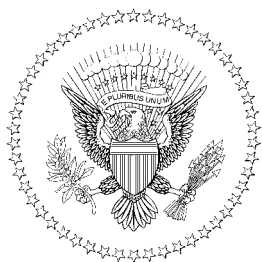


Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



Monday, February 16, 2004
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WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Week Ending Friday, February 13, 2004

The President's Radio Address

February 7, 2004

Good morning. The past few weeks have confirmed that America's economy is strong and growing stronger. The Nation's unemployment rate fell to 5.6 percent in January, the fourth consecutive monthly decline, and we added 112,000 new jobs, the largest single month increase since December of 2000. Overall, the Nation has added 366,000 jobs in the past 5 months.

There's more evidence of a strengthening economy. Manufacturers report new orders. GDP rose at a 6.1 percent in the second half of 2003, the fastest pace in nearly 20 years. Inflation remains low, and our Nation's homeownership rate just reached an alltime high. For the first time in our history, more than half of minority households own their own homes.

All of these are signs that our economic recovery is becoming a lasting expansion. Yet many of the new jobs being created require workers to learn new skills, and we can make sure that more Americans are prepared for these new opportunities.

Our efforts begin in our elementary schools, where students learn the basic skills that carry them through life. With the No Child Left Behind Act, we have raised standards, and we're making sure children learn the basics. Now we need to stay the course of reform, because the No Child Left Behind Act is opening the door of opportunity for all of America's children.

We must also help high school students to prepare for the new jobs our economy is creating. I've asked Congress to pass my Jobs for the 21st Century proposal, a plan that would help students who fall behind in reading and math, expand advanced placement programs in low-income schools and provide larger Pell grants for students who prepare for college with demanding courses in high school.

We also recognize that many workers change jobs in the middle of their careers, and they often get the training they need at community colleges. I have asked Congress to provide \$250 million to community colleges to help Americans get the skills they need for high-growth fields. Over the last several weeks, I have met with men and women who are studying at these colleges and are on their way to better careers.

Toledo, Ohio, I met with Mike Potter. After getting laid off in March 2003, Mike enrolled at Owens Community College's integrated systems technology program, which is supported by a Department of Labor grant. Mike got a new job soon and is earning more than he did before. Here is what Mike told me: "People don't want to see a person with just one skill anymore. They want several skills."

My administration is committed to helping more people like Mike learn the skills they need. And we will continue pursuing a progrowth economic agenda so that every person who wants to work can find a job.

We'll help create more jobs in America by making tax relief permanent, by enforcing spending discipline and reducing the deficit, by enacting commonsense reforms to our regulatory and legal systems, by taking steps to make health care more affordable and accessible, by passing a national energy policy, and by opening up more foreign markets for trade. Taking these steps will add momentum to our Nation's economic expansion and extend jobs and prosperity to more Americans.

I'm optimistic about our future, and one reason is because of America's workers and entrepreneurs. They are talented and hard-working, and they carry with them the spirit that has always made America a place of hope and opportunity.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 11 a.m. on February 6 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February

7. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 6 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks in a Discussion on the National Economy in Springfield, Missouri

February 9, 2004

The President. Jack, thanks for having me. I want to thank the good folks who work here for allowing us to disrupt your day to talk about our economy and how it works. And hopefully out of this discussion, people will learn better how people make decisions, decisions with their own money or decisions with investors' money. I hope people come away from this discussion with this great sense of optimism about the future for our country. It's exactly what I believe. I believe we ought to be—[*applause*]. So this ought to be a lot of fun.

I am thrilled to be here with the two United States Senators from Missouri, Kit Bond and Jim Talent. I appreciate their friendship and thank them for coming. Congressman Roy Blunt, who you know well, is with us today. He's a man who knows a good deal. I said, "Would you like to fly down to your hometown on Air Force One?" [*Laughter*] Guess what his answer was? [*Laughter*]

I appreciate the mayor coming, Tom Carlson. Mr. Mayor, thank you for being here. Fill the potholes. [*Laughter*] Sorry, Mr. Mayor, you didn't ask for any advice. [*Laughter*]

I also want to thank the other State and local officials and community and business leaders for coming here. Thank you all for coming as well.

Before I begin to talk a little bit about the economy and then of course have our panelists talk about what they think and some of the decisionmaking they made, I want to introduce a fellow who you may or may not know. His name is Travis Morrison. Travis, why don't you stand up right quick. [*Applause*] I guess you know Travis. [*Laughter*] I didn't until I arrived, but I know a lot of people like Travis.

See, Travis is a person who takes time out of his life to volunteer in your community. When the tornadoes hit here, he went up to help those who suffered. When people are looking for food, particularly children, he's willing to take time out of his life to fill the knapsacks full of food for the kids. He walks for the March of Dimes. He works for the United Way. He's a soldier in the army of compassion.

A lot of times, this country talks about our strengths, and we should. We talk about the military strength of America, and that's important, and we're going to keep us strong. We talk about how fat our wallets may be, and that's important too. But the true strength of America is found in the hearts and souls of people like Travis, people who are willing to love their neighbor just like they'd like to love themselves.

I like to talk about the Travis Morrisons of the world because everybody can be an army—a soldier in the army of compassion. Everybody can make a difference. This country's strength is found in the faith centers and neighborhoods and community centers, where people help somebody who hurts. And one of my jobs is to lift that spirit of America and invigorate it and to call people to action. One of the best ways to do so is to remind people that in Springfield, Missouri, there are thousands of people like Travis, and if you want to help your community, help make somebody's life a little brighter. Travis, thanks for what you do. Thanks for being a solid, sound American by volunteering to help somebody who hurts.

Speaking about strengths, our country has been through a lot over the last 3 years. I just want you to think about what the economy has been through. In March of 2000, the stock market started to decline. And that matters if you own stocks, and a lot of you do. You own them through your retirement accounts, for example. It's the indication of the rough times ahead. See, when a stock market sometimes indicates—is a predictor of the future, and sure enough, in the first quarter of 2001, the country was in a recession. And when you're in a recession, it means somebody is not going to be able to work. Things are going backwards. The economy is in decline. People are starting to get

laid off. There's a lot of uncertainty out there. People just aren't sure what their future looks like. It's tough times when the country is in a recession.

We started to recover from the recession, and then we got attacked on September the 11th, 2001. In other words, we had tough economic times to begin with, and then the enemy hit us. And that changed us. It really did. It hurt us economically. It changed our whole outlook about the world. Perhaps by now, you're beginning to get an impression of how it changed my outlook. It changed the way I look at the threats to America. It reminded me that my most important duty, my most solemn obligation, is to protect our country and the people. I'll never forget the lessons of September the 11th, and when I see a grave and gathering threat to the United States, we will deal with it. We will deal with it for the good of our country.

The war on terror goes on, unfortunately, but we're going to win. We're going to win because America is tough and strong and disciplined and patient. We'll win because we've got fabulous men and women in the United States military who are willing to sacrifice for our own security and for the freedom.

And then, after we settled in with the new reality of the world, we discovered that some of the corporate citizens in America forgot what it meant to be a responsible citizen. See, when you're a CEO of a corporation, you have a responsibility. Jack knows that, and I suspect he might talk about—at least when he talks, you'll hear he recognizes that. But we had some people in this country who didn't tell the truth to their shareholders and their employees.

By the way, we passed laws—and I want to thank the Senators and the Congressmen who are here—we passed laws, and now they know there will be a consequence in America for not telling the truth. We expect people in positions of responsibility, in CEO America, in corporate America, to be honest to their shareholders and their employees. That affected the people's confidence. Make no mistake about it, when we started reading that some of these CEOs of publicly held companies lied with the numbers, it affected people's confidence.

And then, of course, as you know, I made the tough decision to secure America by—after having gone to the United Nations and after having worked to—given Mr. Saddam Hussein a chance to disarm himself, to do what the world had demanded, we went and disarmed him.

The march to war affected the people's confidence. It's hard to make investment. See, if you're a small-business owner or a large-business owner and you're thinking about investing, you've got to be optimistic when you invest. Except when you're marching to war, it's not a very optimistic thought, is it? In other words, it's the opposite of optimistic when you're thinking you're going to war. War is not conducive to—for investment.

And so we've overcome a lot. And I say we've overcome a lot because we're growing. The growth is good. New jobs are being created. Interest rates are low. Homeownership in America is at one of the highest levels ever, and that's positive. People are owning their own home.

A lot of it had to do with the fact that we cut your taxes, a lot of the reasons why this economy is growing. Make no mistake about it, the main reason the economy is growing is because the entrepreneurial spirit of America is strong and we've got the greatest workers in the world. But it helps when those workers have got more money in their pocket, and it helps when the small-business owners have got more money in their coffers. And that's what tax relief does. See, when you cut the taxes for the people, you let them keep more of their own money. It means somebody is going to demand an additional good or a service, and when they demand an additional good or a service in our economy, somebody is going to produce that good or a service. And when somebody produces it, somebody is more likely to find work.

And secondly, we did some smart things with the tax relief. We said, "If you have a child, you ought to get help with raising that child," so we increased the child credit to \$1,000 per child. It says that we want the Tax Code to work the right way. We used to penalize marriage. That doesn't make any sense. We ought to be rewarding marriage

in the Tax Code, and so—there was a marriage penalty.

We helped small businesses by encouraging them to invest. We cut the taxes on everybody. Sometimes in Washington you see them play favorites—so-and-so gets a tax relief, so-and-so doesn't. My attitude is, if you're going to give tax relief, you ought to give it to everybody who pays taxes. And we did that, and it's helping. People got more money in their pocket to spend. You know what I'm talking about.

Small businesses are feeling pretty good about their future, because there's incentives for them to invest. And by the way, it's very essential for you to understand that when you say cutting taxes on everybody who pays taxes—in other words, you're reducing individual income tax rates—that affects small business. Most small-business owners are sole proprietorships or Subchapter S corporations, which means they pay tax at the individual income tax rate. So when you hear us talking about cutting individual income taxes, think small business as well.

And most new jobs in America are created by small businesses. It makes sense to invigorate the small-business sector of this country. If you're worried about job creation, if you're worried about somebody finding work, it makes sense to stimulate the small-business sector of this economy. And that's what we did.

Now, I want to—before we let Jack talk—he's probably wondering whether or not I'm filibustering. *[Laughter]* I think that's what you call it in the Senate, isn't it? Yes. Anyway, I do want to talk to you real quick that—this is one of the real challenges we face—a couple of challenges. One, my attitude is, in order to make sure people can find work, that we need to open up markets for U.S. products.

I believe we need to have tort reform so that these frivolous and junk lawsuits—*[applause]*. I know we need tort reform particularly when it comes to health care. The costs of health care are going up dramatically. And that affects small-business owners; it affects employees. One cause of increasing health care costs is the frivolous lawsuits that are running these docs out of business, that are causing people to have to practice defensive

medicine. We need medical liability reform now in Washington, DC.

We need association health plans so small businesses can pool risk so they can better provide health insurance for their employees. We need health savings accounts. We've expanded them in the Medicare law, but I want people to understand they're available now. And it's a really good way for people to buy insurance, whether you're a small-business owner and/or an employee. People ought to look into health savings accounts.

We want less regulation. We need an energy plan. We need to be less dependent on foreign sources of energy. If you're a business, you need to have reliable sources of energy available.

But I don't know if you know this or not, but the tax relief we passed is set to expire, parts of it. And some of it's going to expire next year, in 2005. In other words, the child credit is going down in 2005 unless Congress acts. The marriage penalty is going back up in 2005 unless Congress acts. And that's going to be an interesting part of the national dialog. I believe we need to make the tax cuts permanent.

There are some in Washington—and they're going to say, "Let's not make the tax cuts permanent." That means it's going to raise your taxes. When you hear people say, "We're not going to make this permanent," that means tax increase. Now is not the time to raise taxes on the American people. This economy is getting better. We're showing good growth, good, strong growth. Yet, some in Washington want to raise your taxes. Make no mistake about it—let me tell you what's going to happen when they raise them. They're going to say, "Oh, we've got to raise it so we can pay down the deficit." No. They're going to raise the taxes and increase the size of the Federal Government, which would be bad for the United States economy. People have got to understand and listen to the rhetoric carefully. When they say, "We're going to repeal Bush's tax cuts," that means they're going to raise your taxes. And that's wrong, and that's bad economics.

Anyway, that's enough from me. *[Laughter]*

Jack Stack. I'm stimulated, stimulated.

The President. I'm not interested in you being stimulated; I'm interested in the economy being stimulated. [Laughter] And since you're an entrepreneur—[laughter]. See, one of the things that's fabulous about this country is people can start their own business. We want people owning something in America. We want you owning your home. We want you owning your own business. We want you owning your retirement account or your health care plan. We want you managing your affairs.

And Jack understands what it means to own something. He's an entrepreneur. He's a risktaker. And as a result of being an entrepreneur and a risktaker and somebody who has actually made it happen in a positive way, he's also an employer. He's hiring people.

So, Jack, thanks for your—letting me come by.

Mr. Stack. It's nice to have you here. You are definitely the toughest act to follow I've ever had in my entire life. [Laughter]

The President. I think you can handle it. [At this point, Mr. Stack, chief executive officer, Springfield ReManufacturing Corp., made brief remarks.]

The President. Thanks for your vision.

Mr. Stack. Thank you.

The President. He said "bonus depreciation." That means that it was the tax relief passed by Congress encouraged him to invest. When he buys a piece of equipment, somebody has to make the equipment, which means somebody is more likely to find a job. So when Jack makes a decision to buy a piece of equipment, based upon the tax relief, he really says, "I'm going to not only help my workers become more productive—which means better pay over time—but it means somebody is going to have to make the equipment." And that's how the economy works. It's an economy that responds to the decisionmaking processes of a lot of people around the world like Jack.

He said he's going to add employees. That's great. That's what I'm hearing all over the country. You know, 10 people here, 15 people there, but it adds up in America. It adds up because there's a lot of entrepreneurs and a lot of small businesses. In order to figure out how this economy is going

to do and whether or not to be upbeat about it, just listen to the business owners, the small-business owners who are on the leading edge of hiring folks.

We've got a fellow here named Mike Sadler. Mike is the president of Custom Manufacturing and Polishing. Why don't you tell us what you do.

[Mr. Sadler made brief remarks.]

The President. Mike's company is a Subchapter S. That's a legal term for they pay tax at the individual income tax rate. So when you hear people talking about reducing the individual income tax rates, you're really cutting taxes on his business as well. That's important if you're interested in job growth because he has got more money in his coffers, money that will enable him to more likely hire somebody as the demand for his products stays strong, money that will enable him to pay for health care benefits for employees.

In other words, money available in the private sector and particularly in the small-business coffers is money that's going to be put to good use. It's money that's going to make it easier for somebody to find a job. And I'm telling you, Congress should not raise the taxes on people that are creating jobs and of people that are spending this money wisely.

So I want to thank you, Mike, for coming. I appreciate your entrepreneurial spirit. You hiring anybody this year?

Mr. Sadler. We're probably going to get two or three, yet, this year.

The President. Two here or three there, all of a sudden, it starts adding up all across the country.

Tricia is with us. Tricia Derges is the president and CEO of Mostly Memories. It's an interesting name.

Ms. Derges. It's an interesting company.

The President. All right, well, tell us about it.

[Ms. Derges made brief remarks.]

The President. Good. Let me just pick up a couple of things she said. One, she is going to invest. I don't want to get repetitive, but I'm going to—somebody has got to make the conveyor belt. That's how the economy

works. When your people talk about stimulating the economy, tax relief encourages her to make a decision, and that decision then affects somebody's ability to find work.

Secondly, she talked about people who have been laid off. One of the most important things our society must do is to train people for jobs which exist. And I hope that the State of Missouri uses the community college system here in a way that says, "Let's devise curriculum based upon the needs of the employers, so that people can find work." We've constantly got to upgrade the skills of our fellow citizens. As this economy changes, people need to get—learn new skills. And the best place to do that is a place like the community college. That's why I've called on Congress to provide money for job training.

And I'm sure you had to help these people learn their jobs. But it's amazing what happens when people are able to gain new skills and a new lease on life, be more productive as a worker. Higher productivity means better pay.

I'll never forget meeting a lady in Arizona, where she told me that she had worked 15 years as a graphic artist, went to community college, took some courses, then got employed by a high-tech company, and makes more in her first year in her new job as she did after 15 years in her old job. And so education provides ample opportunity for new workers if it's done right. And the best way to do it is to trust the local people to put a curriculum in place to train people for jobs which actually exist.

Mr. Mayor, this is a good way to recruit business, by the way, is if you've got a good worker training program so that the employers know that they can find somebody who can do the job.

Speaking about people doing the job, Gary Brown is with us. He's a warehouse supervisor here at SRC Automotive. Thanks for being with us. You've got kids. You've got—

Mr. Brown. Yes, a lot of kids.

The President. How many have you got?

Mr. Brown. I have four kids.

The President. That is a lot. [Laughter]

[Mr. Brown made brief remarks.]

The President. He got tax relief. See, everybody who pays taxes got tax relief. They told me, about \$3,000.

Mr. Brown. That's right.

The President. That may not sound like a lot—might not sound a lot to somebody. It's a lot to him.

Mr. Brown. Yes, it is.

The President. Sounds like a lot to me.

Mr. Brown. Yes, and if we continue going down that road, it's only going to help us to—my wife is a stay-at-home mom. We home-school all our kids, and we'd like to continue that—

The President. Congratulations.

Mr. Brown. —and hopefully, keep them home-schooled and with a good education.

The President. Yes, that's a—first of all, Mom, you're doing—that's tough. [Laughter] But it's—I appreciate that. I appreciate the idea of you wanting to give your children the education from you and the mom. Tax relief helps; \$3,000 makes it a little easier for mom to stay at home, to help them meet their dreams and aspirations.

I'm going to tell you what's going to happen if Congress doesn't make this permanent. When the child credit goes back down, this man and his family are going to pay \$1,500 more—let me rephrase that—instead of \$3,000 a year, they're only going to receive \$1,500 a year from the Government. That's like a \$1,500-tax increase. Now is not the time for Congress to be raising taxes on the people.

Mr. Brown. To put some—talk about my wife a little bit. One thing she also does is she also takes care of my nephew, whose mom is right now serving in the 203d Engineer Battalion in Iraq.

The President. Fabulous. Yes, thanks. I appreciate that. Pass the word, the Commander in Chief is incredibly proud.

Mr. Brown. I will. Thank you.

The President. Thank her for her service. And you might remind her, when Iraq is free and democratic and peaceful, it will change the world.

These are historic times. These are times where we have a chance to define a more peaceful world for our children. I mean, we'll keep America secure by taking—making the

tough decisions, by speaking clearly, and by being strong. But it's also important for our fellow citizens—and people who wear our uniform can attest to this—that a free Iraq in the midst of a part of the world where there's such hatred, such despondency and hopelessness, will be an historic moment for world peace. See, free societies are peaceful societies. People need to see what can happen when there's a free society.

And you tell your relative——

Mr. Brown. Sister.

The President. Sister. You tell your sister, thanks a lot, and it's a meaningful sacrifice she is making.

Mr. Brown. Thank you.

The President. Teresa, thanks for coming.

Teresa Noblitt. It's an honor to be here with you.

The President. You don't have a big family, do you?

Ms. Noblitt. Yes.

The President. How many kids?

Ms. Noblitt. Four. *[Laughter]*

The President. It seems to be running here—is this company policy? *[Laughter]* You've got five—six—three.

Tell us about yourself. You're an accountant?

[Ms. Noblitt, accountant, SRC Automotive, made brief remarks.]

The President. Yes, that's good. See, one of the things she's saying is that with the tax relief means she can save more money and put it aside for her kids' education. That's noble and important.

See, tax relief can be used to spend, and that's good, because it increases consumer demand, but tax relief also is being saved by a lot of our families, and that savings are really important in a society that rests upon the flow of capital. Savings actually is capital to be invested so people can find work. Tax relief is vital.

This family received \$2,700 in tax relief this year, every year, unless Congress, of course, doesn't act. When the child credit goes down and the marriage penalty goes up, which is going to happen in '05 unless this Congress acts, makes a decision, does what is right, this good family will pay \$1,300—have \$1,300 less in money to spend. And it

means people in Congress will be spending it.

Now, we've got plenty of money in Washington. I would rather have Teresa making the decision with that \$1,300 than the people in Congress. She makes wise decisions with her money.

I hope you've enjoyed the conversation. I have. One of the things that you hear if you listen carefully to what these folks are saying is that Government policies can make a difference in people's lives in a positive way. The entrepreneurial spirit in this country is strong. You've got people who started businesses out of garages and had people delivering goods in the streets, and they had to kick them out and make them go get a warehouse. *[Laughter]* A guy takes a huge risk on a giant debt-to-equity ratio and has succeeded. People buy the company. A man over here buys a company. This is—I love the entrepreneurial spirit in the country, and tax policy has got to encourage it, and we're going to keep it strong here in America.

The other thing you hear, mothers and dads doing their duty, being responsible citizens by loving their children. Government needs to stand with the moms and dads. We need to be squarely on their side, whether it be sending signals to professional sports teams, we're not going to put up with any—you ought not to be putting up with any steroid use amongst your players. We ought to be supporting the moms and dads who are trying to teach their children the right lessons in life. We also ought to be supporting them, helping them raise their kids, and tax relief helps people raise their children.

I'm glad you all came. I'm thrilled to be back in this part of our country, the great Springfield, Missouri. It's got good folks here, good, honest, down-to-earth, hard-working people that really represent the backbone of America. I'm proud that you all sat up here today and shared your stories with us. I hope the people listening have a better sense of how this economy works. I hope the people listening come away with a great sense of optimism about the future of America, primarily because the great strength of America is the people of this country. And you just heard five good people talk about America and where we're headed.

May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless this country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:25 p.m. at SRC Automotive, Inc. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Thomas J. Carlson of Springfield, MO; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Remarks at the National Defense University

February 11, 2004

Thanks for the warm welcome. I'm honored to visit the National Defense University. For nearly a century, the scholars and students here have helped to prepare America for the changing threats to our national security. Today, the men and women of our National Defense University are helping to frame the strategies through which we are fighting and winning the war on terror. Your Center for Counterproliferation Research and your other institutes and colleges are providing vital insight into the dangers of a new era. I want to thank each one of you for devoting your talents and your energy to the service of our great Nation.

I want to thank General Michael Dunn for inviting me here. I used to jog by this facility on a regular basis. Then my age kicked in. *[Laughter]* I appreciate Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger, from Germany. Mr. Ambassador, thank you for being here today. I see my friend George Shultz, a distinguished public servant and true patriot, with us. George, thank you for coming, and Charlotte, it's good to see you. I'm so honored that Dick Lugar is here with us today. Senator, I appreciate you taking time and thanks for bringing Senator Saxby Chambliss with you as well. I appreciate the veterans who are here and those on active duty. Thanks for letting me come by.

On September the 11th, 2001, America and the world witnessed a new kind of war. We saw the great harm that a stateless network could inflict upon our country, killers armed with box cutters, mace, and 19 airline tickets. Those attacks also raised the prospect of even worse dangers, of other weapons in the hands of other men. The greatest threat before humanity today is the possibility of

secret and sudden attack with chemical or biological or radiological or nuclear weapons.

In the past, enemies of America required massed armies and great navies, powerful air forces to put our Nation, our people, our friends at risk. In the cold war, Americans lived under the threat of weapons of mass destruction but believed that deterrents made those weapons a last resort. What has changed in the 21st century is that in the hands of terrorists, weapons of mass destruction would be a first resort, the preferred means to further their ideology of suicide and random murder. These terrible weapons are becoming easier to acquire, build, hide, and transport. Armed with a single vial of a biological agent or a single nuclear weapon, small groups of fanatics or failing states could gain the power to threaten great nations, threaten the world peace.

America and the entire civilized world will face this threat for decades to come. We must confront the danger with open eyes and unbending purpose. I have made clear to all the policy of this Nation: America will not permit terrorists and dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world's most deadly weapons.

Meeting this duty has required changes in thinking and strategy. Doctrines designed to contain empires, deter aggressive states, and defeat massed armies cannot fully protect us from this new threat. America faces the possibility of catastrophic attack from ballistic missiles armed with weapons of mass destruction, so that is why we are developing and deploying missile defenses to guard our people. The best intelligence is necessary to win the war on terror and to stop proliferation, so that is why I have established a commission that will examine our intelligence capabilities and recommend ways to improve and adapt them to detect new and emerging threats.

We're determined to confront those threats at the source. We will stop these weapons from being acquired or built. We'll block them from being transferred. We'll prevent them from ever being used.

One source of these weapons is dangerous and secretive regimes that build weapons of mass destruction to intimidate their neighbors and force their influence upon the

world. These nations pose different challenges; they require different strategies.

The former dictator of Iraq possessed and used weapons of mass destruction against his own people. For 12 years, he defied the will of the international community. He refused to disarm or account for his illegal weapons and programs. He doubted our resolve to enforce our word, and now he sits in a prison cell, while his country moves toward a democratic future.

To Iraq's east, the Government of Iran is unwilling to abandon a uranium enrichment program capable of producing material for nuclear weapons. The United States is working with our allies and the International Atomic Energy Agency to ensure that Iran meets its commitments and does not develop nuclear weapons.

In the Pacific, North Korea has defied the world, has tested long-range ballistic missiles, admitted its possession of nuclear weapons, and now threatens to build more. Together with our partners in Asia, America is insisting that North Korea completely, verifiably, and irreversibly dismantle its nuclear programs.

America has consistently brought these threats to the attention of international organizations. We're using every means of diplomacy to answer them. As for my part, I will continue to speak clearly on these threats. I will continue to call upon the world to confront these dangers and to end them.

In recent years, another path of proliferation has become clear as well. America and other nations are learning more about black-market operatives who deal in equipment and expertise related to weapons of mass destruction. These dealers are motivated by greed or fanaticism or both. They find eager customers in outlaw regimes, which pay millions for the parts and plans they need to speed up their weapons programs. And with deadly technology and expertise on the market, there's the terrible possibility that terrorists groups could obtain the ultimate weapons they desire most.

The extent and sophistication of such networks can be seen in the case of a man named Abdul Qadeer Khan. This is the story as we know it so far.

A.Q. Khan is known throughout the world as the father of Pakistan's nuclear weapons

program. What was not publicly known until recently is that he also led an extensive international network for the proliferation of nuclear technology and know-how. For decades, Mr. Khan remained on the Pakistani Government payroll, earning a modest salary. Yet, he and his associates financed lavish lifestyles through the sale of nuclear technologies and equipment to outlaw regimes stretching from North Africa to the Korean Peninsula.

A.Q. Khan, himself, operated mostly out of Pakistan. He served as director of the network, its leading scientific mind as well as its primary salesman. Over the past decade, he made frequent trips to consult with his clients and to sell his expertise. He and his associates sold the blueprints for centrifuges to enrich uranium as well as nuclear designs stolen from the Pakistani Government. The network sold uranium hexafluoride, the gas that the centrifuge process can transform into enriched uranium for nuclear bombs. Khan and his associates provided Iran and Libya and North Korea with designs for Pakistan's older centrifuges as well as designs for more advanced and efficient models. The network also provided these countries with components and, in some cases, with complete centrifuges.

To increase their profits, Khan and his associates used a factory in Malaysia to manufacture key parts for centrifuges. Other necessary parts were purchased through network operatives based in Europe, in the Middle East, and Africa. These procurement agents saw the trade in nuclear technologies as a shortcut to personal wealth, and they set up front companies to deceive legitimate firms into selling them tightly controlled materials.

Khan's deputy, a man named B.S.A. Tahir, ran SMB Computers, a business in Dubai. Tahir used that computer company as a front for the proliferation activities of the A.Q. Khan network. Tahir acted as both the network's chief financial officer and money launderer. He was also its shipping agent, using his computer firm as cover for the movement of centrifuge parts to various clients. Tahir directed the Malaysia facility to produce these parts based on Pakistani designs and then ordered the facility to ship

the components to Dubai. Tahir also arranged for parts acquired by other European procurement agents to transit through Dubai for shipment to other customers.

This picture of the Khan network was pieced together over several years by American and British intelligence officers. Our intelligence services gradually uncovered this network's reach and identified its key experts and agents and money men. Operatives followed its transactions, mapped the extent of its operations. They monitored the travel of A.Q. Khan and senior associates. They shadowed members of the network around the world. They recorded their conversations. They penetrated their operations. We've uncovered their secrets. This work involved high risk, and all Americans can be grateful for the hard work and the dedication of our fine intelligence professionals.

Governments around the world worked closely with us to unravel the Khan network and to put an end to his criminal enterprise. A.Q. Khan has confessed his crimes, and his top associates are out of business. The Government of Pakistan is interrogating the network's members, learning critical details that will help them prevent it from ever operating again. President Musharraf has promised to share all the information he learns about the Khan network and has assured us that his country will never again be a source of proliferation.

Mr. Tahir is in Malaysia, where authorities are investigating his activities. Malaysian authorities have assured us that the factory the network used is no longer producing centrifuge parts. Other members of the network remain at large. One by one, they will be found, and their careers in the weapons trade will be ended.

As a result of our penetration of the network, American and the British intelligence identified a shipment of advanced centrifuge parts manufactured at the Malaysian facility. We followed the shipment of these parts to Dubai and watched as they were transferred to the *BBC China*, a German-owned ship. After the ship passed through the Suez Canal, bound for Libya, it was stopped by German and Italian authorities. They found several containers, each 40 feet in length, listed on the ship's manifest as full of used ma-

chine parts. In fact, these containers were filled with parts of sophisticated centrifuges.

The interception of the *BBC China* came as Libyan and British and American officials were discussing the possibility of Libya ending its WMD programs. The United States and Britain confronted Libyan officials with this evidence of an active and illegal nuclear program. About 2 months ago, Libya's leader voluntarily agreed to end his nuclear and chemical weapons programs, not to pursue biological weapons, and to permit thorough inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. We're now working in partnership with these organizations and with the United Kingdom to help the Government of Libya dismantle those programs and eliminate all dangerous materials.

Colonel Qadhafi made the right decision, and the world will be safer once his commitment is fulfilled. We expect other regimes to follow his example. Abandoning the pursuit of illegal weapons can lead to better relations with the United States and other free nations. Continuing to seek those weapons will not bring security or international prestige but only political isolation, economic hardship, and other unwelcomed consequences.

We know that Libya was not the only customer of the Khan network. Other countries expressed great interest in their services. These regimes and other proliferators like Khan should know: We and our friends are determined to protect our people and the world from proliferation.

Breaking this network is one major success in a broadbased effort to stop the spread of terrible weapons. We're adjusting our strategies to the threats of a new era. America and the nations of Australia, France and Germany, Italy and Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom have launched the Proliferation Security Initiative to interdict lethal materials in transit. Our nations are sharing intelligence information, tracking suspect international cargo, conducting joint military exercises. We're prepared to search planes and ships, to seize weapons and missiles and equipment that raise proliferation concerns, just as we did

in stopping the dangerous cargo on the BBC *China* before it reached Libya. Three more governments, Canada and Singapore and Norway, will be participating in this initiative. We'll continue to expand the core group of PSI countries. And as PSI grows, proliferators will find it harder than ever to trade in illicit weapons.

There is a consensus among nations that proliferation cannot be tolerated. Yet this consensus means little unless it is translated into action. Every civilized nation has a stake in preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction. These materials and technologies and the people who traffic in them cross many borders. To stop this trade, the nations of the world must be strong and determined. We must work together. We must act effectively.

Today I announce seven proposals to strengthen the world's efforts to stop the spread of deadly weapons. First, I propose that the work of the Proliferation Security Initiative be expanded to address more than shipments and transfers. Building on the tools we've developed to fight terrorists, we can take direct action against proliferation networks. We need greater cooperation, not just among intelligence and military services but in law enforcement as well. PSI participants and other willing nations should use the Interpol and all other means to bring to justice those who traffic in deadly weapons, to shut down their labs, to seize their materials, to freeze their assets. We must act on every lead. We will find the middlemen, the suppliers, and the buyers. Our message to proliferators must be consistent, and it must be clear: We will find you, and we're not going to rest until you are stopped.

Second, I call on all nations to strengthen the laws and international controls that govern proliferation. At the U.N. last fall, I proposed a new Security Council resolution requiring all states to criminalize proliferation, enact strict export controls, and secure all sensitive materials within their borders. The Security Council should pass this proposal quickly. And when they do, America stands ready to help other governments to draft and enforce the new laws that will help us deal with proliferation.

Third, I propose to expand our efforts to keep weapons from the cold war and other dangerous materials out of the wrong hands. In 1991, Congress passed the Nunn-Lugar legislation. Senator Lugar had a clear vision, along with Senator Nunn, about what to do with the old Soviet Union. Under this program, we're helping former Soviet states find productive employment for former weapons scientists. We're dismantling, destroying, and securing weapons and materials left over from the Soviet WMD arsenal. We have more work to do there. And as a result of the G-8 Summit in 2002, we agreed to provide \$20 billion over 10 years, half of it from the United States, to support such programs.

We should expand this cooperation elsewhere in the world. We will retain WMD scientists and technicians in countries like Iraq and Libya. We will help nations end the use of weapons-grade uranium in research reactors. I urge more nations to contribute to these efforts. The nations of the world must do all we can to secure and eliminate nuclear and chemical and biological and radiological materials.

As we track and destroy these networks, we must also prevent governments from developing nuclear weapons under false pretenses. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was designed more than 30 years ago to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons beyond those states which already possessed them. Under this treaty, nuclear states agreed to help non-nuclear states develop peaceful atomic energy if they renounced the pursuit of nuclear weapons. But the treaty has a loophole which has been exploited by nations such as North Korea and Iran. These regimes are allowed to produce nuclear material that can be used to build bombs under the cover of civilian nuclear programs.

So today, as a fourth step, I propose a way to close the loophole. The world must create a safe, orderly system to fuel civilian nuclear plants without adding to the danger of weapons proliferation. The world's leading nuclear exporters should ensure that states have reliable access at reasonable cost to fuel for civilian reactors, so long as those states renounce enrichment and reprocessing. Enrichment

and reprocessing are not necessary for nations seeking to harness nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

The 40 nations of the Nuclear Suppliers Group should refuse to sell enrichment and reprocessing equipment and technologies to any state that does not already possess full-scale, functioning enrichment and reprocessing plants. This step will prevent new states from developing the means to produce fissile material for nuclear bombs. Proliferators must not be allowed to cynically manipulate the NPT to acquire the material and infrastructure necessary for manufacturing illegal weapons.

For international norms to be effective, they must be enforced. It is the charge of the International Atomic Energy Agency to uncover banned nuclear activity around the world and report those violations to the U.N. Security Council. We must ensure that the IAEA has all the tools it needs to fulfill its essential mandate. America and other nations support what is called the Additional Protocol, which requires states to declare a broad range of nuclear activities and facilities and allow the IAEA to inspect those facilities.

As a fifth step, I propose that by next year, only states that have signed the Additional Protocol be allowed to import equipment for their civilian nuclear programs. Nations that are serious about fighting proliferation will approve and implement the Additional Protocol. I've submitted the Additional Protocol to the Senate. I urge the Senate to consent immediately to its ratification.

We must also ensure that the IAEA is organized to take action when action is required. So, a sixth step, I propose the creation of a special committee of the IAEA Board which will focus intensively on safeguards and verification. This committee, made up of governments in good standing with the IAEA, will strengthen the capability of the IAEA to ensure that nations comply with their international obligations.

And finally, countries under investigation for violating nuclear nonproliferation obligations are currently allowed to serve on the IAEA Board of Governors. For instance, Iran, a country suspected of maintaining an extensive nuclear weapons program, recently completed a 2-year term on the Board. Al-

lowing potential violators to serve on the Board creates an unacceptable barrier to effective action. No state under investigation for proliferation violations should be allowed to serve on the IAEA Board of Governors or on the new special committee. And any state currently on the Board that comes under investigation should be suspended from the Board. The integrity and mission of the IAEA depends on this simple principle: Those actively breaking the rules should not be entrusted with enforcing the rules.

As we move forward to address these challenges, we will consult with our friends and allies on all these new measures. We will listen to their ideas. Together, we will defend the safety of all nations and preserve the peace of the world.

Over the last 2 years, a great coalition has come together to defeat terrorism and to oppose the spread of weapons of mass destruction, the inseparable commitments of the war on terror. We've shown that proliferators can be discovered and can be stopped. We've shown that for regimes that choose defiance, there are serious consequences. The way ahead is not easy, but it is clear. We will proceed as if the lives of our citizens depend on our vigilance, because they do. Terrorists and terror states are in a race for weapons of mass murder, a race they must lose. Terrorists are resourceful. We're more resourceful. They're determined. We must be more determined. We will never lose focus or resolve. We'll be unrelenting in the defense of free nations and rise to the hard demands of dangerous times.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:30 p.m. at Fort Lesley J. McNair. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gen. Michael Dunn, USAF, president, National Defense University; former Secretary of State George Shultz, and his wife, Charlotte; President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan; and Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting Appropriations Requests for the Judicial Branch

February 11, 2004

Dear Mr. Speaker:

As a matter of comity, I am transmitting to the Congress the enclosed requests from the Judicial Branch for FY 2004.

The details of these requests are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 12.

Remarks in a Discussion on Education and the Jobs for the 21st Century Initiative in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

February 12, 2004

The President. Thank you all very much. It is nice to be back in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Thank you for such a warm welcome. Behave yourself. *[Laughter]* I—we're going to have an interesting dialog today about how our economy works, how we can make sure people are prepared to take advantage of a growing economy. I hope that the students here at this very fine high school are able to have a better understanding about their future and how to seize opportunities.

Before we begin the discussion, I do want to thank the high school for welcoming me and quite a large entourage. *[Laughter]* Rich, thank you and your staff. I appreciate the teachers of this fine high school. I want to thank you all for teaching. Teaching is such a noble profession.

I've come to this high school—it's a high school that's willing to raise the bar, challenge what I've been calling the soft bigotry of low expectations, that is willing to measure, willing to change if you need to change, willing to use curriculum that actually works, in order to make sure every child is educated, every child has a chance to succeed. This is a fabulous high school. I'm proud of the ad-

ministrators and teachers and students who make it such.

I also want to thank the parents who are here for paying attention to your sons and daughters, for caring about the quality of the education they receive. I often talk about the need for us to usher in a period of personal responsibility. Nothing is more responsible than a parent understanding that he or she is the first teacher of a child, and he or she must pay attention to the education of their children.

I also want to thank our panelists, who we'll talk to in a minute here. But I also want to thank members of the mighty Pennsylvania congressional delegation for traveling with me today.

The senior Senator—I try to downplay the senior part—*[laughter]*—today is actually his birthday. That would be Arlen Specter, who is traveling with us. I look forward to working with him. Where is the Senator? He's somewhere around here anyway. Either that, or he knew this was going to be a long speech. *[Laughter]* We're working well together. We've got some challenges in Washington. I appreciate him working with my administration on issues such as judges.

Speaking about friends and people who I think is doing a great job for the State of Pennsylvania, Senator Rick Santorum is with us as well. *[Applause]* Don't go overboard. *[Laughter]* I've got to fly back with him to Washington. *[Laughter]*

I appreciate the Congressman from this district, Tim Holden. Congressman, thank you for accompanying us today. The Congressman kindly allowed others from the Pennsylvania congressional district to come into his district today, Members such as John Peterson, Joe Pitts, Don Sherwood, Todd Platts, Bill Shuster, and Jim Gerlach. Thank you all for coming.

We've got senators here; we've got State representatives here; we've got mayors here. Thank you all for being here—city councilmen, a lot of citizens.

I'm proud to be here to share with you some thoughts about how to make sure the American Dream shines brightly in every corner of the country. Before we have a little discussion about economics and of what we can do to make sure people are prepared for

the new jobs of the 21st century, I do want to herald a Lauren Simkulak. Lauren is a senior at this high school. She came out to meet me at Air Force One. She was invited to do so because, you see, she is volunteering her time. She's taking time out of her busy life. If you're a senior in high school, your life can be very busy, sometimes with studying, sometimes with other things, but nevertheless—[laughter]. She's involved with the Four Diamonds Fund, a fund to create awareness for cancer. She is a volunteer in the army of compassion.

The reason I bring that up is that oftentimes, you hear our country's strength is defined as our military might. We're going to stay strong. You hear people talk about the might of America being the size of our wallets. We want more citizens having bigger wallets. But the truth of the matter is, the strength of this country is the heart and souls of the American people, people who are willing to love a neighbor just like they'd like to be loved themselves.

Here's my message to the high school students who are listening, and to anybody else: Find somebody who hurts and surround them with love. Governments—you can do so in all kinds of ways. You can do so in the Boys or Girl Scouts. You can do so in the Boys or Girls Club. You can do so through your church or your synagogue or mosque. The strength of America is the fact that we're a loving, compassionate, decent people who are willing to help save America, one soul at a time. I appreciate the service of people in this—[applause].

I want the students here to understand we've been through historic times in this country. You hear me often say, I'm optimistic about the future. Well, one reason I'm optimistic is because I've seen what we have just been through as a nation. Remember, this country has been through a recession, an attack by an enemy which clearly hates what we stand for. We had some corporate scandals, and by the way, we expect our citizens in positions of responsibility to tell the truth. We passed tough laws, by the way, to send those corporate criminals to justice, which is exactly where they belong because they betrayed the trust to employees and shareholders. And then I made the tough de-

cision about dealing with threats by committing some incredibly brave citizens into harm's way to remove a danger, to remember the lessons of September the 11th and remove a danger before it became imminent and before it could conceivably strike America again. All that affected our economy.

Think about what this economy has been through, recession, an attack, a national emergency, corporate scandals, and war. And yet, the economy is growing. The numbers are good, see. The numbers are good, but I don't worry about numbers. I worry about people. There are still some people looking for work because of the recession. There are people looking for work because jobs have gone overseas, and we need to act in this country. We need to act to make sure there are more jobs at home, and people are more likely to retain a job.

I've got some ideas that I'd like to share with you, before we get to making sure we educate people for the jobs that are being generated in the 21st century. The first idea is to make sure there's certainty in the Tax Code. As you know, we acted by cutting taxes. We saw all the challenges to our economy. We cut taxes, which basically meant people had more money in their pocket.

It's kind of a simple Crawford, Texas, economic lesson. When you have more money in your pocket, you're likely to demand a good or a service—an additional good or a service. And when you make a demand for an additional good or a service, in our economy, somebody will produce the good or a service. And when somebody produces the good or a service, somebody is more likely to retain a job or find a job. In other words, the tax cuts stimulated growth.

The tax cuts also made it more likely that the small-business sector of our country would be strong and vibrant. Seventy percent of the new jobs in America are created by small businesses. And that's why much of the tax cuts, the individual tax cuts as well as the encouraging of investment—those tax cuts which encourage investment, were aimed at small businesses.

The tax cuts are making a difference, but unfortunately, they are set to expire, which means if Congress doesn't renew the tax cuts, the child credit will go down. So, in other

words, if you're now getting a bigger child credit because you're a mom or a dad, you're going to pay more taxes. It's a tax increase. The marriage penalty will go up if Congress doesn't act. In other words, they'll be raising your taxes. In order to make sure people can find work or retain a job, we need to make the tax cuts permanent. There needs to be certainty in the Tax Code. People need to be able to plan. Small businesses need to be able to plan. Individuals need to be able to plan. We do not need a tax increase right now in our country.

Health care costs are too high. It's going to be hard to increase jobs with health care costs going up. I put out a plan to address health care costs, associated health plans, health savings accounts. But one of the interesting components of making sure we control the rising costs of health care is to make sure our judicial system doesn't run docs out of business and run the cost of medicine up for patients. We need medical liability reform in the United States.

We've got too many lawsuits in America. It's one thing to be taking a lawsuit based upon a real claim. There's too many junk lawsuits which are running up the cost of doing business. It makes it hard to increase the job base. It makes it hard for people to retain a job when people are getting sued right and left. We need tort reform at the Federal level. We need class-action reform. We need asbestos reform. We need to get less regulations on people who are trying to create jobs. Washington oftentimes poses too many mandates, which makes it hard to retain a job.

The other day I met with an entrepreneur from Philadelphia. She runs a small foundry. She said, "I've got some issues. I'm worried about jobs." She said, "I'm worried about the taxes jumping up and down." She said, "A lot of my customers are getting sued, which makes it hard for them to buy products from me."

She also said something very interesting; she said she's worried about reliable energy supplies. You see, when you have blackouts or brownouts, and you're trying to employ people, it's awful hard to have—to do so. In order to get jobs back, in order for people to retain jobs, we need an energy plan in this country. We need to modernize the elec-

tricity grid. We need to become less reliant on foreign sources of energy.

Listen, Pennsylvanians are great entrepreneurs and farmers. We ought to be opening up markets for Pennsylvania products. In other words, there's a lot of things we can do. But I'm confident about the future of this economy because I've seen what we've been through. I know the spirit of America. I know the entrepreneurial spirit. I know the fact we've got the best workers in the world. Productivity increases are high. This is a fabulous country. There's nothing we can't overcome, and we are overcoming it. And as we overcome the recession and war and emergency, we better make sure we've got a workforce that is prepared for the higher-paying jobs of the 21st century. And that's what we're here to talk about today.

A good education system begins at the early grades. We passed what's called the No Child Left Behind Act. It basically says we trust local people to chart the path to excellence. We're going to spend more Federal money, but we want to know whether or not the children are learning to read, write, and add and subtract. This business about just shuffling kids through the system has got to end. It's got to end.

We've got to make sure that as we focus on primary and secondary education, we never forget the fact that we can strive for higher standards at the high school level. One of the things you hear people talking about is reading programs to make sure that those kids who have been shuffled through now have a chance to learn to read before it's too late and, by the way, using curriculum that actually works, not curriculum that sounds good, not curriculum that may be based upon some interesting theory, but curriculum that actually makes a difference, so that when we measure, we can see clearly that children are learning to read.

We need to expand AP courses. We're going to talk a little bit about AP. One of the interesting things about AP courses, it says clearly that we expect the best from our children. AP courses challenge our kids. It also means that they're more likely to go to college and strive for higher goals. Too many of our minority students aren't getting AP classes. I've got a plan to make sure AP is

spread throughout all segments of our society.

We've got to make sure that math and sciences are—we've got to focus on math and science. We've got to encourage people who have got expertise in math and science to come into classrooms. Oftentimes you'll hear school districts say, "We're pinched for teachers. We need extra help with math and science." We've got a program to encourage people to come in and teach part-time to help out. In other words, we're focused on making sure that secondary and elementary education works well and that high schools work well.

And another interesting part of our society which oftentimes gets overlooked is the fabulous community college system in America. You've got a great community college here in—[*applause*]. Community colleges are available and affordable. They're particularly affordable because the Federal Government wants to help people go to community college with all kinds of different scholarship programs, including Pell grants, which we intend to expand, particularly for those students who are willing to take rigorous academic programs, are willing to set their sights.

The community college system is flexible, and you're going to hear an interesting and innovative program that deals with your health care system here in Harrisburg and central Pennsylvania and the community college and the high school, to prepare folks for the jobs which actually exist.

Listen, it used to be in job training that they never asked the question whether jobs—do the jobs exist for the training programs. The way I used to put it is, you used to train 500 hairdressers for 10 jobs. And yet we satisfied our requirement at the State level, because they didn't ask whether or not the jobs actually existed. They just asked, were you training somebody. Now we're beginning to ask the question, when you train somebody, is there a job, and does the curriculum make sense for the job.

So what you're about to hear is, educational excellence here in Harrisburg exists; innovative programs exist. People who are listening in different communities around Pennsylvania and the country might want to

pay attention to what is happening in this community.

Rich—I appreciate your hospitality—is the principal of the mighty Rams.

Richard Mazzatesta. You're more than welcome here, Mr. President.

The President. I guess I should have said, you're the head Ram. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Mazzatesta. Well, Dr. Hasson might think that I'm the second head Ram. [*Laughter*]

The President. You can call her a Ram. I'm not. [*Laughter*] I'm going to call her, "Ma'am." [*Laughter*]

Barbara Hasson. Barbara.

The President. Barbara, that's right.

[*Richard Mazzatesta, principal, Central Dauphin High School, made brief remarks.*]

The President. Well, I'm here to help. [*Laughter*] However, educational excellence will only be found at the local level. And by that I mean, is that it's important to have local control of schools so that good superintendents and good principals are able to be—adjust according to the circumstances. The Federal Government can write checks, and we are. Federal funding is up. What's changed is we're finally asking the question, "Are we getting any results for our money?" Good schools don't mind answering that question.

Rich said something interesting about the No Child Left Behind Act. What's interesting in this piece of legislation is that because of measuring, you're able to determine whether or not a child can read or write and add and subtract early. And what the measurement system allows you to do is, one, analyze curriculum. You know, is it working? Is the reading program we've got working? But also, it enables you to focus attention on a particular child that might slip behind, which will make it easier, by the way, when this law is fully implemented, for high schools because you'll have a more literate population coming your way at some point in time.

We've got kind of a gap in the pipeline. There's been a—because we haven't focused that intensely on measurement, there's some kids who are just being shuffled through, and you're having to remediate. But we're going to correct that by having high standards early,

enough money to help—provide remedial help so that no child is left behind. That's why we called it that law. We don't want anybody left behind in America.

Barbara—listen, I've been listening to Barbaras all my life. *[Laughter]*

Dr. Hasson. And as I told the President backstage here, he's going to listen to one more Barbara. *[Laughter]*

[Dr. Hasson, superintendent, Central Dauphin School District, made brief remarks.]

The President. Let me see here—*[laughter]*—I think we're doing our responsibility here at the Federal level. Most funding should be at the State and local level, in order to make sure you've got local control of the schools. We've increased the Federal funding at the—for elementary and secondary school programs up by 49 percent over the last 4 years.

I think—let me say a couple of things Barbara said. First, because you measure, you know whether or not children are learning. I hear people say, “Well, I can't believe you're making people measure.” Look, I didn't like to take tests either, but that's too bad. You see, we've got to know. If you don't know whether a child can read and write and add and subtract, it's likely that child will be just shuffled through. And guess who gets hurt? Guess who gets hurt? A lot of inner-city kids get hurt. We want the American Dream to be everywhere.

A lot of kids whose parents may not speak English as a first language, they're easy to quit on. Let's just move them through, see. But we're through with those days in America. Every child has worth. I believe every child can learn, and our systems must challenge mediocrity when we find it, must be willing to raise the bar.

Barbara, that's why I'm here. You're willing to raise the bar. She said, “We accept the challenge.” It's not my challenge. It's a national challenge to make sure every single child can learn. If you can't read, there is no way you're going to be able to take advantage of the fantastic opportunities being created in America. If you can't read, you're going to be left behind when it comes to these unbelievable job opportunities that are going to exist.

And so what we're talking about really here is the basics of job training, aren't we? And that's to give the people the skills necessary to take advantage of a changing, dynamic, exciting economy.

Schools can't survive without good teachers, and we've got one with us right here. Rebecca is a—shall I tell them 31-year teacher? No, I won't say that. *[Laughter]* It might give away our age. *[Laughter]* She's been in the classroom for 31 years. She is an incredibly dedicated professional who told me that after 31 years, she still loves walking into the classroom. Rebecca is in charge of the English AP. Would you share with us your story?

[Rebecca Deitman, teacher, Central Dauphin High School, made brief remarks.]

The President. I appreciate your dedication. You're leading with your heart, and you've got to be. See, the issue with AP is whether or not teachers know how to teach AP. That's one of the bottlenecks, to make sure more advanced placement—AP means raising the bar, is what it means. It means challenging students to the max, which is what we want to do in society, don't we? And part of the money that we're going to spend out of Washington is to make sure that there is teacher training money.

Another bottleneck is—you know, a kid goes home and says, “Mom, I want to take the AP exam. How much does it cost?” And it's quite costly. And so, therefore, a lot of students say, “Well, I'm not going to take the course, because it's too much money to take the exam.” We've got to help, particularly, low-income students pay for the exam. We cannot allow the cost of a test to prevent students from reaching high. And so part of the AP program—*[applause]*.

[Ms. Deitman made further remarks.]

The President. What Barbara mentioned, for example, is not only training AP teachers how to teach AP, which is essential, but if you remember, Barbara said, “We're making sure our teachers have been retrained in the curriculum we're now going to use for reading at the primary level.” Teacher training is an essential aspect of making sure our children get the best education possible.

And one of the reasons you measure, by the way, is to test whether or not the curriculum is working. And if the curriculum is not working, you need superintendents and principals and teachers bold enough to say it's not working. And so then you pick what you think will work, and then you've got to train teachers to teach that curriculum. That's what the No Child Left Behind Act also does.

And you've got a vibrant school district here. You see, if you listen carefully, what people are saying is, "We're going to challenge every child." And that's the beginnings of educational excellence. And we need to challenge every child because the jobs of the 21st century are going to require a lot of smarts. People have to have the capacity to think. It used to be, you know, crank somebody out of high school, and if they could run a backhoe, that's going to be fine. And there's nothing wrong with backhoe drivers. We're going to need them. But we're also going to need computer programmers or people working in the health sciences.

There's some exciting new fields coming, and therefore, the education system must start early, make sure the high schools continue to raise the bar, and our community colleges must be flexible enough to have a curriculum that actually meets the needs of the local communities. In other words, you don't need to be training people for jobs that don't exist.

And somebody who understands that is Edna. She runs the Harrisburg Area Community College, which as I understand it, is the oldest community college——

Edna Baehre. That's correct.

The President. The youngest leader with the oldest college.

Dr. Baehre. Don't I wish. [*Laughter*]

The President. Tell us about your school. Tell us how you've made the curriculum relevant. Tell us what you're doing.

[*Dr. Baehre, president, Harrisburg Area Community College, made brief remarks.*]

The President. Now, what—let's see if I can say—kind of summarize what you just said. There's a lot of interesting job opportunities, whether it be forklift drivers or health care providers, and there are people who

need to get extra training to be able to do those jobs. And you're helping them. And that's good. That's what we want our community colleges to do.

[*Dr. Baehre made further remarks.*]

The President. All right, Roger. Roger is the CEO of PinnacleHealth System. He's here because you're looking for people to work. One of the most exciting fields is the health care field—one of the exciting fields to find work. But you've got to be able to have some—got a skill set that makes you employable.

And tell us what you've done with the community college. Tell us what kind of people you're looking for.

[*Dr. Roger Longenderfer, president and CEO, PinnacleHealth System, made brief remarks.*]

The President. Thank you, Roger. Thanks for being innovative.

The message I heard from Roger is if you're looking for work in central Pennsylvania and you're willing to retrain, willing to go back to school, you can find work, see. There's jobs in this part of the world that may require a different skill set than you have, but there is ample opportunity to retrain, particularly at the community college level. And I'm sure there's some people listening out there saying, "I want to work. I'm worried about my job security, but I may be too old to go back to the community college." That's not the way it works. The community college accepts all comers. What Roger is looking for is smart, capable, hard-working people who need just a little extra training so that he can put them to work.

Speaking about young workers, Athan's mother is here. Athan is 4?

Cari Aftosmes. Four-and-a-half.

The President. Four-and-a-half, yes. I want to make sure she's 4½. Cari is a student at HACC. She's got an interesting story that I would like for her to share with you. By the way, for the Congress to understand, she got a \$1,000 child credit for Athan, and if they don't make the tax cuts permanent, she's going to be paying taxes next year.

[*Ms. Aftosmes made brief remarks.*]

The President. It's a fabulous story. Cari, first of all, understands her most important responsibility is to love her child with all her heart and, therefore, to be able to provide for her child. She's also willing to say, "I can do better. I want to do better. I want to serve my community, and I understand it's going to take a little extra time to get the skills necessary." So she actually became entrepreneurial. She said, "How best to improve?" And she researched and she found a good company willing to pay for her tuition, a community college system that was able to develop a curriculum that matched her desires. And here she is on the cusp of a new career, one that pays better, with better benefits.

See, education enables our workers to be more productive. When you hear about productivity increases, what you're really hearing about is better-paying jobs. But it requires a certain spirit, doesn't it? It requires somebody to seize the moment, some citizen to say, "I want to do better." Government can't make you do better. We can provide the opportunities, and we all work hard to do so. But it requires the spirit of a person like Cari to rise up and say, "I want to do my duty as a mom. I'm going to do my duty as a wife. I'm going to do my duty as a citizen to provide care and comfort for people in hospitals." She took advantage of the opportunity. For those of you looking for work out there, take advantage of the opportunities available to embetter yourself.

Listen, I'm going to tell you something. We've been through a lot in this country. We're going to win the war on terror. We're going to promote freedom and peace. The world is going to be more free and, therefore, more peaceful. At home, we're going to be a society which understands the issues facing our fellow citizens, helps our fellow citizens realize great expectations of our society, encourages the entrepreneurial spirit of Americans, enables people to realize their dreams by having an education system which works and functions well.

And as well this is a society where people who hurt and are lonely and hopeless can find solace, because there's a loving citizen with arms open, willing to do their duty as an American by loving their neighbor.

I am so honored to be back here in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. I thank you for the warm welcome. I thank our panelists for this discussion. And may God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:06 a.m. at Central Dauphin High School.

Remarks in a Discussion on Parental Options and School Choice

February 13, 2004

The President. Thank you, John. Listen, I'm thrilled to be here. I love to come to centers of excellence. This high school is a center of excellence. It is a school that—I was so pleased to hear that 98 percent of the senior class will be going on to higher education. That is a—I would say that's what's called dashing false expectations, is the best way to put it.

See, I would suspect that prior to coming to a place that demanded high standards and high excellence, people would say, "Well, these certain kids can't learn." See, there's an attitude in our society that maybe certain children can't learn, so therefore let's have a system that just shuffles them through. But not at this school. This school believes in the worth and value of every child, that every child can learn. And therefore, this school is not afraid to raise expectations and set glorious heights and demand excellence. And as a result, you've achieved a startling achievement: 98 percent of the high school seniors are going to higher education.

I want to congratulate you and congratulate Jim, congratulate the teachers, congratulate the parents but, most importantly, congratulate the students. I appreciate you setting goals and making the right choices to achieve those goals.

This is a fabulous high school. It's a great place to come and talk about the expectations of our society. It's a great place to come and talk about how we can encourage people to achieve new heights. It's a good way to—it's a good place to come and talk about how you challenge the status quo when the status quo is promoting mediocrity. So thank you for letting me come.

I appreciate so very much the Secretary of Education being here. He's going to say

some words in a minute. You know, when I was looking for a Secretary of Education, I wasn't interested in finding a theorist, somebody who talked about the philosophy of the education or talking about somebody—trying to find somebody who has actually done it. And he was the superintendent of schools in Harris County, which is Houston, Texas. He understands the philosophy behind the law that we just passed a year ago, a law I'm going to talk a little bit about. He's doing a great job. He's a good, sound man. I've known him for a long time. I'm proud that he's serving us. Thank you for coming, Rod. I'm glad you're here.

I noticed Tom Davis and Rodney Frelinghuysen, who are with us today, Members of the United States Congress, who pushed for the initiative I'm going to describe. They're educational entrepreneurs. This is good legislation. I'm really proud of the work that you two gentleman have done on behalf of citizens and parents of this—of Washington, DC. It's really good legislation, and I want to thank you for your efforts.

The Lieutenant Governor from Maryland, Michael Steele, is with us. He's a graduate of this fine high school. I appreciate you coming, Michael.

I appreciate his Excellency Kevin Farrell for coming, and please give Cardinal McCarrick my very best. There's no finer person in our country than Cardinal McCarrick, and I'm proud to call him friend. He's a decent, decent man. The bishop said that he was in Kosovo, and—spreading love and American good will. No better person to do so than Cardinal McCarrick, by the way.

Patty Weitzel-O'Neill is the superintendent. Thank you, Patty, for your hospitality. Elfreda Massie is the interim superintendent of DC public schools. Elfreda, thank you for being here. I want to assure you that the message you're going to hear today is one that says that all systems can achieve excellence. I believe that. I think it's very important for us to work not only in DC but around the country for a public school system that promotes excellence for every single child. And I want to thank you for your leadership and your willingness to

take on a tough assignment. I appreciate you coming.

And I want to thank the chairman of the board of the school. One of the toughest jobs in America is to be on the school board. You get all the complaints and none of the glory. But thank you and the board members for being here.

I, again, want to thank the students so very much. We passed an interesting piece of legislation a couple of years ago called the No Child Left Behind Act. I love the sound of that because that's what I believe society must strive for. No child should be left behind. That kind of says some child or children may be being left behind, doesn't it? If the admonition is "no child left behind," maybe some are, and I think they have been. And one of the reasons I think they have is because I don't think we've set the bar high enough.

This society of ours must challenge what I've called the low—the soft bigotry of low expectations. That means when you lower the bar, when you don't believe in the human potential of a person, you're likely to get lousy results. So I think we need to raise the bar everywhere, just like you've done here at Archbishop High, to challenge every child.

Then I think you've got to measure. See, I don't know how you know whether or not you're achieving excellence if you're not willing to measure. I hear people say around the country, "I don't like tests." Well, I didn't like them either—[laughter]—you know? But that's just the way it is. If you're going to try to figure out whether a child can learn to read and write and add and subtract early in life, you better measure. You better find out early, before it's too late.

A society that doesn't want to leave any child behind is a society which says, "Show me whether or not the curriculum is working. Show me whether or not the school is doing what it's supposed to be doing." I suspect Archbishop High is good because it not only sets the bar, but you're willing to measure. And when you find a child that needs help, you provide that child help.

That ought to be the—that ought to be the paradigm, to use a fancy word, for every school district in America. We need to raise

the bar. And so what we said here in Washington, DC, is we're willing to spend more money, particularly on Title I students. But for the first time, the Federal Government is asking the question, "Can you show us whether or not we're achieving objectives?"

You see, we're tired of children being just shuffled through. It's time now to determine whether or not we're meeting the goal of, for example, every child reading at grade level by the third grade. That's not too much to ask, is it, for a society, to be able to read at grade level by third grade?

So we set the goal. Now it's up to the school district to show us whether or not we're meeting the goal, and if not, there's extra money available to make sure that no child is left behind. But at some point in time, in order to challenge mediocrity where we find mediocrity, parents have to be given other options.

And so the No Child Left Behind Act has got an interesting way of providing that for parents. We say, "We measure. We post the scores. We look at results, and if the results don't measure up, a parent has got the ability to take extra money for tutorial work at a private institution or a public institution, or a parent can send a child to another public school." It's the beginnings of what's called school choice.

But I didn't feel like, and Congress didn't feel like, and I know a lot of parents here in Washington didn't feel like that was enough. So we worked on a new initiative. It's an initiative that says, "Here in Washington we want all aspects of schools to work, so there's money available for the public school system." And I want to thank the Mayor, by the way, for his involvement in this project. And he said, "As you're talking about school choice, make sure you don't forget the other schools as well, see." And so we've got money available to make sure public education can do the best it can possibly do. There's money available for the charter school movement, which provides parents interesting options.

But there's also a new approach here in Washington that I want to talk about today. It's an approach that says there are school systems that are capable of meeting expectations, and when a parent has a child trapped

in a school that won't teach and won't change, we've got to liberate that family, got to give them options. So the Congress wisely—and I might say with administration nudging or insistence—said, "Why don't we provide a \$7,500 scholarship for parents whose children go to—low-income parents whose children go to schools that aren't working, so that that scholarship can follow the child to a place like Archbishop Carroll High School." And there's \$14 million, some of it for administrative purposes, but 90 percent of it is going to go to the families.

This is an historic moment for education. It's the first time ever where the Federal Government has recognized that school choice is a viable alternative for parents. It's an opportunity for us to say to a mother or a dad, "Here's your chance to achieve your expectation for your child." You see, a society that is responsible is one in which a mother and dad love their children with all their heart and all their soul. And a parent who does that wants the very best—the very best—for their children.

And so this initiative is one that's the beginning of what I hope is change all across the country. It's the beginning of a go-by for other school districts and other communities. It says, "Look, we want our public schools to succeed. We want them to do well, but we're going to raise the bar and raise expectations. And when we find children trapped in schools that will not change, parents must be given another viable option." And so here in DC, for the first time, hopefully starting this fall, parents will be given an option. When parents are dissatisfied, they will now have a chance to take scholarship money to send their child to a school of their choice.

We've got some people here who understand what I'm talking about. We've got some grandmothers and moms and school-choice agitators. Well, I don't know, that's a little harsh, isn't it? Okay, advocates, advocates. Before we begin, I might ask the leader here about expectations. When a child comes to this school, tell me how you achieve 98 percent graduates going to college.

[John T. Butler III, president, Archbishop Carroll High School, made brief remarks.]

The President. I appreciate the attitude. He's challenged the soft bigotry of low expectations by setting the bar high. You mentioned AP. You know, one of the things we need to do in America is to spread AP programs—that's called advanced placement programs. Those are high-quality, high-expectation, high-achievement programs. Too often, though, in our communities, a parent will take a look and say, "I don't—I'm not so sure I want to pay for the AP exam. My budget can't afford it." I think Government ought to help people pay for the AP exam. Low-income people ought not to fear their child taking an advanced placement exam because they can't afford the fee. That doesn't make any sense. Plus I think we need to have money available to help teachers teach the advanced placement program. It's one thing to aspire to advanced placement, but if you don't have a teacher who knows how to teach advanced placement, it's not going to become a reality.

But I appreciate the AP program. AP programs work. The AP program is part of a challenging curriculum. And once you pass the AP, you're—there's very little you can't accomplish, by the way. It means that you've excelled. I know you've got a lot of AP students here.

Mr. Butler. We do. The faculty are really important in that regard as well. We are fortunate to have dedicated faculty who sacrifice a lot, and they give long hours to ensure that students are getting what they need. And they go beyond the call of duty, frankly, on a daily basis to ensure that they're providing support—even to today, we have students who are at Harvard, as a matter of fact. Our debate team is at Harvard.

The President. Oh, I don't know what's so good about that. *[Laughter]* But—

Mr. Butler. Well, I understand that you've spent some time there as well.

The President. Well, I mean, I thought he was going to say Yale. But you know, that's all right. No, that's good, they're at Harvard. Yes. *[Laughter]*

Mr. Butler. It is.

The President. Yes, I went there, okay—much to the shock of some of the press corps. *[Laughter]*

Mr. Butler. But I think giving our young people opportunities to get out of the building and get to universities in this community but outside of this community as well really helps to reinforce that. It also helps, too, to have alums such as Michael Steele—I'm glad he's with us today—to hold up as an example of what happens when you work hard.

The President. Michael, good. Listen, Rod, why don't you share some thoughts. Rod—Rod took—I told you, he took on a tough assignment. And I will tell you the children in Houston, Texas, benefited from his leadership. And he's a good, solid citizen.

[Education Secretary Roderick R. Paige made brief remarks.]

The President. I appreciate you—thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Local control of schools is important because innovation oftentimes takes place in spite of government. Archbishop Carroll, obviously, has been able to survive without government telling them what to do, and you're doing what's right.

But the other thing about local control of schools is the more power there is at the local level, the more parents have an opportunity to change things. And so one of the key components of the No Child Left Behind Act is that it's up to you to chart the path to excellence. We just want to know, see? That's all we're asking.

The Federal Government is finally saying, "Show us whether or not you're achieving the objectives, but you figure it out." And it's amazing what happens when parents decide to get involved. A lot of parents think everything is fine with their school until the test scores show up, until there's comparison, until they take a look at—across boundaries. Say, in DC, I bet there's a lot of folks wondering why my school doesn't have a 98 percent college attendance with the seniors. So information is important, but empowering parents is important.

Virginia Walden Ford is with us today. She is—she is a great citizen in that she's willing to seize the moment to try to effect change. She's a tireless worker on behalf of children and parents. She's somebody who has made a difference. I want to welcome you here, Virginia. Tell us about your family. Tell us

about what you're doing. Tell us about how you got involved with the Parents for Choice. She's the executive director, by the way, for Parents for Choice in DC movement.

[Virginia Walden Ford, executive director, D.C. Parents for School Choice, made brief remarks.]

The President. One person can make a difference. Now Virginia has got to make sure that the parents who want to learn how the program works can find a resource. I know you will. There's—this—for example, this might stimulate a few phone calls. I suspect there's going to be some mothers and dads wanting to contact you to find out how the program works. How do you apply for the \$7,500 scholarship? What does it take to be eligible? And how do we get the scholarship money out? We'll help. I know you got an advertising campaign getting ready to go.

Mrs. Walden Ford. We do. We have a bus campaign that begins on Monday. This past week, we spent time sending out forms, just asking parents to call for information, thousands of them. So we are in the field. We are activists. And I'm not embarrassed about being called——

The President. I said "agitators," don't change it. [Laughter]

Mrs. Walden Ford. Oh, okay—I'm not embarrassed. Well, I was——

The President. That's not a bad word.

Mrs. Walden Ford. Look, look, Congressman Davis, I think I was a little bit of an agitator too. [Laughter] But when you believe in something, you fight for it, or you raise your voice and get on—and I know we got on Congressman's nerves. I know we did. But that was okay because we got it done.

The President. I do too, occasionally, myself, you know? [Laughter]

[Mrs. Walden Ford made further remarks.]

The President. Good job, thank you. Catherine Hill is with us today. Catherine is raising a niece, a nephew, and two grandsons. She is a—thank you for being here, Catherine. Would you mind sharing with us some of your thoughts?

[Catherine L. Hill, aunt and grandparent of DC students, made brief remarks.]

The President. Catherine made a decision early on that one of your nephews—was it your nephew or grandson?—went to school in Maryland. So that's what we call school choice. [Laughter] In other words, she said, "I'm not satisfied. I've got high expectations for my loved one." And evidently, the expectations weren't being met, so you made a decision.

Now, what we need to do is make sure the decision is closer to home. She's a resident in Washington, DC. She lives here. It's important that decisions be made more readily available for parents.

I want to say something that Rod said, and it's very important. As you make those decisions, somebody might get the message and say, "Wait, we're not doing something right. We must earn Catherine's support by raising expectations." Why—somebody ought to be asking the question, why is Catherine making a unbelievably tough call to drive hours to another State or out of this District to a State? And hopefully that causes somebody to say, "Maybe we're not doing something right. Maybe we ought to work harder to win the confidence of Catherine Hill or the Catherine Hills of the world." That's what Rod was talking about. You see, when a parent makes the decision, votes to move a child, hopefully that will cause the response to be, we've got to do something better or something different. The customer is Catherine Hill and her children.

And so I want to thank you for your story. More importantly, I want to thank you for setting such an unbelievable example. Imagine Catherine raising a niece, nephew, and two grandsons. That in itself is an overpowering job. And yet at the same time, you keep that clear vision about what is best, and I'm going to appreciate your example.

Ms. Hill. And I also want to say that he graduated in June of 2003. So that's a blessing.

The President. That is.

Elizabeth Stallans is with us. I oftentimes tell people, the toughest job in America is being a single mom. That's the hardest work in our country. And it's important for our school systems to make that job easier, not

harder. And I appreciate you coming, Elizabeth. Thank you for being here. We look forward to hearing your story.

[Elizabeth Stallans, parent of a DC student, made brief remarks.]

The President. Thank you, Elizabeth. Very good. Thank you, Elizabeth. There's strong testimony. Thank you both.

Listen, John, thanks for having us. I've got to say something about the Catholic schools in America. The Catholic school system provides an incredibly important service in our country. They serve as a model. They also take on a lot of students that are the so-called hard-to-educate but always do a good job. They're willing to help with the financially disadvantaged parent. Catholic schools are an incredibly important part of the fabric of our country, and I want to thank the educators who are here. I want to thank you for the service you provide.

I know you share with me a deep desire that all schools do well, all school systems achieve the national objective, which is excellence for every child, regardless of their background. There's no doubt in my mind we can achieve it. In order to achieve it, you've got to have the right mindset, and you must be willing to challenge the status quo when it's failing. This society must be willing to never accept mediocrity when it comes to the education of our children.

You know, the President has got a pretty big microphone. I've got a chance to spotlight success. And by coming here today, I am spotlighting success, this success that we want to be a success all over the District of Columbia. We want people to be able to compete with you, John.

Mr. Butler. I look forward to that.

The President. Yes, sir. I know you do, because you love children—

Mr. Butler. I do.

The President. —from the bottom of your heart. So do I. Thank you all for coming. I want to wish the seniors all the very best. I want to congratulate you. Would the seniors stand up, please?

Thank you—thank you for letting us come. Thank you for letting me come. Remember, your senior year isn't over until you graduate.

[Laughter] Good luck in college. Good luck whatever you decide to do.

May God bless you. May God bless this high school. And may God continue to bless our great country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:49 p.m. at Archbishop Carroll High School. In his remarks, he referred to James Mumford, principal, Archbishop Carroll High School; Bishop Kevin J. Farrell, Auxiliary Bishop of Washington; Theodore E. Cardinal McCarrick, Archbishop of Washington; Patricia Weitzel-O'Neill, superintendent of schools, Archdiocese of Washington; and Mayor Anthony A. Williams of the District of Columbia.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

February 7

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

During the day, in the Oval Office, the President participated in an interview with Tim Russert of NBC television's "Meet the Press" for broadcast on February 8. He also had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister John Howard of Australia to conclude an Australia-U.S. free trade agreement.

February 9

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Springfield, MO, where, upon arrival, he greeted USA Freedom Corps volunteer Travis Morrison.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC. Later, in the Residence, he met with Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist and Speaker of the House of Representatives J. Dennis Hastert to discuss legislative priorities.

The President announced his intention to nominate John J. Danilovich to be Ambassador to Brazil.

February 10

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he met with Chairman Gyude Bryant of Liberia. He then participated in an interview with the HBO cable television channel for a documentary on the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in New York City.

Later in the morning, the President had a meeting with economic leaders to discuss efforts to strengthen the national economy.

The President announced his intention to nominate Cathy M. MacFarlane to be Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development for Public Affairs.

February 11

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he met with Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld.

In the afternoon, at the historic Evermay house, the President attended a Republican National Committee luncheon.

The President announced his intention to nominate Dawn A. Tisdale to be a Commissioner of the Postal Rate Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Marc M. Wall to be Ambassador to Chad.

The President announced his intention to designate Arden Bement, Jr., as Acting Director of the National Science Foundation.

February 12

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Harrisburg, PA, where, upon arrival, he greeted volunteer Lauren Simkulak.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC. Later, he met with Secretary of State Colin L. Powell.

The President announced his intention to nominate Gregory B. Jaczko to be a member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Richard S. Williamson as U.S. Representative on the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations Economic and Social Council and to nominate him for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service.

The President announced his appointment of Charles M. Vest and Henry S. Rowen as members of the Commission on the Intel-

ligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction.

February 13

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Roosevelt Room, he and Vice President Dick Cheney met with U.S. State Governors who recently returned from a tour of Iraq.

In the afternoon, the President had lunch with Vice President Cheney.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia to the White House on February 18.

The President declared a major disaster in South Carolina and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe ice storm on January 26–30.

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 February 9

Enrique J. Sosa,
of Florida, to be a member of the Reform Board (Amtrak) for a term of 5 years, vice Linwood Holton, term expired.

Submitted February 11

Cathy M. MacFarlane,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, vice Diane Leneghan Tomb, resigned.

Dennis C. Shea,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, vice Alberto Faustino Trevino, resigned.

Dawn A. Tisdale,
of Texas, to be a Commissioner of the Postal Rate Commission for a term expiring November 22, 2006, vice William H. Leblanc III, term expired.

Submitted February 12

William Duane Benton,
of Missouri, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the
Eighth Circuit, vice Theodore McMillian, re-
tired.

Miles T. Bivins,
of Texas, to be Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary of the United States of
America to Sweden.

Gregory B. Jaczko,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member
of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for
a term expiring June 30, 2008, vice Greta
Joy Dicus, term expired.

Marc McGowan Wall,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior
Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor,
to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Pleni-
potentiary of the United States of America
to the Republic of Chad.

Richard S. Williamson,
of Illinois, for the rank of Ambassador during
his tenure of service as Representative of the
United States of America on the Human
Rights Commission of the Economic and So-
cial Council of the United Nations.

**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 February 9

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Sec-
retary Scott McClellan

Transcript of a press briefing by Council of
Economic Advisers Chairman N. Gregory
Mankiw on the 2004 Economic Report of the
President

Fact sheet: Tax Relief Is Strengthening Our
Economy

Released February 10

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Sec-
retary Scott McClellan

Released February 11

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Sec-
retary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary on the re-
lease of additional information from the Air
Reserve Personnel Center in Denver, CO,
on the President's service in the National
Guard in Alabama

Statement by the Physician to the President
on the review of the medical and dental
records of President George W. Bush cov-
ering the period 1968–1973

Fact sheet: Strengthening International Ef-
forts Against WMD Proliferation

Released February 12

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Sec-
retary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary on Senate
passage of the highway funding bill

Released February 13

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Sec-
retary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary: Meeting
with President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali of
Tunisia

Statement by the Press Secretary on the re-
quest by 9/11 Commission Chair Kean and
Vice Chair Hamilton for a private meeting
with the President

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing
that the President signed H.R. 2264

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster
assistance to South Carolina

**Acts Approved
by the President**

Approved February 13

H.R. 2264 / Public Law 108–200
Congo Basin Forest Partnership Act of 2004