franklin Roosevelt, were able to guide our Nation through critical periods because of their strong personal convictions and sense of moral clarity. Today, these and other heroes of history inspire us to pursue virtue and character in our own lives.

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, we have seen the great character of our Nation in the hearts and souls of our citizens and soldiers, and in countless acts of kindness, generosity, and sacrifice. To sustain this spirit and continue to improve our society, we must promote a culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility in our Nation. Through the USA Freedom Corps, my Administration is offering opportunities for citizens to give back to their communities, helping millions of Americans meet vital needs as active and engaged citizens in our democratic society.

The development of character and citizenship has always been a primary goal of America's schools. Today, it is more important than ever that we educate our young people to be knowledgeable, compassionate, and involved citizens of a free society. Since 2002, 47 State education agencies and local school districts have received grants to implement character education programs. These grants help schools work with students, parents, and community organizations to effectively teach universal values such as respect, honesty, and tolerance.

This week, I urge all Americans to join me in promoting good character in America. By teaching these values to our children and living by these values in our own lives, we can build a future of hope, compassion, and opportunity for all.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 19 through October 25, 2003, as National Character Counts Week. I call upon public officials, educators, librarians, parents, students, and all the people of the United States to

observe this week with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eighteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:20 a.m., October 21, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 20, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on October 22.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Roh Moo-hyun of South Korea in Bangkok

October 20, 2003

President Bush. Thank you all for coming. It's my honor to have breakfast with a friend of the United States and a friend of mine, President Roh. We've got a very important and close relationship with South Korea. We share common goals. We want the world to be more free and peaceful. And that's why I'm so grateful for South Korea's support in places like Iraq.

We also share a goal to enhance the prosperity of our respective peoples. We will discuss ways to make sure our trade between our countries is free and fair. We have a common goal to make sure that the Korean Peninsula is nuclear-weapons-free. We're making good progress on peacefully solving the issue with North Korea. And during this breakfast, I will share ideas and listen to ideas from President Roh as to how to move the process forward.

These are important consultations with a close friend, and I want to thank the President for coming to have breakfast.

President Roh. It is my pleasure to meet with President Bush—[*inaudible*]—and it is to my greater pleasure to meet with him—[*inaudible*]. Korea and the United States have been promoting the friendship between each other based on mutual trust, and we have been addressing the problem in this period of cooperation and friendship.

The United States is currently making various efforts to promote global peace, and it has succeeded in winning the U.N. resolution regarding Iraq. And I would like to congratulate this meaningful progress.

I appreciate that the United States has been making efforts to make progress in the areas related to North Korea, and this issue is very critical for—[*inaudible*]—and the further progress of Korea. And in this regard, the six-party talks—[*inaudible*]—progress. And I would like to thank United States for helping us to achieve this important milestone. And I am thankful for Mr. Bush for making more efforts to continue to resume the six-party talks in the near future.

During today's breakfast with President Bush, I hope to have a meaningful dialog on how to resolve the North Korea nuclear issue and how to realign the—[*inaudible*]—alliance.

At the same time, I would like to commend the United States' effort in bringing peace and democracy in Iraq, and I would like to discuss with him how to reconstruct the economy there, and I would like to discuss with him how Korea can cooperate in this regard. And I would have a meaningful discussion on these points.

And in this meeting, I hope to have a serious discussion in accordance with the goals of the APEC in the areas of how to promote trade and mutual investment and how to promote regional security. And I am sure that we will—[*inaudible*].

Thank you.

President Bush. Thank you very much, Mr. President. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:30 a.m. at the Grand Hyatt Erawan Bangkok. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Joint Statement Between the United States of America and the Republic of Korea

October 20, 2003

On October 20, 2003, President George W. Bush of the United States of America and President Roh Moo-hyun of the Republic of Korea held a summit meeting in Bangkok,

Thailand. At the meeting, the two Presidents noted with satisfaction that there has been smooth progress in building a comprehensive and dynamic alliance relationship between the two countries as declared in the Joint Statement adopted on May 14. In addition, the two Presidents had a broad and sincere exchange of views on various issues between the two countries, including North Korea's nuclear issue, Iraq reconstruction, and the issue of upgrading the U.S.-ROK alliance.

Regarding the U.S. request for the dispatch of additional troops to Iraq, President Roh explained that as a result of conducting a comprehensive review of the overall situation, including the importance of the U.S.-ROK alliance and national interest, the ROK government has decided to dispatch additional troops to Iraq so as to provide assistance for a prompt establishment of peace and reconstruction in Iraq. President Roh stated that the size, type and form of the troops as well as the timing of the dispatch will be decided by taking into account public opinion, the result of the survey teams and the characteristics and capability of the Korean military forces. President Bush expressed respect and gratitude to President Roh for making the principled determination to dispatch troops. President Bush also stated that the ROK's dispatch of troops to Iraq will not only further strengthen the U.S.-ROK alliance and contribute to the reconstruction and stabilization of Iraq, but also will serve as an opportunity to increase the ROK's prestige in the international community.

President Bush and President Roh reaffirmed the principles agreed upon in their summit meeting in May, that they will not tolerate nuclear weapons in North Korea and that they are committed to a peaceful resolution of the issue. The leaders noted the importance of the Six Party talks for achieving the goal of the complete, verifiable and irreversible elimination of North Korea's nuclear weapons programs. The two Presidents shared the view that it is desirable to hold the next round of the talks at an early date and to make concrete progress. President Bush reiterated that the U.S. has no intention of invading North Korea and that the U.S. expects North Korea to end its nuclear weapons ambitions. President Bush explained how

security assurances might be provided within the multilateral context, conditioned on North Korea's progress in nuclear dismantlement. President Roh expressed appreciation for President Bush's efforts toward resolving the issue. The two Presidents agreed to study ways and means to seek progress in the next round of the talks. The two Presidents also urged North Korea to respond positively to the other parties' diplomatic efforts and to refrain from any action which would exacerbate the situation.

President Bush and President Roh noted that the strong alliance between the ROK and the U.S. and the presence of US Forces Korea have made great contributions to peace and stability on the Korean peninsula as well as in Northeast Asia. The two Presidents agreed to pursue the relocation of USFK bases in careful consideration of the security environment on the Korean peninsula.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

**Memorandum on Certification
Concerning U.S. Participation in the
U.N. Mission in Liberia Consistent
With Section 2005 of the American
Servicemembers' Protection Act**
October 20, 2003

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Certification Concerning U.S.
Participation in the U.N. Mission in Liberia
Consistent With Section 2005 of the
American Servicemembers' Protection Act

Consistent with section 2005 of the American Servicemembers' Protection Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-206; 22 U.S.C. 7421 *et seq.*), concerning the participation of members of the Armed Forces of the United States in certain United Nations peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations, I hereby certify that members of the U.S. Armed Forces participating in the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) are without risk of criminal prosecution or other assertion of jurisdiction by the International Criminal Court because, in authorizing the operation, the United Nations Security

Council (in Resolutions 1497 (2003) and 1509 (2003)) has provided for the exclusive jurisdiction of the contributing State for all acts or omissions arising out of or related to UNMIL, unless such exclusive jurisdiction is expressly waived.

You are authorized and directed to submit this certification to the Congress and arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

Joint Statement Between the United States of America and the Republic of Singapore

October 21, 2003

Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong and President George W. Bush held discussions on a broad range of issues during President Bush's first official visit to Singapore. This visit builds upon the strong and multi-faceted U.S.-Singapore partnership, which saw the signing of the U.S.-Singapore Free Trade Agreement earlier this year, and on a history of cooperation, congruent interests, and shared perspectives.

President Bush and Prime Minister Goh reviewed recent developments in Southeast Asia and regional efforts in the war against terrorism. They welcomed the recent arrest of Riduan Isamuddin (also known as Hambali) and the conviction of key perpetrators of the Bali bombings. They recognized that much headway had been made in disrupting terrorist networks, but agreed that more needed to be done and that the campaign against terrorism required a sustained long-term effort. The two leaders pledged to continue to work closely, both bilaterally and through multilateral institutions such as ASEAN, APEC, and the UN, to defeat terrorism.

The Prime Minister and the President also discussed the situation in Iraq. They expressed hope for Iraq's early reintegration into the global community. They welcomed the positive steps taken by the Coalition Provisional Authority and the Iraqi Governing Council, in particular the new investment laws passed to restore international investor confidence in the country. President Bush expressed gratitude for Singapore's contribu-

tion toward Iraq's reconstruction and commended the Singapore police training contingent's efforts to help train the Iraqi police to protect critical installations.

The President and the Prime Minister reaffirmed the need for a strong U.S. security presence in Asia, which continues to be vital for the peace and stability of the region. President Bush recognized the important role played by Singapore as a major security cooperation partner and expressed appreciation for Singapore's support for the U.S. as reflected in the 1990 Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S. and Singapore. Both leaders expressed concern over the emergence of new threats to global peace and stability such as terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and agreed that such threats required even closer cooperation between the U.S. and Singapore.

To this end, Prime Minister Goh and President Bush agreed that the United States and Singapore would enter into negotiations for a Framework Agreement for the Promotion of a Strategic Cooperation Partnership in Defense and Security. This strategic framework agreement will expand upon the scope of current bilateral cooperation in areas of defense and security such as counterterrorism, counterproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, joint military exercises and training, policy dialogues, and defense technology. Both leaders expressed the desire to see this Framework Agreement implemented as soon as possible.

President Bush and Prime Minister Goh emphasized the value of collaborative efforts to respond to new health threats, including emerging diseases and use of biological agents by terrorists. In this regard, both leaders were pleased to endorse the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on collaboration recently concluded between the United States Department of Health and Human Services and the Singapore Ministry of Health. The MOU will establish the Regional Emerging Diseases Intervention (REDI) Center. Based in Singapore's newly opened Biopolis, the REDI Center will facilitate the exchange of information and expertise on surveillance; prevention and control of, and research on, communicable and non-communicable diseases; and on bioterrorism

concerns. The REDI Center will also make its research, training, and surveillance facilities available to other economies in the Asia-Pacific region, and President Bush and Prime Minister Goh welcomed the endorsement of the Center by APEC Leaders at their meeting in Bangkok. In a broader context, the MOU will enhance and expand bilateral cooperative efforts in health and medical sciences, and on health security issues.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong of Singapore in Singapore
October 21, 2003

Mr. Prime Minister, thanks. It's so gracious of you to host us, and it's a chance for me to say to the Singapore people how much we appreciate our friendship. And I appreciate our personal relationship, Mr. Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister is a wise man. He understands Southeast Asia very well. And a lot of our discussion was about how we continue to foster our agenda, which is one of peace and freedom as well as prosperity through trade.

I appreciate your good advice, and I want to thank you for your warm hospitality. It's a magnificent country you have here. We're honored to be here. Thank you again.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:55 p.m. at the Istana. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Presidential Determination on Sudan Peace Act
October 21, 2003

Presidential Determination No. 2004-05

Memorandum for the Secretary of State
Subject: Presidential Determination on Sudan Peace Act

Consistent with section 6(b)(1)(A) of the Sudan Peace Act (Public Law 107-245), I hereby determine and certify that the Gov-

ernment of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement are negotiating in good faith and that negotiations should continue.

You are authorized and directed to notify the Congress of this determination and to arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 22.

Presidential Determination on FY 2004 Refugee Admissions Numbers and Authorizations of In-Country Refugee Status
October 21, 2003

Presidential Determination No. 2004-06

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Presidential Determination on FY 2004 Refugee Admissions Numbers and Authorizations of In-Country Refugee Status Consistent with Sections 207 and 101(a)(42), respectively, of the Immigration and Nationality Act, and Determination Consistent with Section 2(b)(2) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act, as Amended

Consistent with section 207 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the "Act") (8 U.S.C. 1157), as amended, and after appropriate consultations with the Congress, I hereby make the following determinations and authorize the following actions:

The admission of up to 70,000 refugees to the United States during FY 2004 is justified by humanitarian concerns or is otherwise in the national interest; provided, however, that this number shall be understood as including persons admitted to the United States during FY 2004 with Federal refugee resettlement assistance under the Amerasian immigrant admissions program, as provided below.

The 70,000 admissions numbers shall be allocated among refugees of special humanitarian concern to the United States in accordance with the following regional allocations;

provided, however, that the number allocated to the East Asia region shall include persons admitted to the United States during FY 2004 with Federal refugee resettlement assistance under section 584 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act of 1988, as contained in section 101(e) of Public Law 100-202 (Amerasian immigrants and their family members); provided further that the number allocated to the former Soviet Union shall include persons admitted who were nationals of the former Soviet Union, or in the case of persons having no nationality, who were habitual residents of the former Soviet Union, prior to September 2, 1991:

Africa	25,000
East Asia	6,500
Europe and Central Asia	13,000
Latin America/Caribbean	3,500
Near East/South Asia	2,000
Unallocated Reserve	20,000

The 20,000 unallocated refugee numbers shall be allocated to regional ceilings as needed. Upon providing notification to the Judiciary Committees of the Congress, you are hereby authorized to use unallocated numbers in regions where the need for additional numbers arises.

Additionally, upon notification to the Judiciary Committees of the Congress, you are further authorized to transfer unused admission numbers allocated to a particular region to one or more other regions, if there is a need for greater numbers for the region or regions to which the numbers are being transferred. Consistent with section 2(b)(2) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, as amended, I hereby determine that assistance to or on behalf of persons applying for admission to the United States as part of the overseas refugee admissions program will contribute to the foreign policy interests of the United States and designate such persons for this purpose.

An additional 10,000 refugee admissions numbers shall be made available during FY 2004 for the adjustment to permanent resident status under section 209(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1159(b)) of aliens who have been granted asylum in the United States under section 208 of the Act (8 U.S.C. 1158), as this is justi-

fied by humanitarian concerns or is otherwise in the national interest.

Consistent with section 101(a)(42) of the Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(42)) and after appropriate consultation with the Congress, I also specify that, for FY 2004, the following persons may, if otherwise qualified, be considered refugees for the purpose of admission to the United States within their countries of nationality or habitual residence:

- a. Persons in Vietnam
- b. Persons in Cuba
- c. Persons in the former Soviet Union

You are authorized and directed to report this determination to the Congress immediately and to publish it in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 22.

The President's News Conference With President Megawati Sukarnoputri of Indonesia in Bali, Indonesia

October 22, 2003

President Megawati. President George Bush and I have just concluded the meeting. I have met with His Excellency, the President, several times. Our last meeting was in New York on 23d September, 2003, when we attended the 58th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

I attach great importance of my personal relation with President Bush as well as of bilateral relations between Indonesia and the United States, for both are the large democratic countries in the world and have great potential of cooperation.

We started our meeting today by conducting bilateral talks. It was followed by working luncheon attended by a number of members of the Cabinet. During the talks, we have discussed issues of common concern, namely: counterterrorism; U.S. support to the democratization and reform process in Indonesia; military cooperation; U.S. support to the territorial integrity and national unity of the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia; and renunciation to any terrorist

movement in the country; U.S. support to the Indonesian economy through a—[inaudible]—free process, particularly in the post-IMF program; and cooperation in the field of education in Indonesia.

In addition, we have exchanged our view of various regional and international issues, among others, on the latest development in Asia and the situation in the Middle East, despite the fact that we do not always share common perspective. But we both continue to hold mutual understanding that it is to the interest of the two countries to maintain consultation and cooperation in the pursuit of global peace.

Following bilateral talks and lunch, I accompanied President Bush in his meeting with some eminent leading figures from Islam, Hindu, and Christian. I regard this particular meeting as positive development as the Indonesian religion figures had the opportunity to conduct open and direct dialog with the leader of the U.S. administration. I am pleased to note that both sides were in agreement about the importance of religion tolerance as one of the major pillars of democracy in Indonesia.

My current meeting with President Bush might be the last before the two countries carry out general election in 2004. We will continue to foster cordial and cooperative bilateral relations.

May I now invite President George W. Bush to present his remarks. Thank you.

President Bush. Thank you, Madam President. Good afternoon. Thank you very much. Laura and I are honored to be in Indonesia, the world's third largest democracy and the world's—home to the world's largest Muslim population. Indonesia is a vital partner, and Indonesia is a friend of America. We share a commitment to democracy and tolerance. We stand together against terrorism. I thank President Megawati for her leadership, for her friendship, and for her hospitality today.

The success of Indonesia as a pluralistic and democratic state is essential to the peace and prosperity of this region. Indonesians profess many faiths and honor many traditions. And like Americans, you understand that diversity can be a source of strength. Your national motto, "Unity in diversity,"

sounds a lot like our own, "Out of many, one." Americans admire the way Indonesians maintain unity and balance modern ideas with ancient traditions and deep religious faith.

More than 200 years ago, the Founders of my country recognized and protected the essential role of religion in society within a democratic and pluralistic constitution. Your constitution affirms the same inalienable right of all to worship freely, a gift from your founders that enriches the Indonesian nation to this day.

Earlier, just minutes ago, we met with five Indonesian religious leaders, including leaders of Indonesia's two largest Islamic organizations, who are sustaining Indonesia's tradition of tolerance and moderation. Americans hold a deep respect for the Islamic faith, which is professed by a growing number of my own citizens. We know that Islam is fully compatible with liberty and tolerance and progress, because we see the proof in your country and in our own.

Terrorists who claim Islam as their inspiration defile one of the world's great faiths. Murder has no place in any religious tradition. It must find no home in Indonesia.

Nearly 3 months ago, America shared Indonesia's grief when a suicide bomber killed 14 people outside a Jakarta hotel. One year ago, miles from where we now stand, Indonesia suffered the worst terrorist attack in its history when over 200 innocent men and women lost their lives. Today we pay tribute to the victims. We remember the suffering of their families, and we reaffirm our commitment to win the war on terror.

President Megawati has confronted this evil directly. She was one of the first leaders to stand with me after September the 11th. Under her leadership, Indonesia is hunting and finding dangerous killers. America appreciates Indonesia's strong cooperation in the war on terror. America believes that freedom and democracy are critical to defeating terror, because free nations that respect human rights do not breed hatred, resentment, and the ideologies of murder.

The United States is working for democracy and freedom and economic progress in Afghanistan and Iraq, to lift millions out of

poverty, to overcome years of brutal repression, to help create a more secure and safe world. And the United States strongly supports a healthy democracy in Indonesia, for the sake of your own people and for the sake of peace.

Indonesians have made good progress over the last 5 years in strengthening democracy and in building the civil institutions that sustain freedom. Next year, your country will reach an important milestone when some 150 million Indonesians vote in the nation's first-ever elected—Presidential election. The United States is working with Indonesia to support these historic elections. In a short time, Indonesia has traveled far down the road to full democracy, and Indonesians should be proud of this accomplishment.

We'll also support Indonesia's efforts to build an education system that teaches values and discourages extremism. I will propose to our Congress a 6-year, \$157 million program to support basic education in Indonesia.

The partnership between our two peoples is strong and is growing stronger. In all that lies ahead, in the defense of freedom, in the advance of tolerance and democracy, Indonesia will have a firm ally in the American Government, and you'll have the friendship and the respect of the American people.

Thank you, Madam President.

President Megawati. Thank you.

President Bush. I think we'll take a couple of questions—is that not true—from—alternating both sides?

President Megawati. Yes.

President Bush. Would you like to call on somebody first? I'll call on him. You call on—[laughter]—you sure you want to call on him? [Laughter] Okay.

U.S. Middle East Policy

Q. Mr. President, some of the religious leaders that you just met with have said that U.S. foreign policy is biased toward Israel and against Muslims, making it easy for the terrorists to find recruits. How do you answer those charges, and how do you deal with that situation?

President Bush. Our foreign policy is for a—development of a Palestinian state that lives side by side with Israel in peace. And I'm the first President to ever articulate such

a vision, and I still believe it is possible. In order to achieve a Palestinian state living side by side in peace, there needs to be leadership willing to fight off the terror that is trying to prevent the state from emerging.

U.S. Foreign Policy Goals

Q. I would like to ask question in Indonesian. Because your visit to Indonesia has been opposed by many people, what is your views? And is there a possibility of a change in your foreign policy view, which is seen as imbalanced toward the Islamic world?

President Bush. Well, I strongly believe in peace and freedom. I think it's important for the world to be as free as possible, and I strongly believe that free nations are peaceful nations. And my foreign policy promotes that.

America is also a compassionate nation. We lead the world in helping feed the hungry and battle disease. I look forward to working with the President in terms of allowing Indonesians to use our money to help implement an education system that the Government decides, not America. No, I'm proud of our foreign policy.

President Megawati. Can I still add something? Because you also spontaneously accepted the invitation of—my invitation to come to Indonesia, which proves that he is very open to come to this country of ours in this spontaneous way.

North Korea/Iran

Q. North Korea is rejecting your offer as laughable and still insisting on a nonaggression treaty. How do you proceed from here? And are you confident that Iran is forswearing nuclear weapons?

President Bush. Well, first of all, I want to thank the Foreign Ministers from Great Britain and France and Germany and their Governments for taking a very strong universal message to the Iranians that they should disarm. The Iranians have—it looks like they are accepting the demands of the free world, and now it's up to them to prove that they've accepted the demands. That's a very positive development.

On terms of North Korea, we had a really good visit at APEC about how best to resolve the North Korean issue peacefully, how best

to convince the North Koreans to disarm, at least abandon their nuclear ambitions—nuclear weapons ambitions. And we had good progress in Bangkok. And there's going to be a series of these statements that I guess are trying to stand up to the five nations that are now united in convincing North Korea to disarm. And my only reaction is we'll continue to send the very clear message to the North Koreans. The good news is that there's other nations besides America now sending the message.

Q. [*Inaudible*]*—*is that helping the climate?

President Bush. Launching missiles into the sea? No, of course, not. Look, the guy, he—we'll determine whether he's serious or not. He wanted to have dialog; we're having dialog. And he wanted a security agreement, and we're willing to advance a multiparty security agreement, assuming that he is willing to abandon his nuclear weapons designs and programs. And we'll just stay the course.

Wait a minute, you're crowding out the host press. This is unbelievable. [*Laughter*] This is unilateralism at its worst. I've never heard—[*laughter*]*—*two and two, Stretch. Sorry.

President's Visit

Q. Mr. President—

President Bush. Yes.

Q. —what is the message you would like to convey to the Indonesian people with this 3-hour visit, the shortest one that you make among the six-nation visit in this journey?

President Bush. Yes, well, first of all, it's been a—it might not have been very long, but it's been very productive. And my message is, thank you for the hospitality, and thank you for the wonderful exchange we've had with the President.

I'm traveling to a lot of countries in a very quick period of time, and I appreciate the fact that the Indonesian Government was able to accommodate my desires to come here. And we've got a lot in common. We both appreciate democracy. We both care about trade so that our nations can prosper. We both care about educating people so that children have a chance to succeed in life. We both love freedom, and we both want the

world to be peaceful. And we had a great exchange along those lines.

So my message to the Indonesian people is, thank you very much for the warm hospitality. And I want to thank the President for the warm hospitality as well.

Thank you all very much. That's it.

President Megawati. That's it?

President Bush. Unless you want to keep answering questions. [*Laughter*] I'll stay here as long as you want to.

President Megawati. No—

President Bush. You want to? Okay. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 2:12 p.m. at Bali International Airport. In his remarks, President Bush referred to Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Jack Straw of the United Kingdom; Minister of Foreign Affairs Dominique de Villepin of France; Minister of Foreign Affairs Joschka Fischer of Germany; and Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Joint Statement Between the United States of America and the Republic of Indonesia

October 22, 2003

President George W. Bush and President Megawati Soekarnoputri today reaffirmed a new era of cooperation between two of the world's largest democracies and reviewed the shared values and common challenges that join them in friendship. They welcomed the excellent progress in implementing the Joint Statement of September 19, 2001. They also expressed satisfaction that the relationship between their two democracies continues to grow and strengthen. President Megawati emphasized the importance of President Bush's visit.

President Bush expressed the strong support of the United States for Indonesia's democratic transition and reforms, and welcomed Indonesia's progress toward becoming a mature and stable democracy. Both Presidents agreed that, as the most populous majority-Muslim nation, Indonesia is a powerful example that democracy and Islam can go hand in hand.

President Bush noted Indonesia's substantial economic recovery in recent years and pledged to support continued economic development as Indonesia successfully ends its program with the IMF at the end of this year. President Bush praised President Megawati's commitment to continue to press forward with difficult economic reforms, combat graft, and improve the investment climate. The two Presidents agreed that the long-standing trade and investment ties between their two countries have shown the benefits of an open trading system to Indonesia's development. The United States is the top market for Indonesia's non-oil and gas exports, and U.S. companies are major investors in Indonesia.

President Bush and President Megawati reaffirmed that military reform is an important element of Indonesia's transition to a mature and stable democracy. The two Presidents agreed that normal military relations are in the interest of both countries and agreed to continue working toward that objective. President Megawati welcomed U.S. support for her efforts to foster proper civil-military relations in the form of International Military Education and Training (IMET) and Regional Defense Counter Terrorism Fellowships. Both Presidents agreed on the need to improve civil-military relations and stressed the importance of observing human rights. Both Presidents welcomed the successful convening of the first Indonesia-United States Security Dialogue in Jakarta in April 2002. They agreed that the second dialogue would be held in Washington, D.C. early next year.

The two Presidents expressed their sorrow over the killing of two Americans and one Indonesian by unknown gunmen near Timika, Papua in August 2002. They noted that the joint investigation between the Indonesian police, the Armed Forces, and the FBI is proceeding well, and reaffirmed their shared commitment to find the murderers and bring them to justice, whoever they may be.

President Bush praised the Government of Indonesia for recent successes in their war on terror, including the arrest and prosecution of those responsible for the Bali bombings, and focused efforts to dismantle the ter-

rorist networks. Agreeing that terrorism poses a continued threat to international peace and security, the two Presidents committed to enhance their bilateral cooperation in the fight against terrorism, including through capacity-building and sharing of information.

Both Presidents denounced the linking of terrorism with religion. The two Presidents agreed that there could be no justification for terrorist attacks against innocent civilians. They stressed that terrorism is a violation of the true teachings of all religions, and agreed to work together to promote inter-faith dialogue in their respective countries and abroad. President Bush underscored that the war on terrorism is not in any way a war on Islam and expressed great admiration and respect for Indonesia's long history of religious tolerance and moderate Islamic thought.

President Bush announced a new six-year, \$157 million program designed to support Indonesia's efforts to improve the quality of education in its schools. This initiative seeks to strengthen both basic and higher education by supporting parents, local governments, and Muslim organizations in their efforts to give Indonesian students the tools they need to compete in the global economy.

President Bush emphasized strong support for Indonesia's territorial integrity and national unity. He asserted that a united, stable, prosperous, and democratic Indonesia could be a model of a successful democratic transition for the world. President Bush reiterated that the United States opposes secessionist movements in any part of Indonesia, and calls on separatist groups in Aceh and Papua to pursue the redress of their grievances through peaceful political means. He further expressed the hope that the Indonesian Government would continue a political process based on Special Autonomy in dealing with those grievances. President Bush commended the Indonesian Government's efforts to resolve communal conflicts through law enforcement that respects human rights, dialogue, and reconciliation.

Both Presidents expressed deep concern regarding the ongoing terrorism and violence in the Middle East, which has claimed the lives of far too many innocent civilians. They

expressed strong support for the vision articulated by President Bush on June 24, 2002, of an independent, sovereign and viable Palestinian state living in peace and security side by side with a secure Israel. Both Presidents agreed that all parties share a responsibility to bring about a just and comprehensive peace, and that ending violence must be the highest priority.

President Bush, accompanied by President Megawati, also met Islamic leaders KH Hasyim Muzadi, Dr. Syafi'i Ma'arif, and Dr. Azyumardi Azra, as well as Christian leader Rev. Dr. Natan Setiabudi and Hindu leader Ida Pedanda Gede Made Gunung. During that meeting, President Bush expressed great respect for Indonesia's religious tolerance, moderation, and commitment to democracy. The religious leaders briefed President Bush on the Indonesian Islam, as well as cultural and religious harmony in Indonesia. They also expressed their views on current events, such as the situation in the Middle East, Iraq, and Afghanistan. All agreed on the need to combat international terrorism.

The two Presidents recognized that a U.S.-Indonesia relationship based on mutual respect and equitable partnership is in the national interest of both countries. They pledged to deepen and strengthen this important relationship and to work together to promote global peace and prosperity.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Interview With the White House Press Pool

October 22, 2003

The President. What I thought I would do is just—

Q. On the record?

The President. Yes, on the record. I thought I would just give you some observations of this trip and then answer some questions. Just first observation is that we have worked hard to build up good bilateral relations in the Far East. And the—part of the purpose of the trip is to continue to foster those relations.

It struck me as interesting that the United States now has got good enough relations

with both—with countries like Japan and South Korea and China to effect policy which helps our mutual security and our economy—and economy. I think that's a very positive development.

The most notable example of where that is taking—where it is helping is in North Korea. When I visited with Hu Jintao, I spent a lot of time talking about North Korea, our mutual desire to effect change with Kim Chong-il. And it was a very positive discussion. But I also had the very same discussion with Koizumi and President Roh. I mentioned it to Vladimir. I didn't have a bilateral with Vladimir Putin, but I did talk to him about it in passing.

My point is, is that by working hard to establish good relations on a lot of fronts, when a common problem arises, we can effect the solution in a positive way. I know you asked me, Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters], about the North Korean reaction. I didn't exactly see what official said it. But I—what I hope my answer conveyed to you in public there was that this requires a degree of patience, because Kim Chong-il is used to being able to deal bilaterally with the United States. But the change of policy now is, is that he must deal with other nations, most notably China. And I was pleased with my discussions with Hu Jintao, about his—reaffirming his mutual desire—or his desire, which is our mutual goal, that Kim Chong-il disarm. He realizes that it's a problem.

We discussed the security guarantees, what form they may come in. I made it very clear, obviously—I said this during the pool spray there—that a treaty is not going to happen, but there are other ways to effect on paper what I have said publicly—we have no intention of invading. Obviously, any guarantee would be conditional on Kim Chong-il doing what he hopefully will say he'll do, which is to get rid of his nuclear weapons programs.

The APEC summit was positive. I mean, one of the things that's very important—the two things that came out of that, although evidently didn't get equal emphasis, but they were equally emphasized by all parties, was, one, the need to get the Doha Round of trade going again. This was really one of the first official meetings of a group of countries after

the Cancun talks broke down. And there was a positive statement coming out of the meeting, kind of universal agreement that Cancun was a missed opportunity. Hopefully the missed opportunity will be—will serve as a catalyst. I think people now have taken a step back and said, “Well, we did miss an opportunity,” and hopefully this will enable the talks—kind of not start at ground zero but have a running start as a result of the missed opportunity.

And it’s interesting, in the room there is something like 60 percent of all the world trade—was affected—was countries in that room, and therefore it was a, I think, a very positive and strong statement.

The other thing was the clear understanding of the countries of the need to fight terror. That’s important for the United States, that people continue to recognize that the war on terror goes on. I’ve always felt that there’s a tendency for people to kind of seek a comfort zone and hope that the war on terror is over. And I view it as a responsibility of the United States to remind people of our mutual obligations to deal with the terrorists.

That notion of responsible behavior by countries was finally accepted. This was not a—didn’t require a lot of push. People understood. President Megawati understands that when terrorists bomb Bali, it affects economies. It not only—there’s a serious economic consequence, same thing we felt on September the 11th, to our economy.

That was a very positive development. Bilateral discussion with all the leaders—in those bilateral discussions, we talked about this war on terror. Gloria Arroyo, with Abu Sayyaf, President Megawati just hours ago, we talked about the continued need for us to work together.

I think the other notable—when you step back and take a look at what our work with these Asian countries has been, they understand the Iraq issue well. South Korea was very forthcoming. Japan is forthcoming. Hu Jintao made it clear that he—that a peaceful Iraq was in the world interest. Those are all positive developments in kind of the aftermath of the military operation. And I think it speaks to our—the nature of our relationship with these countries right now.

Obviously we haven’t been to Australia, but Australia is a key component in a peaceful Asia-Pacific region and a key partner in the war on terror. So I’m looking forward to seeing John Howard. He and I have got a great relationship. He is a—as I said in Crawford, he’s a man of steel. He’s a standup guy.

Q. A sheriff?

The President. He’s a sheriff. See, that’s a good lesson. You should never answer the question you’re asked. [Laughter] Actually, I answered it for a reason. Of all the people in the world who understand Texas, it’s probably Australians.

Q. Patsy [Patricia Wilson, Reuters].

The President. Yes, Patsy. Anyway, it’s going to be a good visit down there. We had some good discussions there at APEC, but this will be a chance to further our discussions and assure the Australian people that the American people are really grateful for the support and mutual efforts to make the world secure.

I had a good visit with the religious leaders today. It was an important visit. There were three Muslims, a Christian, and a Hindu. A couple of observations from the meeting: One, there was kind of a sense that Americans believe that Muslims are terrorists. And one of the reasons I wanted to have this meeting was because I wanted to make it very clear that I didn’t feel that way and Americans don’t feel that way. And I made it—assured them that Americans know that these terrorists are hiding behind Islam in order to create fear and chaos and death.

Secondly, there was a—they did bring up the Middle East. I explained to them what our policy was, that in order for there to be a Palestinian state—and I reminded them I was the first President to have articulated that—that there needs to be a concerted effort to fight off the terrorists who are trying to prevent the establishment of a state. I didn’t really have time to go in further than that, about the whole Aqaba accords and the progress we were making, until the Prime Minister, who had avowed—who vowed to fight terror with us, was eased out.

Let’s see, what else did they discuss? Iraq, of course. I assured them that we would do

our job, and then the Iraqis will run themselves, and that our job means to provide enough security so that the Iraqi citizens are able to write a constitution and hold elections, at which point the United States and the coalition forces will move on. And I think they were pleased to hear it. I don't want to put words in their mouth, but I think that relieved them to know that we have confidence in the Iraqi people's abilities to be a peaceful, free society.

National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice. You listened.

The President. Well, they did a lot of talking.

National Security Adviser Rice. They had a lot to say.

The President. They had some prepared texts. There was a good exchange. I'm glad I did it. They were, I think, appreciative of the fact I took time to listen to them and dispel some notions and to—my own personal views about religion and the views of our country. I reminded them, we've got a lot of Muslims living in the United States, and they make an important contribution to our country, and they're welcome in the United States. And we're a pluralistic, free society; people can worship the way they want to worship. And it works well in America.

All in all, it's been a very positive experience.

Indonesia Meeting With Religious Leaders

Q. Was it confrontational at all?

The President. Not at all, polite.

Q. You said that there were some texts. Did they come out with the line about—what did they tell you? How direct were they? They said some things going into the meeting that the United States policy is tilted against Muslims. What did they—

The President. They said the United States policy is tilted toward Israel, and I said our policy is tilted toward peace and that—and then I went through the notion of a Palestinian state and the need for us to fight off terror in order for a state to develop.

There wasn't a lot of debate. There were five people there that felt—that all needed to say something. So I gave them all a time

to speak, and I listened and would occasionally interject some thoughts about what they had said. But they were direct. One fellow felt that the war on Iraq was—I guess the best way to put it was maybe just—I can't remember his exact words, but it was like we just decided to act. And I reminded him that the world had spoken before, that there was a—the United States had passed—I didn't get into all the resolutions, but I made it clear that a process had gone on way before I made the decision to use military force, that the world had spoken before about Saddam Hussein.

I also made the point very clearly that there was a lot of human suffering; a lot of Muslims suffered in Iraq. And I did bring up the mass graves and the torture rooms and the rape rooms and the death at the hands of Saddam Hussein. My point to them was, was that we ended a lot of suffering, prevented a lot of suffering.

Lieutenant General Boykin

Q. Is your job made tougher in convincing them that Americans don't have a war on—don't dislike Islam when you have General Boykin saying that Muslims all—

The President. Yes, that came up. Boykin came up. I said he didn't reflect my opinion. Look, it just doesn't reflect what the Government thinks. And I think they were pleased to hear that.

Indonesia Meeting With Religious Leaders

Q. Something in your answer to your Terry's question was interesting. You articulated the fact that you're the President—first President to advocate a Palestinian state. And obviously in trying to reassure Muslims—

The President. Not that good a question. Go ahead.

Q. —not only in America but around the world, potential terrorist hotbeds—to reassure people who are interested in this subject of that point. It's not something we have heard you saying a lot lately. Is there a reason—

The President. About a Palestinian state?

Q. Right, that you were the first President to advocate it.

The President. I say it quite a bit. I mean, I really do. First of all, in America, most people know that. In Indonesia, maybe they didn't pay attention to it. But anyway, I explained it. It was not a—I don't view that as—I wouldn't read anything into that, I had to say that in Indonesia, but not saying it in every press conference I give.

Q. Can I ask you about some of the leaders you've met with here?

The President. Well, anyway—

Q. I guess what I'm getting at is, it's a good thing to have out there, I guess. We don't hear it a lot.

The President. Yes, I don't know. There's a lot of things that there's misconceptions. Evidently it's a misconceptions that Americans believe that Muslims are terrorists. And there was a—that's probably one of the best things that came out of the meeting, for me, was to have heard that concern, and for me being able to assure people and remind them about the nature of our society, that—and that Islam's a peaceful religion. The basic tenets of Islam is peace and respect and tolerance. And that's what they wanted to make the point to me, that we are—that's the way we are.

Interesting, their elections came up. This is the first direct Presidential election. It's going to be interesting—an interesting exercise in democracy. And they wanted to talk about that. And as you know—maybe you don't know—our USAID money is helping with the elections. They were appreciative of that. The education money came up. They wanted to make sure that this wasn't America's education system. I said, "It's not. It's money available for the Indonesian Government to help basic education develop." So those were a couple of misconceptions that it was important for me to help alter.

Democratic Candidates and Foreign Policy

Q. Can I ask a question—I know that you say campaigning—there will be time enough for campaigning. In just months, Democrats, at least, will be fighting in some very highly contested—what do you say to those who are criticizing your policy? Where does the line end where they've got to be very careful to not undermine American foreign policy?

The President. I don't know. You know, I'm not paying that much attention to it. Maybe you are. I'm not. You know, one of these days, they'll have a candidate, and then it will all sort out, kind of come in focus. Primarily—I don't know what they're saying, so it's hard for me to answer that.

Q. Democrats who are criticizing your policy now, some of them fairly severely, about the war, does that hurt when you go to meet with these foreign leaders? Does that have any resonance?

The President. You know, I can't—I don't know, because they have never brought it up. Nobody has ever said, "Your foreign policy is being challenged in Democrat primaries, and therefore you're less credible." I mean, it really hasn't come up. I think most people who understand America know that the field will eventually be whittled down to one opponent, and then we'll campaign.

Decisionmaking and Leadership

Q. You seem, on these trips in particular, to bond with some of these leaders who have taken on very difficult problems at home, sort of stuck their neck out, whether it's President Arroyo or—you had some of those comments about the King of Jordan when he came. And I was just wondering, do you relate to that at all, particularly in having to take on the war on terrorism and kind of not, as you say, wanting to be too comfortable and pretend that it's over?

The President. You know, that's an interesting question. First of all, I like people. And I spend time trying to—I think about the other person and how the other person might think and relate to the other person's problems. I do have good relations with these leaders on an individual basis, for a variety of reasons. I mean, Gloria Arroyo, who is taking a tough stand against Abu Sayyaf, there is a common bond there because she has made some tough decisions. But these leaders—for example, Aznar of Spain or Blair of Britain, these guys stood up, stood strong and were—did what they thought was right. That's my approach.

I remember when we had the discussion down in Crawford, one of reporters, fellow reporters, said, "I hear you don't pay attention to the press." I said, "Not really." And

he said, "Why?" And I said, "Well, because sometimes your opinion matters to me and sometimes it doesn't, but I've got a job, and I'm willing to lead." And the fellow said, "Well, how do you know what the people think?" And I said, "Well"—I reminded the fellow that people don't make up their mind based upon what they write, and secondly, my job is to lead. My job is to do what I think is the right thing and lead.

And I think those world leaders appreciate that, and I appreciate that when I see that they make those tough decisions. There is a common bond that's established when you're in the decisionmaking process and you're not trying to chase popular will, which is fickle and moves around. You stay focused on the objectives you set for a country. That's a very good question. It may be an area where we do establish in common.

And I've reminded them at times that, just do what you think is right, stand your ground in the face of public criticism, and the people—when things turn out the way—for the good, people will judge you correctly.

Dana, how are you?

Q. I'm well, thank you.

The President. Are you surviving this trip?

Q. I wish we just got a little more time in Bali.

The President. Yes, that and Hawaii. Look, I've heard all the people—

Q. She spent her honeymoon in Bali.

The President. You'll be thankful when we get back. You'll be grumpy—very grumpy, starting tomorrow, when we get airborne. But you'll be thankful when we all land home.

Reform of the Palestinian Authority

Q. Mr. President, I was wondering, the last time we sat around this table was coming from Aqaba.

The President. Middle East, that's right.

Q. And you were talking about how positive you felt about Prime Minister Abbas and the fact that you thought that things would be able to move forward.

The President. And they did move forward, for a while.

Q. I wonder if you could reflect on how you felt since—during the fact that the man you put confidence in and hope in is gone.

The President. I was disappointed that Arafat shoved him out of the way. I just—it was an unfortunate decision, because it stopped good progress toward a Palestinian state. And when the Palestinian Authority comes up with a leader who is willing to genuinely fight and dismantle terrorist organizations, the process will pick up where it left off and move forward.

Q. Are you confident of that?

The President. I hope it does. I think eventually it will. You've got to be patient in foreign policy sometimes.

Q. Is there anything more the United States can do on that, or is the roadmap—once they get on track on the roadmap, then things will come back and move forward again?

The President. The roadmap is still there. And we just need leadership willing to stand up and say, "We're going to prevent the few from letting the process move forward." And that's what they're doing. There are a few people there that don't want a Palestinian state. They've got different ambitions. And we've just got to fight them off.

Q. Do you think the public support of the U.S. for Abbas sort of got Arafat to dig in his heels?

The President. I don't know. I really don't. I can't speculate as to why the decision was made. This was an unfortunate decision, because it delayed the development of a Palestinian state.

Prime Minister Mahathir's Remarks at the Organization of the Islamic Conference Summit

Q. What did you tell Prime Minister Mahathir? Apparently he's saying you didn't fuss at him.

The President. No, I walked up and said, the—I said, "I want to inform you that you're going to read the newspapers"—Condi had briefed the press about me saying that the comments were reprehensible. I said, "You're going to see—I'm here to inform you that you're going to see that I thought your comments were reprehensible." I said, "They're divisive and unnecessary." I didn't

yell at him. I just told him—confirmed exactly what was in the newspaper.

Q. How did he respond?

Q. Yes, what did he say?

The President. “I was misquoted” or something. I can’t remember exactly what he said, but I just had—that was it. You know the way I felt.

Q. He said he was misquoted?

The President. Well, he said he was—

Q. Taken out of context?

The President. Yes, context, whatever he said to you all.

Press Secretary Scott McClellan. He said that in the paper.

The President. Not misquoted. It’s hard to misquote what he said.

Q. The issue were his comments. Obviously he’s on his way out, but the response, apparently, at the Islamic conference, was a round of applause. What do you make of that?

The President. It’s just unfortunate, again. I mean, it’s one of these situations where in order to achieve peace and freedom, you can’t pit groups against each other. And there’s a tendency to blame Jewish people. And that’s not the policy—that’s not how I think, and that’s not the policy of the United States Government. I wasn’t there, so I don’t—pitting groups against each other will never achieve a common objective. It does quite the opposite. He knew how I felt. There’s no question about that. I don’t know, what did he say?

Q. [*Inaudible*]—he was asking Muslims to have more understanding, at one part—

The President. Evidently, in his speech, he said that we need more education, a terrorist ban, which is good. That was positive.

Madrid Donors’ Conference

Q. I know you hate two questions, but I can just—just two quick ones. You talked about your meeting with Hu, and that was positive. Is there anything that he offered to you that he can—any pressure he can apply on North Korea? And the second one is a brief one. Are you happy with the progress or the contributions with the Madrid donors’ conference coming up?

The President. Donors’ conference? Yes. I think we’re making good progress. And the question on Hu was?

North Korea

Q. Is there anything that he can—any pressure that he can apply on North Korea? Did he say he would be able to do anything or—

The President. He is a—China is a major presence in the neighborhood. And the fact that they’re willing to take the same message to the North Koreans that the United States is taking to the North Koreans, along with three other nations, is a powerful statement to Kim Chong-il that it’s in his national interest that he abandon his nuclear weapons ambitions and that—he has been saying—as I said in the press conference, I think—one of your questions—he’s been saying, “I want a security guarantee.” And what we have now said is that in return for dismantling the programs, we’re all willing to sign some kind of document, not a treaty but a piece of paper that says we won’t attack you. We’ll see what happens.

Q. How does that—a lot of people were saying we can’t make it look like we’re giving in to blackmail from North Korea.

The President. What’s changed is we’ve now got five countries involved. And the neighborhood is now speaking. What happened before was the bilateral relations with the United States. And now he’s got his big neighbor to the—right on his border, he’s got a neighbor to the south, he’s got Japan, he’s got another neighbor, Russia, all saying the same thing. It’s a different dynamic, is what I’m—that’s where the policy has changed.

Q. This security guarantee, what should it say?

The President. That’s what we’ll determine. We haven’t worked out the words, but the point is, is that North Korea must hear that in return for the dismantling of their program—in a verifiable way, by the way; I mean, we’re going to want to know—that now five nations are willing to say something about his security.

Q. Everybody is behind that?

The President. Yes.

Iran

Q. Can I ask you one on Iran?

The President. On Iran? Yes.

Q. It seems like last night there was some maybe cautious optimism that this is a good first step. If they comply with the three criteria that you've laid out, would they be then allowed to have a civilian nuclear energy program, or would that—

The President. Well, it depends on—first things first, and that is, let us have, in a verifiable way, their agreement that was made with the IAEA. The IAEA must be allowed in, and we'll discuss it then. Our relations with Iran—that will help relations with Iran, obviously, if they do abandon a nuclear weapons program. It will also help if they—we end up doing a—reaching an agreement on the Al Qaida that they hold.

Q. What are the cross-strings there?

The President. You've got to have patience in foreign policy.

Q. Are you at all suspicious of the European motives?

The President. Am I suspicious? No, not in this case. No, I'm not. I believe, in this case, they generally are concerned about Iran developing a nuclear weapon. They understand the consequences. I appreciate it very much. We spent a lot of time talking to the European—our European counterparts, who are influential, more so than we are, in Iran. You know, we've got a sanctions policy with Iran; they don't. And there's influence. This is an effective approach. I've been saying all along that not every policy issue needs to be dealt with by force. There are ways to achieve common objectives, and this is a common objective.

And the European Union—and we're speaking directly to Silvio Berlusconi about it, who is the head of the EU. We've also obviously spoke to the three—the leaders of the countries who went into Iran. And they made a decision collectively in Europe that it's not in their interest or the world interest that Iran have a nuclear weapon. And we came to that conclusion, they've come to that conclusion, and working together is an effective way. It's the same approach—kind of approach we're taking in North Korea as well, a collective voice trying to convince a leader to change behavior.

Legislative Agenda

Q. [*Inaudible*]—Republicans in Congress didn't follow your wishes on the phone—

The President. I thought they did in the House. There's two bodies.

North Korea

Q. Do you regret saying that you loathe Kim Chong-il? Some people think that it helped them sort of—it made them sort of harden their position—

The President. Any leader who starves his—made him do what?

Q. It just made him—

The President. Made Kim Chong-il—surely it didn't make Kim Chong-il renege on the last agreement, did it? Because I wasn't there, you know what I'm saying?

Q. Right, but they've been much more vocal about their nuclear ambitions.

The President. No, they've been—remember, they lobbed a rocket over—

Q. Japan.

The President. Remember the rocket over Japan? Keep it in perspective. Anybody who starves his people is—I just can't respect anybody that would really let his people starve and shrink in size as a result of malnutrition. It's a sad, sad situation for the North Korean people. That's one people—I've assured the—our partners in this effort that we deeply care about the plight of the North Korean people. It's just unconscionable that that many people are starving in the 21st century. We provide—we're a generous nation. We provided food. We're not so sure the food is getting to the people, is one of the issues that we face. I feel strongly about failed leadership dashing the hopes of the people, in this case creating incredible starvation.

Q. Thank you.

The President. You're welcome.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 3:10 p.m. aboard Air Force One en route to Canberra, Australia. In his remarks, the President referred to President Hu Jintao of China; Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; President Roh Moo-hyun of South Korea; President Vladimir Putin of Russia; President Megawati Sukarnoputri of Indonesia; President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of the Philippines; Prime Minister John Howard of

Australia; former Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Lt. Gen. William G. Boykin, USA, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence; President Jose Maria Aznar of Spain; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Prime Minister Mahathir bin Mohamed of Malaysia; and Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy. A reporter referred to King Abdullah II of Jordan. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Statement on Senate Passage of Partial-Birth Abortion Legislation

October 22, 2003

I applaud the Senate for joining the House in passing the ban on partial-birth abortion. This is very important legislation that will end an abhorrent practice and continue to build a culture of life in America. I look forward to signing it into law.

Statement on the Death of Don Luis Ferre

October 22, 2003

Don Luis Ferre was a distinguished statesman and a great American, who dedicated himself to his family and the economic and cultural growth of Puerto Rico. As a member of Puerto Rico's House of Representatives, president of the senate, and Governor, he was an effective advocate for the political empowerment of the people of Puerto Rico. He was widely recognized as a strong leader in his community. In 1991, he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his years of distinguished service to America. He was a good friend of my family, and I valued his advice and counsel.

Laura joins me in sending our condolences to the Ferre family and to the people of Puerto Rico.

Exchange With Reporters Following Discussions With Prime Minister John Howard of Australia in Canberra, Australia

October 23, 2003

President Bush. Can't get any better than that. [*Laughter*]

Australia-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

Q. Mr. Bush, did you discuss the free trade agreement? And how are you committed to keeping agriculture in the free trade agreement if it goes ahead?

President Bush. What I'm committed to is seeing that we can get this free trade agreement done by the end of December. That's what John and I talked about in Crawford. I think a free trade agreement with Australia would be good for America, good for American workers. I also believe that it would be good for Australia.

Prime Minister Howard. Very good.

President Bush. And the commitment we talked about was to make sure our negotiators push forward with a deal. Obviously, agriculture is an important issue; intellectual property is an important issue. There's a lot of important issues that we've got to work through if—and I think we can.

Prime Minister Howard. Thank you. American?

President Bush. Yes, Tom.

War on Terror

Q. Mr. President, the Defense Secretary has written a memorandum saying there have been mixed results in the war on terror, that it's going to be a long, hard slog, and no bold steps have been taken yet. Do you agree with that characterization?

President Bush. What I agree with is that the war on terror is going to be tough work, and it's going to take a while. And we're making great progress. We're dismantling the Al Qaida network. They hide in hills, in caves, and you know, they hide in free societies. And it takes a while to find them, which is

why John Howard and I talked a lot about sharing intelligence and finding these killers before they kill again, people like Hambali, who was routed out of society. The Australians and the Prime Minister were very helpful, as was our intelligence service. But the success went to the Thai authority.

Prime Minister Howard. Yes, I met the general that handcuffed him.

President Bush. Yes, he's a good fellow. Anyway, we've got work to do. This is a long war on terror. And removing Saddam Hussein from power was an important part of winning the war on terror. Ridding Afghanistan of the Taliban was an important part of winning the war on terror.

I haven't seen the Secretary's comments, but somebody told me they thought he said we need to make sure our military's intelligence services are focused on the war on terror. And I couldn't agree more with you. That's exactly what we're doing.

Australian Detainees in Guantanamo Bay/Iraq

Q. Mr. President, on the war on terror, and in light of the Rumsfeld memo, are you inclined now to ask Australia for more assistance in Iraq? And how long do you intend to hold the two Australians detained in Guantanamo Bay without charge or trial? And have you discussed that with the Prime Minister?

President Bush. I did discuss it with the Prime Minister. There's a process, ongoing process to deal with these two people that were picked up off of a battlefield of war. And I think one of the—somebody in the Australian media, when they were in America, asked me about torture or some—it's alleged allegations of torture. It's ridiculous, utterly ridiculous. And we will deal with them in a—in a way that conforms to our standards.

John—the Prime Minister—I keep calling him John; we're close friends. The Prime Minister and I have talked about the procedures, and I assured him these people will be taken care of in a way that conforms with our rules and regulations.

The first question was—oh, Iraq. Listen, Australia has made a tremendous contribution in Iraq. Their troops were fantastic.

They laid it on the line, and every military person I talked to about the contribution of the Australians was—had high praise for the skill and the strength and spirit of the Aussie troops.

In my judgment, Australia has made a significant contribution to peace and freedom, and the people of Iraq who suffered in the hands of a brutal tyrant are very thankful for the contributions of the Australians.

Adam.

Australia-U.S. Relations

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, you called Australia a “sheriff.” Does that mean Australia should flex its military might more in Asia? And Mr. Howard, how do you see the job of a sheriff?

President Bush. Yes, Adam—can I put it in context?

Q. Please.

President Bush. I was asked the question, is Australia America's deputy sheriff; that was the question. It was a very careful, clever question. I don't think you were—I don't think you asked it, Adam. And my answer was, “No, we're equal. We're equal partners on the war on terror. We're equal partners working for a world that's more free.”

And today in my speech to the Parliament, I will praise Australia's work in this part of the world. I'll note the fact that Australia led in East Timor. And Australia's—Australia is carrying a heavy load, for which we are grateful. And I appreciate you, Mr. Prime Minister.

I said Mr. Prime Minister—somebody told me that they made fun of me for calling—or they made fun of the Prime Minister, when they call him “the man of steel.” I'm going to repeat the words. That's a high compliment. That means in the face of criticism, he's staying strong, that he does what he think is right. And the world is better for the leader—leaders like Prime Minister John Howard.

Prime Minister Howard. You asked me, did the President put in correct and proper Texan—we were in Crawford. And so the language of sheriff and deputy sort of rolls easily off any tongue, particularly an American tongue.

Look, our role in the region is—I've categorized it as that of *helpem fren*. That is—for the benefit of the Americans, that is pidgin English used by the Pacific Islanders. It means helping a friend. And I see Australia's role in the region as helping friends. And that's what we're doing in the Solomons. It's what we did in East Timor. It's what we may have to do again in other parts of that region. But when necessity arises, we help people. We don't see ourselves as having any kind of enforcement role, but we're always good to our allies, particularly the United States, to defend values that are important to both our societies.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:46 a.m. at the Australian Parliament House. In his remarks, he referred to Nurjaman Riduan Isamuddin (known as Hambali), Al Qaida's chief operational planner in Southeast Asia; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. A reporter referred to Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the Australian Parliament in Canberra

October 23, 2003

President Bush. Governor-General Michael Jeffery, Prime Minister John Howard, Speaker of the House, Leader of the Senate, Leader of the Opposition Simon Crean, distinguished Members of the House and the Senate, Premiers, members of the diplomatic corps, ladies and gentlemen: Laura and I are honored to be in the Commonwealth of Australia. I want to thank the Prime Minister for his invitation. I want to thank the Members and Senators for convening this session of the Parliament. I want to thank the people of Australia for a gracious welcome.

Five months ago, your Prime Minister was a distinguished visitor of ours in Crawford, Texas, at our ranch. You might remember that I called him a "man of steel." [Laughter] That's Texan for "fair dinkum." [Laughter] Prime Minister John Howard is a leader of exceptional courage who exemplifies the finest qualities of one of the world's great democracies. I'm proud to call him friend.

Americans know Australia as a land of independent and enterprising and good-hearted people. We see something familiar here, something we like. Australians are fair-minded and tolerant and easygoing. Yet in times of trouble and danger, Australians are the first to step forward, to accept the hard duties, and to fight bravely until the fighting is done.

In a hundred years of experience, American soldiers have come to know the courage and good fellowship of the "diggers" at their side. We fought together in the Battle of Hamel, together in the Coral Sea, together in New Guinea, on the Korean Peninsula, in Vietnam. And in the war on terror, once again we're at each other's side.

In this war, the Australia and American people have witnessed the methods of the enemy. We saw the scope of their hatred on September the 11, 2001. We saw the depth of their cruelty on October the 12, 2002. We saw destruction and grief, and we saw our duty. As free nations in peril, we must fight this enemy with all our strength.

No country can live peacefully in a world that the terrorists would make for us. And no people are immune from the sudden violence that can come to an office building or an airplane or a nightclub or a city bus. Your nation and mine have known the shock and felt the sorrow and laid the dead to rest. And we refuse to live our lives at the mercy of murderers.

The nature of the terrorist threat defines the strategy we are using to fight it. These committed killers will not be stopped by negotiations. They will not respond to reason. The terrorists cannot be appeased. They must be found. They must be fought, and they must be defeated.

The terrorists hide and strike within free societies, so we're draining their funds, disrupting their plans, finding their leaders. The skilled work of Thai and Indonesia and other authorities in capturing the terrorist Hambali—suspected of planning the murders in Bali and other attacks—was a model of the determined campaign we are waging.

The terrorists seek safe harbor to plot and to train, so we're holding the allies of terror to account. America, Australia, and other nations acted in Afghanistan to destroy the

home base of Al Qaida and rid that country of a terror regime. And the Afghan people, especially Afghan women, do not miss the bullying and the beatings and the public executions at the hands of the Taliban.

The terrorists hope to gain chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons, the means to match their hatred. So we're confronting outlaw regimes that aid terrorists, that pursue weapons of mass destruction, and that defy the demands of the world. America, Australia, and other nations acted in Iraq to remove a grave and gathering danger, instead of wishing and waiting while tragedy drew closer.

Since the liberation of Iraq, we have discovered Saddam's clandestine network of biological laboratories, the design work on prohibited long-range missiles, his elaborate campaign to hide illegal weapons programs. Saddam Hussein spent years frustrating U.N. inspectors for a simple reason: because he was violating U.N. demands. And in the end, rather than surrender his programs and abandon his lies, he chose defiance and his own undoing.

Who can possibly think that the world would be better off with Saddam Hussein still in power? Surely not the dissidents who would be in his prisons or end up in his mass graves. Surely not the men and women who would fill Saddam's torture chambers and rape rooms. Surely not the families of the victims he murdered with poison gas. Surely not anyone who cares about human rights and democracy and stability in the Middle East. Today, Saddam's regime is gone, and no one—

[At this point, there was a disturbance in the audience.]

Speaker Andrew. Senator Brown, I warn you—Senator Brown will excuse himself from the House. Senator Brown will excuse himself from the House. The Sergeant will remove Senator Brown from the House.

The President.

President Bush. Surely no one who cares about human rights and democracy and stability in the Middle East. Today Saddam Hussein's regime is gone, and no one should mourn its passing.

In the months leading up to our action in Iraq, Australia and America went to the United Nations. We are committed to multi-lateral institutions, because global threats require a global response. We're committed to collective security, and collective security requires more than solemn discussions and sternly worded pronouncements. It requires collective will. If the resolutions of the world are to be more than ink on paper, they must be enforced. If the institutions of the world are to be more than debating societies, they must eventually act. If the world promises serious consequences for the defiance of the lawless, then serious consequences must follow.

Because we enforced Resolution 1441 and used force in Iraq as a last resort, there is one more free nation in the world, and all free nations are more secure.

We accepted our obligations with open eyes, mindful of the sacrifices that had been made and those to come. The burdens fall most heavily on the men and women of our Armed Forces and their families. The world has seen the bravery and skill of the Australian military. Your Special Operations forces were among the first units on the ground in Iraq. And in Afghanistan, the first casualty among America's allies was Australian, Special Air Service Sergeant Andrew Russell. This afternoon, I will lay a wreath at the Australian War Memorial in memory of Sergeant Russell and the long line of Australians who have died in the service to this nation. And my Nation honors their service to the cause of freedom, to the cause we share.

Members and Senators, with decisive victories behind us, we have decisive days ahead. We cannot let up on our offensive against terror, even a bit. And we must continue to build stability and peace in the Middle East and Asia as the alternatives to hatred and fear.

We seek the rise of freedom and self-government in Afghanistan and in Iraq for the benefit of their people, as an example to their neighbors and for the security of the world. America and Australia are helping the people of both those nations to defend themselves,

to build the institutions of law and democracy, and to establish the beginnings of free enterprise.

These are difficult tasks in civil societies wrecked by years of tyranny. And it should surprise no one that the remnants and advocates of tyranny should fight liberty's advance. The advance of liberty will not be halted. The terrorists and the Taliban and Saddam holdouts are desperately trying to stop our progress. They will fail. The people of Afghanistan and Iraq measure progress every day. They are losing the habits of fear, and they are gaining the habits of freedom.

Some are skeptical about the prospects for democracy in the Middle East and wonder if its culture can support free institutions. In fact, freedom has always had its skeptics. Some doubted that Japan and other Asian countries could ever adopt the ways of self-government. The same doubts have been heard at various times about Germans and Africans. At the time of the Magna Carta, the English were not considered the most promising recruits for democracy. *[Laughter]* And to be honest, sophisticated observers had serious reservations about the scruffy travelers who founded our two countries. *[Laughter]* Every milestone of liberty was considered impossible before it was achieved. In our time, we must decide our own belief: Either freedom is the privilege of an elite few, or it is the right and capacity of all humanity.

By serving our ideals, we also serve our interests. If the Middle East remains a place of anger and hopelessness and incitement, this world will tend toward division and chaos and violence. Only the spread of freedom and hope in the Middle East in the long term will bring peace to that region and beyond. And the liberation of more than 50 million Iraqis and Afghans from tyranny is progress to be proud of.

Our nations must also confront the immediate threat of proliferation. We cannot allow the growing ties of trade and the forces of globalization to be used for the secret transport of lethal materials. So our two countries are joining together in the Proliferation Security Initiative. We're preparing to search planes and ships and trains and trucks carrying suspect cargo to seize weapons or mis-

sile shipments that raise proliferation concerns. Last month, Australia hosted the first maritime interdiction exercise in the Coral Sea.

Australia and the United States are also keeping pressure on Iran to conform to its letter and spirit of the nonproliferation obligations. We're working together to convince North Korea that the continued pursuit of nuclear weapons will bring only further isolation. The wrong weapons, the wrong technology in the wrong hands, has never been so great a danger, and we are meeting that danger together.

Our nations have a special responsibility throughout the Pacific to help keep the peace, to ensure the free movement of people and capital and information, and advance the ideals of democracy and freedom. America will continue to maintain a forward presence in Asia, continue to work closely with Australia.

Today, America and Australia are working with Japan and the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, and Singapore and other nations to expand trade and to fight terror, to keep the peace in the Taiwan Straits.

Your country is hosting President Hu Jintao. Australia's agenda with China is the same as my country's. We're encouraged by China's cooperation in the war on terror. We're working with China to ensure the Korean Peninsula is free of nuclear weapons. We see a China that is stable and prosperous, a nation that respects the peace of its neighbors and works to secure the freedom of its own people.

Security in the Asia-Pacific region will always depend on the willingness of nations to take responsibility for their neighborhood, as Australia is doing. Your service and your sacrifice helped to establish a new Government and a new nation in East Timor. And working with New Zealand and other Pacific Island states, you're helping the Solomon Islands reestablish order and build a just Government. By your principled actions, Australia is leading the way to peace in Southeast Asia. And America is grateful.

Together——

[At this point, there was a disturbance in the audience.]

President Bush. Together, my country, with Australia, is promoting greater economic opportunity. Our nations are now working to complete a U.S.-Australia Free Trade Agreement that will add momentum to the free trade throughout the Asian-Pacific region, while producing jobs in our own countries.

[At this point, there was a disturbance in the audience.]

Speaker Andrew. Senator Nettle will resume her seat. Sergeant, remove Senator Nettle. Senator Nettle will resume her seat. The President has the call. Senator Nettle is warned. Sergeant will remove Senator Nettle.

President Bush. I love free speech. [Laughter]

Speaker Andrew. The President has the call.

President Bush. The relationship between America and Australia is vibrant and vital. Together, we will meet the challenges and the perils of our own time. In the desperate hours of another time, when the Philippines were on the verge of falling and your country faced the prospect of invasion, General Douglas MacArthur addressed Members of the Australian Parliament. He spoke of a code that unites our two nations, the code of free people, which, he said, “embraces the things that are right and condemns the things that are wrong.”

More than 60 years later, that code still guides us. We call evil by its name and stand for freedom that leads to peace. Our alliance is strong. We value, more than ever, the unbroken friendship between the Australian and the American peoples. My country is grateful to you and to all the Australian people for your clear vision and for your strength of heart. And I thank you for your hospitality. May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:30 a.m. at the Australian Parliament House. In his remarks, he referred to Governor-General Michael Jeffery, Prime Minister John Howard, Speaker of the House of Representatives Neil Andrew, President of the Senate Paul Calvert, and Leader of the Opposition Simon Crean of Australia; Nurjaman Riduan Isamuddin (known as Hambali), Al Qaida’s chief operational planner in Southeast

Asia; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and President Hu Jintao of China. Speaker Andrew referred to Senator Bob Brown and Senator Kerry Nettle of Australia.

Statement on Senate Action To Block a Vote on the Proposed “Class Action Fairness Act”

October 23, 2003

Yesterday, 39 Members of the U.S. Senate blocked an up-or-down vote on a bill that would reduce frivolous lawsuits and the burden they place on our economy. The “Class Action Fairness Act” would protect the legal rights of all citizens while ensuring that court awards and settlements go to those who are wrongfully injured rather than to a few wealthy trial lawyers. Class action reform will allow businesses and their employees to go back to the business of growing our economy and creating jobs. It was passed by the House and is favored by a large bipartisan majority in the Senate. Those who are serious about bringing an end to frivolous lawsuits in this Nation and protecting the rights of those who are wrongfully injured should strongly support this legislation. I am eager to sign it; our economy needs it; and I urge those Senators who stand in the way to let the will of the people be heard.

Remarks at a Bush-Cheney Reception in Honolulu, Hawaii

October 23, 2003

Thank you all very much. Aloha! Thank you. Please be seated. Thanks for the warm welcome. If I seem a little jet-lagged—[laughter]—it’s because I’ve spent a long week away from home. After 8 days on the road and more than 18,000 miles in the air, it’s great to be back in America. And it’s really great to be in the beautiful State of Hawaii.

We had a great trip. I visited with some of our strongest allies in the war on terror and some of the Nation’s most important trading partners. We made progress on a broad agenda, an agenda that will help make America more secure and more prosperous.

I want to thank each of you for giving me a warm welcome home. I particularly want

to thank you for your strong support. See, what we're doing today is we're laying the foundation for a victory in Hawaii and a nationwide victory in 2004. As your Governor said, and my chairman of the campaign here said, we need more than just financial contributions. We need you talking up the campaign. We need you going to your coffee shops and your houses of worship and your community centers and reminding everybody that this administration has got an optimistic, positive, hopeful agenda for everybody who lives in America.

I'm getting ready, and I'm loosening up. [Laughter] But the political season will come in its own time. I've got a job to do. And there's a lot on the agenda in Washington. I'm going to continue, though, to work hard to earn the confidence of every American by keeping this Nation secure and strong and prosperous and free.

As we go about our work in Washington, Vice President Cheney and I are grateful for the continuing support in Hawaii. We appreciate our friends here. I also appreciate the unique contributions native Hawaiians have made to this State and to our Nation. I'm impressed by the rich culture of the native Hawaiian people. I respect our shared traditions, and I appreciate Governor Lingle's dedication to all of Hawaii's citizens. You've got a great Governor for this State.

And I've got a great wife. I'm really proud of Laura. She's a fabulous mom, a wonderful wife, and a great First Lady for our country.

And I appreciate the Lieutenant Governor, Duke Aiona. I appreciate Felix Camacho, who is the Governor of Guam, who is with us today. I want to thank the members of the statehouse who are here. We've got a lot of State representatives. The Governor was telling me she wants to increase the number in '04. Mayor Arakawa is here from Maui. Bryan Baptiste is here. I appreciate you, Mr. Mayor.

I want to thank Travis Thompson, who was our event cochairman. I want to thank all the other cochairs for their hard work. I want to thank the grassroots activists who are here, the party chairmen, the national committee-woman. But most of all, I want to thank you all for coming. It warms our heart. This is a big crowd, and we're honored.

In the last 2½ years, our Nation has acted decisively to confront great challenges. I came to this office to solve problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents and to future generations. I came to seize opportunities and let—instead of letting them slip away. This administration is meeting the tests of our time.

Terrorists declared war on the United States of America, and war is what they got. We've captured or killed many of the key leaders of the Al Qaida network, and the rest of them know we're on their trail. In Afghanistan and Iraq, we gave ultimatums to terror regimes. Those regimes chose defiance, and those regimes are no more. Fifty million people in those two countries once lived under tyranny, and now they live in freedom.

Two-and-a-half years ago, our military was not receiving the resources it needed, and morale was beginning to suffer. So we increased the defense budget to prepare for the threats of a new era. And today, no one in the world can question the skill and the strength and the spirit of the United States military.

Two-and-a-half years ago, we inherited an economy in recession. And then our country was attacked. And we marched to war for our security and for peace. And we had scandals in corporate America, all of which affected the people's confidence. But we acted. We passed two tough new laws to hold corporate criminals to account. And to get the economy going again, I have twice led the United States Congress to pass historic tax relief for the American people.

When Americans have more take-home pay to spend, to save, or invest, the whole economy grows, and people are more likely to find a job. We're returning more money to the people to help them raise their family. We're reducing the taxes on dividends and capital gains to encourage investment. We're giving small businesses incentives to expand and to hire new people. With all these actions, this administration is laying the foundation for greater prosperity and more jobs across America, so every single person in this country has a chance to realize the American Dream.

Two-and-a-half years ago, there was a lot of talk about education reform, but there

wasn't much action. So I called for and the Congress passed the No Child Left Behind Act. With a solid bipartisan majority, we delivered the most dramatic education reforms in a generation. We've increased spending for Title I students. We've increased spending at the Federal level. But in return for increased Federal dollars, we expect results, because we believe every child can read and write and add and subtract. This administration is challenging the soft bigotry of low expectations. The days of excuse-making are over. We expect results in every classroom so that not one single child is left behind.

We reorganized our Government and created the Department of Homeland Security to safeguard our borders and ports and to better protect the American people. We passed trade promotion authority to open up new markets for our farmers and ranchers and manufacturers and entrepreneurs. We passed budget agreements to help maintain much needed spending discipline in Washington, DC. On issue after issue, this administration has acted on principle, has kept its word, and has made progress for the American people.

The Congress gets credit. I enjoy working with our Speaker, Denny Hastert, and the majority leader, Bill Frist. They're fine people. We work together to try to change the tone in Washington, to elevate the debate, to focus on results. After all, we're there to represent the people. And those are the kind of people I have asked to join my administration—results-oriented, decent, hard-working people from all walks of life. I have put together a fantastic administration for the American people. Our country has had no finer Vice President than Dick Cheney. Mother may have a second opinion. [*Laughter*]

In 2½ years, we have done a lot. We have come far, but our work is only beginning. I've set great goals worthy of this great Nation. First, America is committed to expanding the realm of freedom and peace for our own security and for the benefit of the world. And second, in our own country, we must work for a society of prosperity and compassion, so that every citizen has a chance to work and to succeed and to realize the great promise of our country.

It is clear that the future of freedom and peace depend on the actions of America. This Nation is freedom's home and freedom's defender. We welcome this charge of history, and we are keeping it.

Our war on terror continues. The enemies of freedom are not idle, and neither are we. This country will not rest. We will not tire. We will not stop until this danger to civilization is removed. We are confronting that danger in Iraq, where Saddam holdouts and foreign terrorists are desperately trying to throw Iraq into chaos by attacking coalition forces and aid workers and innocent citizens. They know that the advance of freedom in Iraq would be a major defeat for the cause of terror. This collection of killers is trying to shake the will of the United States of America. America will not be intimidated.

We're aggressively striking the terrorists in Iraq, defeating them there so we will not have to face them in our own country. We're calling other nations to help build a free country in Iraq, which will make us all more secure. We're standing with the Iraqi people as they assume their defense and move toward self-government. These are not easy tasks, but they are essential tasks. We will finish what we have begun, and we will win this essential victory in the war on terror.

Our greatest security comes from the advance of human liberty, because free nations do not support terror, free nations do not attack their neighbors, free nations do not threaten the world with weapons of mass terror. Americans believe that freedom is the deepest need and hope of every human heart. And I believe that freedom is the right of every person, and I believe that freedom is the future of every nation.

America also understands that unprecedented influence brings tremendous responsibilities. We have duties in the world. And when we see disease and starvation and hopeless poverty, we will not turn away. On the continent of Africa, America is now committed to bringing the healing power of medicine to millions of men and women and children now suffering with AIDS. This great, strong, and compassionate land is leading the world in this incredibly important work of human rescue.

We face challenges here at home as well. And our actions will prove that we're equal to those challenges. Any time somebody who wants to work can't find a job, says we've got a problem. This administration will continue to create the conditions for economic growth and economic vitality, so every single citizen can find work.

We have a duty to keep our commitment to America's seniors by strengthening and modernizing Medicare. The Congress took historic action to improve the lives of older Americans. For the first time since the creation of Medicare, the House and Senate have passed reforms to increase the choices for seniors and to provide coverage for prescription drugs. They must get their differences ironed out and get a bill to my desk. The sooner they get the job done, the sooner America's seniors will get the health care they need.

For the sake of our health care system, we need to cut down on the frivolous lawsuits which increase the cost of medicine. People who have been harmed by a bad doctor deserve their day in court. Yet the system should not simply reward lawyers who are fishing for rich settlements. Frivolous lawsuits drive up the cost of health care, and they therefore affect the Federal budget. Medical liability reform is a national issue that requires a national solution. The House of Representatives has passed a good bill to reform the system. The bill is now stuck in the United States Senate. The Senate must act on behalf of the American people. Senators must understand, no one has ever been healed by a frivolous lawsuit.

I have a responsibility as your President to make sure the judicial system runs well, and I have met that duty. I have nominated superb men and women for the Federal courts, people who will interpret the law, not legislate from the bench. Some Members of the United States Senate are trying to keep my nominees off the bench by blocking up-or-down votes. Every judicial nominee deserves a fair hearing and an up-or-down vote on the Senate floor. It is time for some Members of the United States Senate to stop playing politics with American justice.

This country needs a comprehensive energy plan. You may have noticed last summer

that we had a problem with the delivery of electricity in parts of our country. [Laughter] We need to modernize our systems. If we're interested in economic growth, we need a modern system, one that—we need laws that encourage investment in order to modernize the system. We need to use our technologies to encourage conservation. We need to use our technologies to enable us to explore for energy in environmentally friendly ways. But for the sake of our national security and for the sake of our economic security, we need to be less reliant on foreign sources of energy.

Our strong and prosperous Nation must also be a compassionate nation. I will continue to advance our agenda of compassionate conservatism by applying the best and most innovative ideas to the task of helping our fellow citizens who are in need. There are millions of men and women who want to end their dependence on Government and become independent through hard work. We must build on the success of welfare reform to bring work and dignity into the lives of more of our fellow citizens.

Congress should complete the "Citizen Service Act" so that more Americans can serve their communities and their country. Both Houses should reach agreement on my Faith-Based Initiative to support the armies of compassion that are mentoring our children and caring for the homeless and offering hope to the addicted. This Nation should not fear faith; we ought to welcome faith into the compassion and help of citizens in need.

A compassionate society must promote opportunity for all, including the independence and dignity that come from ownership. This administration will constantly strive to promote an ownership society in America. We want more people owning their own home. We have a minority homeownership gap in America. I presented a plan to the United States Congress to close that gap, and I urge them to act.

We want people to own and manage their own health care plan. We want people to own and manage their own retirement account. We want more people to own their own small businesses, because in America we understand, if a person owns something, he or she has a vital stake in the future of this country.

In a compassionate society, people respect one another and take responsibility for the decisions they make. We're working to change the culture in this country from one that said, "If it feels good, do it," and "If you've got a problem, blame somebody else," to a new culture in which each of understands we're responsible for the decisions we make in life.

If you are fortunate enough to be a mother or a father, you're responsible for loving your child with all your heart. If you're concerned about the quality of the education in your community, you're responsible for doing something about it. If you are a CEO in corporate America, you're responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees.

And in the new responsibility society, each of us is responsible for loving our neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourself. We can see the culture of service and responsibility growing around us. I started the USA Freedom Corps to encourage Americans to extend a compassionate hand to a neighbor in need. Your response has been strong. I get reports about our faith-based and charities that are strong all across America. People want to serve our country.

Policemen and firefighters and people who wear this Nation's uniform are reminding us what it means to sacrifice for something greater than yourself. Once again, the children of America believe in heroes because they see them every day. In these challenging times, the world has seen the resolve and the courage of America. I've been privileged to see the compassion and the character of the American people.

All the tests of the last 2½ years have come to the right nation. We're a strong country, and we use that strength to defend the peace. We're an optimistic country, confident in ourselves and in ideals bigger than ourselves. Abroad, we seek to lift whole nations by spreading freedom. At home, we seek to lift up lives by spreading opportunity to every corner of America. This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it, and we know that for our country, the best days lie ahead.

May God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:08 p.m. at the Hilton Hawaiian Village. Prior to these remarks, the President crossed the international dateline on his return flight from Australia. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Linda Lingle and Lt. Gov. James R. "Duke" Aiona, Jr., of Hawaii; Mayor Alan M. Arakawa of Maui County; Mayor Bryan J. Baptiste of Kauai County; Brennon Morioka, Hawaii State chairman, Travis Thompson, Hawaii national committeeman, and Miriam Hellreich, Hawaii national committeewoman, Republican National Committee; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. He also referred to Title I of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law No. 103-382), which amended Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Public Law No. 89-10). A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Iraq Donors' Conference

October 24, 2003

Today's success at the Iraq Donors' Conference marked significant progress for freedom in Iraq. I commend the 73 nations and 20 international organizations that are meeting the challenge of helping the Iraqi people recover from decades of oppression and build a better future. The contributions will help bring necessary funds, goods, and services to the Iraqi people. I especially thank President Aznar and the Government of Spain for having hosted the conference and for having contributed so much to supporting the people of Iraq.

The world has a clear interest in a democratic Iraq because free nations do not breed the ideologies of terror. A free Iraq will serve as an example and an inspiration to advocates of reform and progress throughout the Middle East. And a free Iraq will be a source of stability and hope for that region. America appreciates the efforts of all nations that are committed to this great endeavor.

Statement on the Death of Madame Chiang Kai-shek

October 24, 2003

Laura and I were saddened to learn of the death of Madame Chiang Kai-shek. Madame

Chiang was a close friend of the United States throughout her life and especially during the defining struggles of the last century. Generations of Americans will always remember and respect her intelligence and strength of character. On behalf of the American people, I extend condolences to Madame Chiang's family members and many admirers around the world.

Message on the Observance of Ramadan

October 24, 2003

I send greetings to Muslims in the United States and around the world observing the holy month of Ramadan.

Ramadan is the holiest season in the Islamic faith, commemorating the revelation of the Qur'an to Muhammed. This month of introspection provides Muslims a time to focus on their faith and practice God's commands. Through fasting, prayer, contemplation, and charity, Muslims around the world renew their commitment to lead lives of honesty, integrity, and compassion.

Throughout our history, people of different faiths have shaped the character of our Nation. Islam is a peaceful religion, and people who practice the Islamic faith have made great contributions to our Nation and the world. As Americans, we cherish our freedom to worship and we remain committed to welcoming individuals of all religions. By working together to advance freedom and mutual understanding, we are creating a brighter future of hope and opportunity.

Laura joins me in sending our best wishes.
Ramadan mubarak.

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest an-

nounced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

October 18

In the morning, at the U.S. Ambassador's residence in Tokyo, Japan, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he and Mrs. Bush traveled to Manila, Philippines, where they greeted U.S. Embassy personnel and members of the American community at the Embassy.

In the afternoon, at the Rizal Monument, the President and Mrs. Bush participated in a wreath-laying ceremony with President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of the Philippines. Later, at Malacanang Palace, he and Mrs. Bush participated in a welcoming ceremony with President Macapagal-Arroyo and her husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo. The two Presidents then had a meeting.

In the evening, in the Ceremonial Hall at Malacanang Palace, the President and Mrs. Bush attended a state dinner hosted by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

October 19

In the morning, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Bangkok, Thailand. Later, at the Grand Hyatt Erawan Bangkok, he met with Prime Minister Thaksin Chinnawat of Thailand.

In the afternoon, the President participated in a review of Thai troops recently returned from Afghanistan. Later, he and Mrs. Bush toured the Grand Palace.

Later in the afternoon, at the Grand Hyatt Erawan Bangkok, the President met with President Hu Jintao of China.

In the evening, at the Grand Palace, the President and Mrs. Bush attended a state dinner hosted by King Phumiphon Adunyadet and Queen Sirikit of Thailand.

October 20

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, at the Grand Hyatt Erawan Bangkok, he had a breakfast meeting with President Roh Moo-hyun of South Korea. He then met with President Vicente Fox of Mexico.

In the afternoon, at Government House, the President participated in the first session of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation

(APEC) Leaders' Retreat. Later, he attended an APEC Business Advisory Council reception.

In the evening, at the Grand Palace, the President and Mrs. Bush and other APEC leaders and their spouses had an audience with King Phumiphon Adunyadet and Queen Sirikit of Thailand. Later, the President participated in a photo opportunity with APEC leaders.

Later in the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush attended the APEC leaders' gala dinner at the Royal Thai Navy Conference Hall and a cultural performance at the Royal Thai Navy Institute.

The President announced his intention to nominate James M. Strock to be a member of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy.

October 21

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Old Parliament Building, he participated a photo opportunity with APEC leaders and the second session of the APEC Leaders' Retreat. In the afternoon, he attended a reception for APEC leaders.

Later in the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Singapore. In the evening, the President met with Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong of Singapore at the Istana.

The President announced his intention to nominate Edward McPherson to be Under Secretary of Education.

October 22

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he and Mrs. Bush traveled to Bali, Indonesia, where, at Bali International Airport, he met with President Megawati Sukarnoputri of Indonesia.

In the afternoon, at the airport, the President met with religious leaders. Later, he and Mrs. Bush traveled to Canberra, Australia.

The President announced the laureates of the 2002 National Medals of Science and National Medals of Technology, which will be presented at a White House ceremony on November 6.

The President announced his intention to nominate Carol Kinsley to be a member of

the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

October 23

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he and Mrs. Bush participated in a courtesy call on Governor-General Michael Jeffery of Australia and Mrs. Jeffery at Australia's Government House.

Later in the morning, at Australia's Parliament House, the President met with Prime Minister John Howard of Australia.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush participated in a wreath-laying ceremony at the Australian War Memorial.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Hickam Air Force Base on the island of Oahu, HI, crossing the international date line and arriving Thursday morning, October 23.

Upon arriving at Hickam Air Force Base, the President and Mrs. Bush greeted Gov. Linda Lingle and Lt. Gov. James "Duke" Aiona of Hawaii, U.S. military leaders, and National Park Service volunteer Hilma Chang.

Later in the morning, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Pearl Harbor, where they participated in a wreath-laying ceremony at the U.S.S. *Arizona* (BB-39) Memorial and met with eight survivors of the 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Later, aboard the U.S.S. *Missouri*, the President participated in a briefing by Adm. Thomas Boulton Fargo, USN, combatant commander, U.S. Pacific Command. He then toured the U.S.S. *Missouri* and greeted veterans and former *Missouri* crewmembers. Later, he and Mrs. Bush visited second-grade students at Pearl Harbor Elementary school.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Honolulu, HI, where, at the Kahala Mandarin Oriental Hotel, he attended a Hawaii Republican Party reception. Later, he met with delegates of 13 Pacific Island nations attending the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush departed for Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate James M. Loy to be Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security and to designate

him as Acting Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security.

October 24

In the morning, the President and Mrs. Bush arrived in Washington, DC. Later in the day, they traveled to Camp David, MD.

The White House announced that the President will welcome Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe of Sri Lanka to the White House on November 4.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Joseph Kabila of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the White House on November 5.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Rolandas Paksas of Lithuania to the White House on December 8.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary Commission: Ralph F. Archbold, Wayne A. Budd, John Anderson Fry, Charles R. Gerow, Judith Rodin, and Jeffrey L. Sedgwick.

The President announced his intention to nominate Edward E. Kaufman, Fayza Veronique Boulad Rodman, and Steven J. Simmons to be members of the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

The President announced his designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to attend the commemoration ceremony of the 20th anniversary of the restoration of democracy to Grenada in St. George's: Otto J. Reich (head of delegation), Marcia Bernicat, Adm. Joseph Metcalf III, Langhorne Anthony Motley, and Ken Tomlinson.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted October 22

Neil Vincent Wake,
of Arizona, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Arizona, vice Paul G. Rosenblatt, retiring.

Submitted October 23

Carol Kinsley,
of Massachusetts, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for a term expiring October 6, 2006, vice Toni G. Fay.

Submitted October 24

Floyd Hall,
of New Jersey, to be a member of the Reform Board (Amtrak) for a term of 5 years, vice Amy M. Rosen, term expired.

Edward E. Kaufman,
of Delaware, to be a member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors for a term expiring August 13, 2006 (reappointment).

Fayza Veronique Boulad Rodman,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors for a term expiring August 13, 2006, vice Robert M. Ledbetter, Jr., term expired.

Steven J. Simmons,
of Connecticut, to be a member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors for a term expiring August 13, 2006 (reappointment).

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released October 18

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Released October 19

Statement by the Press Secretary: Announcement of U.S.-Thailand FTA Negotiations

Advance text of the President's remarks to the Thai troops

Released October 20

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice on the President's bilateral meetings

Fact sheet: President Bush Announces United States Intends To Negotiate a Free Trade Agreement With Thailand

Fact sheet: APEC Pledges To Improve Transparency and Fight Corruption

Fact sheet: U.S. Actions at the APEC Summit: Day One

Released October 21

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Transcript of remarks by Press Secretary Scott McClellan on Iran

Fact sheet: Health Security Initiative

Fact sheet: New APEC Initiatives on Counterterrorism

Fact sheet: Energy Security Initiative

Fact sheet: U.S. Expands Digital Freedom Initiative to Indonesia and Peru

Fact sheet: APEC Announces Important Commitments on Security

Fact sheet: U.S. Accomplishments at the APEC Summit: Day Two

Released October 23

Advance text of the President's remarks to the Australian Parliament

Released October 24

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit by Sri Lankan Prime Minister Wickremesinghe

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Rolandas Paksas To Visit Washington

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Bush To Meet with Congolese President Joseph Kabila

**Acts Approved
by the President**

NOTE: No acts approved by the President were received by the Office of the Federal Register during the period covered by this issue.