

The President. I didn't. Thank you.

Q. Thank you very much.

The President. Good luck to you.

NOTE: The interview began at 1:08 p.m. in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House, and the transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 4. In his remarks, the President referred to President Jacques Chirac of France; Specialist Jeremy C. Sivits, USA, who was convicted of abusing Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib Prison; Don North, documentary film producer; Marvin Zindler, member, board of directors, Agris-Zindler Children's Fund; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Pope John Paul II at the Vatican City State

June 4, 2004

The President. Your Holiness, thank you very much for receiving Laura and me and our delegation. I bring greetings from our country, where you are respected, admired, and greatly loved.

I also bring a message from my Government that says to you, sir, we will work for human liberty and human dignity, in order to spread peace and compassion, that we appreciate the strong symbol of freedom that you have stood for, and we recognize the power of freedom to change societies and to change the world.

And so, sir, we're honored to be here. Perhaps the best way I can express my country's gratitude to you and our respect to you is to present to you the Medal of Freedom from America. And if you might allow, I'd like to read the citation attached to that honor:

"A devoted servant of God, His Holiness Pope John Paul II has championed the cause of the poor, the weak, the hungry, and the outcast. He has defended the unique dignity of every life and the goodness of all life. Through his faith and moral conviction, he has given courage to others to be not afraid in overcoming injustice and oppression. His principled stand for peace and freedom has inspired millions and helped to topple com-

munist and tyranny. The United States honors this son of Poland who became the Bishop of Rome and a hero of our time."

And so, on behalf of the American people, Your Holiness, I would be honored if you would accept our Medal of Freedom.

[*The President and the First Lady presented the medal and congratulated Pope John Paul II.*]

Pope John Paul II. I am very grateful, Mr. President, for this thoughtful gesture. May the desire for freedom, peace, a more humane world symbolized by this medal inspire men and women of good will in every time and place.

God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:58 p.m. at the Epistolic Palace. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on House of Representatives Passage of the "Worker Reemployment Accounts Act"

June 4, 2004

I commend the House for passing the "Worker Reemployment Accounts Act," which establishes a pilot program for Personal Reemployment Accounts.

Personal Reemployment Accounts are an important reform in Federal job training, because workers decide how to use the funds to maximize their likelihood of securing a job. A Personal Reemployment Account gives unemployed Americans additional choices and flexibility to help them return to work more quickly. They can use funds from their account to pay for what they need most to help find a job—special training, childcare, transportation, relocation assistance, or a combination of these. Finally, there is a reemployment bonus that lets workers who return to work quickly keep any leftover funds from their account.

These innovative accounts that I proposed last year put decisionmaking and resources directly in the hands of individuals who need the most help getting back to work. I urge

the Senate to pass this important legislation so that we can help every American who wants to work find a job.

Proclamation 7795—Great Outdoors Month, 2004

June 4, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

More than 200 years ago, Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark embarked upon an expedition to explore uncharted lands and find passage across the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. During the Captains' journey, their Corps of Discovery encountered remarkable landscapes, observed wildlife, and traded with American Indians. Two years into his experience, Captain Lewis was inspired by the beauty of a waterfall along the Missouri River that he called in his journal, "the grandest sight I ever beheld." Today, the splendor of the great outdoors continues to inspire our citizens, and a love of outdoor recreation remains a fundamental part of the American character. By observing Great Outdoors Month, we celebrate our commitment to appreciating and protecting our natural wealth.

Outdoor recreation is an ideal way to exercise and enjoy memorable experiences with family and friends, and all across our country are scenic places that sports and nature enthusiasts can explore and help keep beautiful. During Great Outdoors Month and throughout the year, I encourage Americans to go camping, fishing, hunting, hiking, bird watching, boating, or to participate in other outdoor activities that are part of a healthy lifestyle.

The true strength of our Nation lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens, and I urge all Americans not only to visit our parks and recreation areas, but also to volunteer their time and talents to help maintain the beauty of our environment. Good stewardship of the environment is not just a personal responsibility, it is a public value; and citizens who lend a hand to local parks and public lands are vital to the preservation of our Nation's

many special places. Americans can take pride in the remarkable progress we continue to make in conserving our environment and natural resources.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 2004 as Great Outdoors Month. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies and activities and to participate in safe and enjoyable outdoor recreation.

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

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:36 a.m., June 8, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on June 9.

Remarks to Reporters in Rome, Italy

June 4, 2004

National Economy

Today's job report shows that the American economy is strong and it's getting stronger. Two hundred forty eight thousand jobs for last month is good for the American workers. It shows that our economy is vital and growing. We've added 900,000 jobs over the last 3 months and 1.4 million jobs since last August. The policies in place are working. The entrepreneurial spirit is strong. The small-business sector of our economy is vibrant. And I'm pleased the American worker is doing their job.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:36 p.m. at the U.S. Ambassador's Residence. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.