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resolution on Iraq. I look forward to continuing our dialog in a spirit of cooperation and friendship, and I'm glad you're here.

Chancellor Schroeder. Thank you very much. And let me say, I love to be here, particularly since the weather is—compared to what we are used to—so nice and so favorable. [*Laughter*]

And I think what we're talking about here at this meeting will be essentially something that, indeed, forms part of one whole and something that is an indissoluble, namely a good world economy on the one hand and stable political situation—a stable political environment on the other.

We are willing to give our contribution, and we, indeed, give our contribution to this in Afghanistan, for example, but also on the Balkans. And let me say that I'm gratified to know that this is appreciated.

I am confident that the resolution—the United Nations Security Council resolution on Iraq will be adopted today. Whatever we can do to bring this about, we will certainly do. We think that this resolution will be a good basis, a good foundation for enhancing stability, for also improving the chances for the Iraqi people, and also to enhance stability all around in that region that is—I think we would all agree—a difficult one. And I think that this is, indeed, our common task. It is something that we shall work on together. And well, thank you again for your gracious hospitality.

President Bush. Thanks, Gerhard. Appreciate you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:43 p.m. at Dunbar House. Chancellor Schroeder spoke in German, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Vladimir Putin of Russia at Sea Island

June 8, 2004

President Bush. I always enjoy talking to my friend Vladimir Putin. He's a strong leader who cares deeply about the people of his country and understands the issues that we face. We just had a long discussion about a variety of issues. And I had the opportunity to thank him for working together on important issues such as the United Nations Security Council resolution.

The vote today in the United Nations Security Council was a great victory for the Iraqi people. The international community showed that they stand side by side with the Iraqi people. The U.N. Security Council resolution supports the interim government, supports free elections, and supports the multinational force. America supports strongly the idea of a free society in the midst of hatred and intolerance, and I appreciate your help, Vladimir, on getting that Security Council resolution through today.

And it is my pleasure to continue to work with you as we make sure our relations are as close as they possibly can be.

President Putin. First of all, I would like to thank the U.S. President for having invited me to such a wonderful place. Indeed, we had a very thorough discussion which pertained to virtually the entire spectrum of the U.S.-Russia relationship.

I have congratulated the U.S. President with the positive change currently underway with the U.S. economy, which has to be acknowledged as his merit. And this happens with the background of the unreasonable growth for costs and pricing for the energy resources. We're all interested in these positive changes, because in the contemporary world of today, when we live, it is important for all of us that the U.S. economy improves, for the entire world—for Russia included.

I'd like to point out the fact that our relationship has been developing all across the board, including such sensitive areas as the military cooperation.

Now, as regards the adoption of the United Nations Security Council resolution, without any exaggeration I would state that it is a major step forward. And I hope I will express the view which is held by all members of the Security Council that, indeed, we have witnessed a very constructive dialog which was in progress over the past few days in this area. And this is not about passing a new document in the Security Council regarding Iraq. This is about a quality change in the status in Iraq and with regards to the presence of the military troops there. This

is about a quality change of the impact the United Nations have over the situation in Iraq. Naturally, it will take quite a long time before this adoption of the document will have any impact on the real change on the ground in Iraq.

But we can convincingly and comfortably state that the situation is ripe for adopting such a serious and such a concrete document concerning this country. If prior to this document it was primarily the burden and the responsibility which was upheld by the United States with regard to this country, it seems now it will be the Iraqi government themselves who will have the whole spectrum of the sovereignty rights which will be enjoyed by them, with a major influence now to be exercised by the entire world community with regards to the situation in that country.

Therefore on this occasion, I would like to congratulate the U.S. President with this achievement and to express our wish that the situation is going to be changing in a better way there.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:41 p.m. at Dunbar House. President Putin spoke in Russian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Message to the Congress on the Death of President Ronald Reagan

June 8, 2004

To the Congress of the United States:

By this Message, I officially inform you of the death of Ronald Reagan, the fortieth President of the United States.

Ronald Reagan was a great leader and a good man. He had the confidence that comes with conviction, the strength that comes with character, the grace that comes with humility, and the humor that comes with wisdom.

Through his leadership, spirit, and abiding faith in the American people, President Reagan gave our Nation a renewed optimism. With his courage and moral clarity, he enhanced America's security and advanced the spread of peace, liberty, and democracy to millions of people who had lived in darkness and oppression. As America's President, he helped change the world.

The sun has now set on Ronald Reagan's extraordinary American life. Just as he told us that our Nation's best days are yet to come, we know that the same is true for him.

George W. Bush

The White House,
June 8, 2004.

Remarks at the Multi-Agency Command Center at Saint Simon's Island, Georgia

June 8, 2004

Thank you all very much for working at what you're doing. It's a great example of Federal, State, and local cooperation. I appreciate so many of you taking time away from your families to make sure this event goes the way we want it to go, secure and peaceful.

I know that you're working long hours, and I've come to thank you very much for what you're doing. It means a lot to me, and it means a lot to the people whose lives you're protecting.

So I want to thank you very much, and I ask for God's blessings on you all and the country. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:32 p.m. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom and an Exchange With Reporters at Sea Island, Georgia

June 9, 2004

President Bush. Mr. Prime Minister, thank you very much for your steadfast leadership, your clear vision, and your friendship.

Yesterday was an important day for the Iraqi people. The United Nations Security Council unanimously expressed the desire for Iraq to be free and peaceful, and I want to thank you for your leadership on that issue. It's really important for leaders to have allies