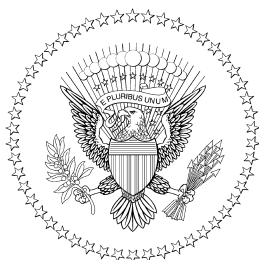


Weekly Compilation of  
**Presidential  
Documents**



Monday, January 23, 2006  
Volume 42—Number 3  
Pages 73–98

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**Editor's Note:** The President was at Camp David, MD, on January 20, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

## WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

## PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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

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Week Ending Friday, January 20, 2006

**Proclamation 7973—Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday, 2006**

*January 13, 2006*

*By the President of the United States  
of America*

**A Proclamation**

As we observe the 20th anniversary of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday, we reflect on the history of civil rights in America and honor Dr. King for the power of his intellect, the truth of his words, and the example of his courage. Dr. King created a powerful and enduring legacy for all Americans by calling upon our Nation to ensure equal justice under law and uphold our founding ideals of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for all people.

Dr. King became an active leader in the civil rights movement in the 1950s, strengthened in his resolve by the quiet courage of Rosa Parks' refusal to give up her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama, bus. He advocated non-violent action as a means to overcome the evil of racism in America, and he led the effort that resulted in the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Dr. King later said that the legislation was the work of every citizen who took to the streets and marched for justice and equality. The Voting Rights Act, which became law the next year, guaranteed all citizens the right to vote, regardless of race, and helped our country realize the promise of the 15th Amendment to our Constitution.

Dr. King believed that all people are made in God's image and created equal. He dedicated his life to empowering people, no matter their circumstances, and challenged them to lift up their neighbors and communities. He broke down barriers within our society by encouraging Americans to look past their differences and refused to rest until our Nation fulfilled its pledge of liberty and justice for all.

As we observe and honor Dr. King's birthday, we are reminded that great causes often involve great sacrifices. In the five decades since Dr. King and Mrs. Parks stood together in Montgomery, Alabama, our country has made great progress toward equality for every citizen. Yet more work remains. In the words of Dr. King, "We will not be satisfied until 'justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.'"

**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 Monday, January 16, 2006, as the Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday. I encourage all Americans to observe this day with appropriate civic, community, and service programs and activities in honor of the memory and legacy of Dr. King.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this thirteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:23 a.m., January 18, 2006]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on January 19. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Proclamation 7974—Religious Freedom Day, 2006**

*January 13, 2006*

*By the President of the United States  
of America*

**A Proclamation**

The right to religious freedom is a foundation of America. On Religious Freedom Day,

our Nation celebrates the passage of the 1786 Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom and the protection of religious freedom in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.

Our Founding Fathers knew the importance of freedom of religion to a stable democracy, and our Constitution protects individuals' rights to worship as they choose. We reject religious discrimination in every form, and we continue our efforts to oppose prejudice and to counter any infringements on religious freedom.

Today, we are also working to advance freedom of religion abroad. The Department of State's Office of International Religious Freedom plays an important role in these efforts, advocating for religious freedom and actively working against religious persecution around the world. In recent years, we have seen important progress, including in Vietnam, Laos, India, Georgia, and the United Arab Emirates, and with the release of many individuals in countries throughout the world who had been imprisoned because of their faith. By helping to secure the religious freedom of people in other countries, we promote the spread of liberty and human dignity.

**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 January 16, 2006, as Religious Freedom Day. I call on all Americans to reflect on the great blessing of religious liberty, endeavor to preserve this freedom for future generations, and commemorate this day with appropriate events and activities in their schools, places of worship, neighborhoods, and homes.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this thirteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:23 a.m., January 18, 2006]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on January 19. This item was not

received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Executive Order 13395—  
Designating the Global Fund To  
Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and  
Malaria as a Public International  
Organization Entitled To Enjoy  
Certain Privileges, Exemptions, and  
Immunities**

*January 13, 2006*

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including sections 1 and 16 of the International Organizations Immunities Act (22 U.S.C. 288 and 288f-6), it is hereby ordered as follows:

**Section 1. Designation.** The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund) is hereby designated as a public international organization entitled to enjoy the privileges, exemptions, and immunities provided by the International Organizations Immunities Act.

**Sec. 2. Non-Abridgement.** The designation in section 1 is not intended to abridge in any respect privileges, exemptions, or immunities that the Global Fund otherwise may have acquired or may acquire by law.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
January 13, 2006.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:23 a.m., January 18, 2006]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on January 19. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**The President's Radio Address**  
*January 14, 2006*

Good morning. Last October, I was proud to nominate Judge Sam Alito to be an Associate Justice on the Supreme Court of the United States. This week, Judge Alito testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee,

and the American people saw a man of character and intelligence. He forthrightly answered questions with grace and composure and showed his personal humility and legal brilliance—qualities that have made him one of America's most accomplished and respected judges.

In his opening statement to the Committee, Judge Alito offered an eloquent description of the proper role of a judge. He put it this way: "A judge cannot have any agenda; a judge cannot have any preferred outcome in any particular case. The judge's only obligation is to the rule of law. In every single case, the judge has to do what the law requires."

Judge Alito has embodied this understanding of a judge's proper role throughout his distinguished career. He has participated in thousands of appeals, and he has authored hundreds of opinions. His record shows that he strictly and fairly interprets the Constitution and laws and does not try to legislate from the bench or impose his personal preference on the people. As the American people saw this week, Judge Alito always approaches the law in a thoughtful, fair, and openminded way.

Throughout his life, Sam Alito has demonstrated a mastery of the law, great decency, and a strong commitment to public service. As a young man, he wore his country's uniform in the Army Reserve and achieved the rank of captain. Early in his legal career, he worked as a Federal prosecutor. As Assistant to the Solicitor General, Sam Alito argued 12 cases before the Supreme Court. He later served in the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel, where he provided constitutional advice for the President and the executive branch.

In 1987, President Reagan named Sam Alito the United States Attorney for the District of New Jersey—the top Federal prosecutor in one of the Nation's largest Federal districts. The Senate confirmed him by unanimous consent. In this important post, Sam Alito showed a passionate commitment to justice and the rule of law and earned a reputation for being both tough and fair. He moved aggressively against white-collar and environmental crimes, drug trafficking, organized crime, and violations of civil rights. In

1990, President Bush nominated Sam Alito for the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, and the Senate once again confirmed him by unanimous consent. He's served with distinction on that court for 15 years, and he has more prior judicial experience than any Supreme Court nominee in more than 70 years.

Sam Alito's brilliance, integrity, and accomplishments have gained him respect and praise from his colleagues and from attorneys across the political spectrum. This week, fellow judges from the Third Circuit publicly testified in support of his confirmation, and they praised his integrity and fairness. The American Bar Association gave Judge Alito a unanimous rating of "well-qualified"—the ABA's highest possible rating. The ABA concluded that Judge Alito meets "the highest standards" of "integrity, professional competence, and judicial temperament." In the past, leading Democratic Senators have called the ABA's rating system the "gold standard" for judicial nominees.

During this week's hearings and over the course of his career, Judge Alito has demonstrated that he is eminently qualified to serve on our Nation's highest Court. I'm grateful to Senator Arlen Specter for his superb work in chairing the hearings. I also thank Judge Alito's wife, Martha, and the Alito children for their patience and dignity during the confirmation process.

Now the Senate has a duty to give Judge Alito a prompt up-or-down vote. I look forward to the Senate voting to confirm Sam Alito as 110th Justice of the Supreme Court. America is fortunate to have a man of his intellect and integrity willing to serve, and as a Justice on our Nation's highest Court, Sam Alito will make all Americans proud.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 8:00 a.m. on January 13 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 14. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 13 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

### **Remarks to Reporters Following a Visit to the National Archives and Records Administration**

*January 16, 2006*

It seems fitting on Martin Luther King Day that I come and look at the Emancipation Proclamation in its original form. Abraham Lincoln recognized that all men are created equal. Martin Luther King lived on that admonition to call our country to a higher calling, and today we celebrate the life of an American who called Americans to account when we didn't live up to our ideals.

Allen, thanks for having me. I would strongly recommend our fellow citizens come to this house of archives—a house that archives a lot of our important documents. It's really an amazing place; it's really fascinating. I appreciate you and your staff, thanking you.

All right, thank you all. See you later today.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9 a.m. in the East Rotunda Gallery. In his remarks, he referred to Archivist of the United States Allen Weinstein. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

### **Remarks at Georgetown University's "Let Freedom Ring" Celebration**

*January 16, 2006*

Thank you all. Thanks for the kind introduction, and thanks for the invitation to be here. It's an honor to join you on this national holiday celebrating one of America's most important lives: Martin Luther King, Jr.

Every year on this day, we reflect on the great movement for civil rights that transformed our country. We remember leaders like Rosa Parks, who today is being honored with the John Thompson, Jr., Legacy of a Dream Award. And we recommit ourselves to working for the dream that Martin Luther King gave his life for: an America where the dignity of every person is respected; where people are judged not by the color of their skin—by the content of their character; and where the hope of a better tomorrow is in every neighborhood in this country.

I'm sorry Laura is not with me. She's leading a delegation to Liberia for the swearing-in of President Johnson Sirleaf, who, by the

way, is the first elected woman President on the Continent of Africa.

I want to thank Dr. DeGioia and the good folks at Georgetown University. I want to thank the members of my Cabinet who are here. By the way, Condoleezza Rice is not here, because she's with Laura. *[Laughter]* I want to thank Majority Leader Bill Frist and his wife, Karyn, other Members of Congress who are here. I appreciate Bruce Gordon, the president of the NAACP, for his strong leadership.

It is such an honor always to be in the presence of Dorothy Height. And I want to thank Tiffany Thompson for being here to represent her good dad—wondering where your brother was. *[Laughter]* DeGioia hired him, and he's working. *[Laughter]* Thank you all for being here.

When our Founders declared America's independence, they invoked the self-evident truth that all men are created equal. Our Constitution was written to put the principles of a free and equal society into practice. It is a living document. It required amendment to make sure that promise was fulfilled, amendments like the abolishment of slavery, the guarantee of equal protection, and the right to vote for all Americans. Dr. King called these documents America's great "Charters of Freedom," and he continued to trust in their power even when the practice of America did not live up to their promise.

As children of the South, Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks both came to the civil rights movement with long personal experience of the evils of discrimination and segregation. Dr. King called the daily humiliations endured by black Americans "the jangling discords of our Nation." And Rosa Parks famously experienced it when that bus driver had her arrested for refusing his order to give up her seat to a white man.

But Mrs. Parks and Dr. King shared a deep belief in a hopeful future. They strongly believed that segregation could not stand once it was held up to the light in all its ugliness. And because of their spirit and their work, the cruelty and humiliation of Jim Crow is a thing of the past.

As well, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Mrs. Parks' faith in the future reflected their faith

in a Higher Being. Martin Luther King and Mrs. Parks both believed that the answer to hate and discrimination was love. Dr. King once wrote, "It is quite easy for me to think of a God of love, mainly because I grew up in a family where love was central and where lovely relationships were ever-present." Mrs. Parks was a devout member all her life of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and a woman who saw the face of God in every human being. These two leaders knew that freedom was not a grant of government but a gift from the Author of All Life.

So when they made their appeal to equal rights, they aimed straight for America's soul, and they roused the dozing conscience of a complacent nation. By calling us to be true to our founding promise of equality, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Mrs. Parks helped African Americans gain their God-given rights.

As leaders, Martin Luther King and Mrs. Parks believed their calling was to be involved, to be active, to work for change. Long before Mrs. Parks refused to move from her bus seat, she'd been active in community efforts to advance opportunities for African Americans and to register them to vote.

At the dawn of this new century, America can be proud of the progress we have made toward equality, but we all must recognize we have more to do. The reason to honor Martin Luther King is to remember his strength of character and his leadership but also to remember the remaining work. The reason to honor Mrs. Parks is not only to pay homage to her strength of character but to remember the ideal of active citizenship. Active citizens in the 1960s struggled hard to convince Congress to pass civil rights legislation that ensured the rights of all, including the right to vote. And Congress must renew the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Martin Luther King did not live to celebrate his 40th birthday. Yet in the short time he walked upon this earth, he preached that all the powers of evil are ultimately no match for one individual armed with eternal truths. And one evening, on a bus ride home from work, a tired but brave woman named Rosa Parks proved that Dr. King was right.

And so today we honor Dr. Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks. We ask for God's bless-

ings on their legacy, and we ask for God's blessings on our great Nation.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:50 p.m. at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. In his remarks, he referred to President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia; John J. DeGioia, president, Georgetown University; civil rights leader Dorothy I. Height; and former Georgetown University head men's basketball coach, John Thompson, Jr., and his daughter Tiffany and son John Thompson III.

### Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt of Belgium

January 17, 2006

**President Bush.** You're probably wondering what the Prime Minister is sharing with me. First of all, welcome. We're talking mountain biking—actually, he's talking about the Tour de France. He's a huge advocate and a follower of the bike scene around the world. He's also an avid mountain biker, and one of these days, he and I are going to ride. He's going to give me a lesson on how to ride a mountain bike.

First of all, welcome. Thanks for the wide-ranging discussion. I've been honored to know Guy for a long period of time. We have got a close relationship. And we talked about the importance of transatlantic relations, about how it's important for the United States to work with the European Union to reach common objectives and to help work together to make this world a more peaceful place and a better place for people.

We talked about bilateral relations, and the Prime Minister brought up an antiquated tax treaty that he believes needs to be looked at by our Government in order to facilitate trade between Belgium and the United States.

We talked about Africa, in particular, the Congo. And I want to thank you for your leadership, Mr. Prime Minister, on this very important issue. I told the Prime Minister my Government would work very closely with the Belgium Government to help the people of the Congo realize their full potential.

We had a wide-ranging discussion, as to be expected among friends, and it's been my honor to welcome him here. And I'm glad you're here.

**Prime Minister Verhofstadt.** Well, we had, in fact, a very good and intense discussion—not only about biking, that was only at the end, the biking, in the search of who can be the successor of Lance Armstrong. [Laughter] We have not made a final choice on who can be the successor.

But we had a very good, I think, discussion about transatlantic relationship. I'm very pleased that since our last meeting, we have started with this transatlantic informal meetings in New York and in Brussels. And it improves, I think, the relationship, the transatlantic relationship. There is certainly a lot of work still to do, and I think that common point of view and a common policy of the U.S. and of Europe on issues like the Middle East, like Iran, is certainly absolutely necessary and can improve this transatlantic relationship.

And we also discussed the need to have more reflection on future of North Atlantic Alliance, on the relationship between European defense and North Atlantic Alliance, and maybe we can develop a number of initiatives with Belgium in Brussels on that issues.

About the Congo, it's very clear that we have to help. The transition period is, at this moment, successful. We hope for elections in April, a second round in June. But we have already discussed what after these elections. The international community has to continue to help and to seek good governance in the Congo and in Central Africa.

So that were, in any way, the most important elements, and then at the end, in fact, we shall start a negotiation with the American administration to have a new tax treatment between Belgium and the U.S., to avoid double taxation in the future.

Thank you.

**President Bush.** Good job. Thanks, Guy. Appreciate you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:02 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Prime Minister Verhofstadt referred to 2005 Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

### **Statement on the Death of Sheikh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah of Kuwait**

*January 17, 2006*

I was deeply saddened to learn of the death of His Highness Sheikh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah, the Amir of Kuwait. Sheikh Jabir was a friend and steadfast and reliable ally of the United States. He supported the U.S. servicemen and women who fought to liberate Kuwait and later Iraq from the aggression and tyranny of Saddam Hussein. Sheikh Jabir worked tirelessly to provide a better future for Kuwait's citizens and was the driving force behind many reforms, including the establishment of a vibrant, elected Parliament and a free press. In his last months, he provided critical leadership to ensure that Kuwait's women achieved political rights. On behalf of the American people, Laura and I send our deepest condolences to Sheikh Jabir's family and to the Government and people of Kuwait on the passing of this historic leader.

### **Letter to Congressional Leaders on Review of Title III of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996**

*January 17, 2006*

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

Consistent with section 306(c)(2) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–114)(the “Act”), I hereby determine and report to the Congress that suspension for 6 months beyond February 1, 2006, of the right to bring an action under title III of the Act is necessary to the national interests of the United States and will expedite a transition to democracy in Cuba.

Sincerely,

**George W. Bush**

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Richard G. Lugar, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Thad Cochran, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Henry J. Hyde, chairman, and Tom

Lantos, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; and Jerry Lewis, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations.

## **Remarks Following a Meeting With Iraqi Citizens**

*January 18, 2006*

Listen, thank you all for coming. It's been my honor to visit with folks who know firsthand the brutality of Saddam Hussein. These are folks who have suffered one way or the other because the tyrant was a law unto himself and was willing to deny people basic human rights. The stories here are compelling stories. They're stories of sadness and stories of bravery.

In the course of our discussion, we were also able to talk about what a contrast it is between a society which was willing to jail people, torture people, and beat people and kill people, to a society that is beginning to understand the fruits of democracy and freedom.

Last year was an amazing year in Iraq. Millions of people went to the polls to vote, first in January, then to ratify a Constitution, and then back to the polls again to elect a Government under the new Constitution. It's a testimony to the courage of the Iraqi people. Obviously, we still have got work to do and fully intend to do it.

And one of the interesting moments will come here this year when Saddam Hussein's trial is brought forth for the world to see, to see the butcherer, the person who brutalized many people or ordered the brutality of many people here at this table, get his due justice under rule of law.

And so I want to thank you all for coming. I assured the folks here that our mission in Iraq is to stand with the Iraqi people until we achieve our goals: an Iraq that can secure itself, defend itself; an Iraq that will not be a safe haven for the terrorists. And of all the countries in the Middle East, I'm convinced Iraq is going to lead that part of the world to a more democratic future. The Iraqi people are brave and courageous and smart people.

And so thank you for being here. Thank you for sharing your stories. I appreciate it very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:50 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## **Notice—Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Terrorists Who Threaten To Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process**

*January 18, 2006*

On January 23, 1995, by Executive Order 12947, the President declared a national emergency pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701–1706) to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States constituted by grave acts of violence committed by foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process. On August 20, 1998, by Executive Order 13099, the President modified the Annex to Executive Order 12947 to identify four additional persons, including Usama bin Laden, who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process.

Because these terrorist activities continue to threaten the Middle East peace process and continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States, the national emergency declared on January 23, 1995, as expanded on August 20, 1998, and the measures adopted on those dates to deal with that emergency must continue in effect beyond January 23, 2006. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing for 1 year the national emergency with respect to foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
January 18, 2006.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register,  
11:47 a.m., January 19, 2006]

NOTE: This notice was published in the *Federal Register* on January 20.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders on  
Continuation of the National  
Emergency With Respect to  
Terrorists Who Threaten To Disrupt  
the Middle East Peace Process**

January 18, 2006

*Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice, stating that the emergency declared with respect to foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process is to continue in effect beyond January 23, 2006. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on January 21, 2005 (70 FR 3277).

The crisis with respect to the grave acts of violence committed by foreign terrorists who disrupt the Middle East peace process that led to the declaration of a national emergency on January 23, 1995, as expanded on August 20, 1998, has not been resolved. Terrorist groups continue to engage in activities that have the purpose or effect of threatening the Middle East peace process and that are hostile to United States interests in the region. Such actions constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United

States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process and to maintain in force the economic sanctions against them to respond to this threat.

Sincerely,

**George W. Bush**

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate.

**Remarks on the National Economy  
and a Question-and-Answer Session  
in Sterling, Virginia**

January 19, 2006

**The President.** Thanks for having me. Please be seated. Thanks for coming to say hello. What I thought I'd do is share some thoughts with you and then answer questions for a while. Before I do, I want to thank Randy and the Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce for setting this up. I appreciate you all coming.

I've got something to say, and I hope you do as well, as we have a conversation about how to make sure this economy of ours continues to stay robust and strong—so people can find work and realize their dreams.

Before I talk about the economy, I do want to say Laura sends her regrets. She came home last night about 12:45. She just came back from Africa, where she and my daughter Barbara and Condi Rice went to witness the swearing-in of the first elected woman President on the continent of Africa. They had a great trip. She said it was an inspiring inauguration. I just wish she'd have tiptoed in a little quieter. [*Laughter*]

She's doing great. You know, one of the best things about the Presidency is how close our family has remained and how wonderful a wife and mother she is. And the American people are getting to see that.

Speaking about families, Chuck Kuhn's family is pretty remarkable—turns out his mother works for him. [*Laughter*] That's the opposite in my family. [*Laughter*] I need a

little advice on how to—[laughter]—restructure the chain of command in the Bush family. [Laughter] But I love being here in a place where a guy who had a dream at age 17 years old—that’s how old Chuck was when he started to act on his entrepreneurial instincts—said, “If I work hard and if I’m smart and if I figure out what the market wants, I can build something that I call my own.” And 23 years later, we’re standing, obviously, in what has become a very successful business enterprise, successful because he is thriving and expanding, successful because he has provided people a good place to make a living. And so I want to thank you, Chuck, for being a great entrepreneur.

I want to thank the folks who work here for setting this deal up. I’m here to talk about how to make sure that America is the place where the entrepreneur can succeed. That’s what we’re really here to discuss, isn’t it? And it’s a wonderful place to have that discussion.

Before we get there, I want to thank the attorney general, Bob McDonnell of the State of Virginia—the Commonwealth of Virginia, for being here. Appreciate you. He’s sitting next to an old Governor buddy of mine, Bill Graves. He was the Governor of Kansas during the time I was the Governor of Texas. And I used to remind him he made a really smart move when he married a woman from Texas. [Laughter] Still married, aren’t you? Yes. [Laughter] Good move. [Laughter] The best deal that’s ever happened to you. It’s great to see you. Bill is the president and CEO of the American Trucking Association.

I want to thank all the other State and local officials who are here, but most importantly, I want to thank the small-business owners who are here.

I was interested to find out that Loudoun County is the home of 10,000 small businesses, 80 percent of which have got 10 employees or less. It’s pretty strong, isn’t it? Amazing. Probably one of the reasons why you’re growing so fast is that people realize this is a good place to take risk, and that’s really the role of Government, when you think about it.

I like to tell people the role of Government is not to try to create wealth; that’s not the role of Government. Oh, sure, the role of

Government is to help the poor and help the elderly with medicine, but it’s not to try to create overall wealth. The role of Government is to create an environment in which people are willing to risk capital, to take risk, an environment in which people are willing to work to realize their dreams—just like here at this trucking company. That’s the fundamental policy—the principle on which I’m basing my decisions as I ask Congress to think about how to make sure the economic growth that is now prevalent in America continues.

We have got a robust economy, but it wasn’t necessarily going to be that way—when you think about what we’ve been through, it kind of helps point to what good policy may be. We’ve been through a stock market correction. We’ve been through corporate scandals, which affected the confidence of people. We have been through a terrorist attack, which hurt our economy. We have been through war. We’ve had significant natural disasters. All of which could have sent us into a downward spiral had we not put good policy in place.

We’ve overcome these issues, and I believe one of the main reasons why is because we let people keep more of their own money. I asked Congress for tax relief. I believe strongly that if the entrepreneurs of America have more money in their pocket, they will use it to expand their businesses. I believe more—very strongly that if a consumer has more money in their pocket, they will demand extra goods and services. And when somebody demands an extra good and service in a market economy, somebody is going to produce it to meet that demand.

And so I went to Congress and said, “Look, we’ve got problems; let’s be aggressive about how we address it; let’s cut the taxes on everybody.” I remember the debate, they said only some people should have tax cuts. So we lowered rates for everybody. If you all have tax relief, everybody who pays taxes ought to get relief; you ought not to try to play favorites with who gets it and who doesn’t get it.

We mitigated the damage of the marriage penalty. I always thought it was a little contradictory to have a Tax Code that discouraged marriage. Seems like to me we ought

to encourage marriage in this country, and the Tax Code ought to encourage that.

We lowered taxes on dividends and capital gains because we want to encourage investment. We put the death tax on the road to extinction. The death tax is a punitive tax for small businesses and farmers and ranchers. It's a tax you pay—you know, you're paying income tax when you're making money; you're paying tax to the Government, that's fine. And then you die, and then your heirs get to pay it all over again, and that doesn't seem fair. It seems like to me that you want a tax system that encourages families to be able to—a family member to pass their assets on to whomever they choose without the Government making it impossible to do so. And so the death tax was put on its way to extinction. I said, put on its way to extinction; the problem is the way the law was written. It's coming back to life in 2011, which is going to make some interesting estate issues, particularly in 2010.

We increased the child credit. We want to help families who have got children. One of the things that's really important for Congress to recognize is that most new jobs in America are created by small businesses. If you're interested in job growth, then you've got to be thinking about, where's the engine for growth? And it's the small-business owner. Seventy percent of new jobs in America are created by small-business owners and entrepreneurs. Many small businesses pay tax at the individual income tax level—sole proprietorships, subchapter S, you know. These are structures in which people are able to grow their businesses, but they're advantageous to the owners of business. And yet, you pay individual income tax rates.

So when you hear me talking about, "We cut taxes on individuals," you also have to recognize we cut taxes on small businesses. And if you want there to be job creation to offset the trauma that our economy has been through, our country has been through, then it makes sense to say to the job creators, "Here's a little more money for you in your pocket."

We also encouraged investment. You might remember we made it tax advantageous to increase investment in plant equipment if you're a small-business owner.

All the policies that I'm describing to you were aimed at saying to the small-business sector, "We understand your importance; here's how to help you grow."

The other thing that you've got to understand in Washington is that you hear a lot of debate about the deficit, and it's an important debate, don't get me wrong. But in my judgment, the best way to solve the deficit is to grow the economy, not run up your taxes. See, there is a myth in Washington—they say, "All we've got to do is just raise the taxes a little bit, and we'll solve the deficit." No, that's not how it works. They're going to run up your taxes, but they're going to find new ways to spend the money and not solve the deficit. That's how Washington works.

The best way, it seems like to me, to solve the deficit is to keep progrowth tax policies in place and do something on the spending side. And so I'm working with Congress—and I want to thank the Speaker and the Leader for supporting and passing lean budgets. I say "lean" because we've got one aspect of our budget that is not going to be lean. And that is any time we've got a kid in harm's way, he or she is going to have the best equipment, best training, best possible pay. That's what we owe the families of our military.

But on nonsecurity discretionary spending, we've slowed it down every year I've been in office. And, actually, the nondiscretionary—nonsecurity discretionary spending—I'm from Texas—[laughter]—is lower in '06 than it was in '05. We've actually reduced nonsecurity discretionary spending. The issue for the budget is mandatory spending. See, that's when—that means you don't have discretion over it; it's fixed by formula. The two biggest programs we face, of course, are—for mandatory spending increases—are Medicare and Social Security. And we're going to have to do something about it, and a lot of folks in Washington don't want to do anything about it—it's too hard, politically.

I want to share some thoughts with you about my view of "too hard, politically." I think we're supposed to do the hard things, politically. I think the job of a President and

jobs of leaders in Congress from both political parties should—confront problems now and not pass them on to future generations. And we've got a problem with Social Security and Medicare, and I'll tell you why. We've got a bunch of baby boomers like me getting ready to retire. As a matter of fact, I'm 62 years old in the year 2008—it's a perfect fit. [Laughter] And there are a lot of us. I'm looking at some of them here. And we've been promised greater benefits than previous generations.

The politicians that ran for office said, "Vote for me; I'll make sure your Social Security benefits go faster than the rate of inflation." And as a result of a lot of us retiring and fewer people paying the system, the deal is going broke. And it's hard for me to travel our country and look at hard-working people paying payroll taxes to a system that I know is going broke. And it should be hard for Republicans and Democrats on Capitol Hill as well.

And so I just want to assure you that no matter how hard it may seem for some, I'm going to keep talking about it. That's the job of a President, is to remind people of the challenges.

There's a long-term deficit issue as a result of a system which is out of balance and out of kilter; and we need to do something about it now; we have that obligation. The Senate has the chance—or the House now has the chance to pass a budget bill, or an appropriations bill, reconciliation bill that actually starts to cut mandatory spending by making reforms. The deal passed out of the House, passed out of the Senate, now it has to go back to the House. And it would be a good-faith gesture on people from both political parties to say, "We see we've got a problem on mandatory spending; why don't we start reforming the system for the sake of future generations of Americans."

Things are going well, by the way, in the economy. We added 4.6 million new jobs since April of 2003. What I'm telling you is, the tax plan is working, and here's why I can say it to you without having to throw some hot air your way. Since April of 2003, 4.6 million new jobs have been created—not by government, but by entrepreneurs. We had a national unemployment rate of 4.9 per-

cent—I think it's 2 percent, 2-point-something percent here in Loudoun County. But think about—[applause]—the economy grew at 4.1 percent in the third quarter. And that's in spite of high energy prices—or higher energy prices and two storms. Think about that. Think of how robust our economy is when it's growing at 4.1 percent in the third quarter of this year, in the face of storm and high energy prices. It's got to affect your business, doesn't it, all those high energy prices. And yet, you're growing.

In other words, we've got an economy which is robust. The interesting statistic is the manufacturing activity has been up for 31 straight months. You hear a lot of talk about manufacturers and the trouble with manufacturers, and of course, there are some trouble. But we've had growth for 31 straight months. Productivity is up. That's a really important statistic for our country because productivity—as a worker becomes more productive, as the workforce is more productive, higher wages follow; that's just a fact of life.

Do you realize that from 1973 to 1995, productivity in America grew at 1.4 percent. At that rate, the standard of living doubles every 50 years. Today, our productivity is up, averaged 3.4 percent over the past 5 years. In other words, we're more productive as time goes on. Technology enables our workers to be more productive. Education enables our workers to be more productive. Smart business leaders are constantly trying to figure out how to make their companies more productive. The more productive a workforce is, the faster incomes go up.

So what I'm saying is, things are going fine. I mean, you know, we've got more minorities ever before in our country owning their own home. Homeownership is on the rise. And the fundamental question facing us is, what do we do to keep it going? What do we do? Well, first thing is, Congress needs to make the tax relief permanent. You know, this relief is set to expire. The easy course is, of course, say, "Well, then just let it expire." That's a tax increase if the tax relief expires. When you hear people say, "Well, we're not going to make it permanent," what they're telling you is they're going to run up your taxes; that's what they're saying.

Failure to make tax relief permanent is a tax raise on the working people and the small businesses in this country. If you're a small-business owner, there's got to be certainty in the Tax Code. Congress needs to put themselves in the shoes of people who are trying to plan. Good business owners, good small-business owners don't think, you know, 2 months in advance; they think years in advance; they're making capital schedules; they're thinking about how to grow their company; they're constantly strategizing. Uncertainty in the Tax Code makes it hard for the small-business sector to stay confident and to make investments. And when there is uncertainty, it makes it harder for this economy to show steady growth.

So people need to make this tax cut permanent so we don't take money out of your pocket. And we need to make the tax cuts permanent so there will be certainty when it comes time for small businesses to plan.

I understand there's a problem in health care, and I suspect during the question-and-answer, we'll get questions on health care. One of the biggest problems our small businesses have is the increase in health care. The role of Government, in my judgment, is to take care of the poor through Medicaid and community health centers. The role of the Government, in my judgment, is to take care of the elderly through a Medicare program which is modern, and by the way, provides choices for our seniors. But I also think the role of Government is to encourage a direct relationship between the consumer/the patient, and the provider/the doctor, without a lot of go-between.

I think that—I know that small businesses should be allowed the same affordability of health care that big businesses get by being able to pool across jurisdictional boundaries, pool your risk. If you're a restaurant owner in here Loudoun County and a restaurant owner in Crawford—I think there are a couple of restaurants here. *[Laughter]* If not, there will be. No, there is a good one, The Coffee Shop—I mean, Coffee Station, excuse me. But they should be allowed to pool their risk across jurisdictional boundaries. In other words, the larger the risk pool, the more employees you're able to get in a risk pool, the easier it is to manage your costs when it

comes to health insurance. You can't do that now. And Congress should be allowed—encourage you to be able to pool risk.

An interesting product available is called health savings accounts. I strongly urge every small-business owner here to look at them. It's an innovative product that enables the small-business owner and the employee to combine, work together to come up with a plan where the employee owns it. It provides for a high deductible catastrophic plan, coupled with tax-free contributions in the plan, basically gives the consumer control over his or her medical decisions. The plan can grow tax-free, which is an encouragement for people to make wise decisions about how they treat their body. If you have a catastrophic event, the insurance kicks in and covers it. It's portable; if you change jobs, you can take it with you. It's a good—it's an interesting idea.

It certainly stands in stark contrast with a system in which the Federal Government gets to make the consumers decisions, or tells the providers what they can charge. It's the opposite of Federal control; it is patient control.

We need—do a lot on information technology. The health care industry is inefficient in that you've still got people filing out forms with handwritten notes. And doctors can't write anyway—*[laughter]*—and it creates a lot of confusion, as you can imagine.

We need to have legal reform. I mean, you can't have a legal system—I mean, a medical system that's available and affordable when you've got your doctors being sued. Do you realize we've got a crisis when it comes to ob-gyns in America? These good docs who have got the great compassionate job of taking care of youngins, they're getting run out of business because of frivolous and junk lawsuits. It makes no sense.

When I first came to Washington, I said, you know, "This is a State issue." But the problem with all these junk lawsuits is that they cause doctors to practice defensive medicine. In other words, they prescribe more than they should because they're afraid of getting sued. And when you practice defensive medicine, it makes the cost of medicine go up. And when you couple that with increasing premiums, it costs us a lot of money

at the Federal level—I'm talking billions a year as the result of junk lawsuits.

And good small-business owners have trouble affording health care; part of the reason why is because of these junk lawsuits. And so I've decided this is a national issue that requires a national response. We need medical liability reform in Washington, DC, so that health care is available and affordable.

Laura always says I get too long-winded when I come to one of these deals—[*laughter*—and so I'll try to rein it in here. I've got something to say, though.

We've got to do something about lawsuits, in general, not just medical lawsuits. One of the things I hear a lot from small-business owners is they're afraid of getting sued. I mean, we've got a society which is litigious in nature. People are just suing right and left. That makes it—that runs up the cost of staying in business. It makes it harder for people to work. Of course, if you have a legitimate lawsuit, you ought to get—you know, have your day in court. Everybody understands that. It's just these frivolous lawsuits.

And we're trying to do some things about it in Washington. We've got a class-action lawsuit reform passed. We're trying to get asbestos reform passed. We got bankruptcy passed. We got manufacturers liability passed when it comes to firearms. I mean, we're making some progress when it comes to lawsuit reform. I urge the attorney general here to—urge the Governor in the Commonwealth to pass good lawsuit reform as well. It's a really important issue for the vibrancy of our economy.

Now, energy, real quick. Look, we're hooked on foreign sources of oil, and we need to do something about it, pure and simple. I've got a strong faith in technology being able to lead us away from a hydrocarbon society. It's going to take awhile. But the Federal Government has a role to invest in research and development. I envision a day when we're using corn, corn husks, different kind of grasses to be able to convert that into energy.

Down in Brazil, they've got enormous amounts of energy they get from their sugarcane. Their automobiles are flex-fuel automobiles; they're able to convert from gasoline to ethanol made by sugarcane on an easy

basis. I mean, it's coming. And the role of the Federal Government is to encourage these new technologies, to be able to make us less dependent on foreign sources of oil.

We need to be—we ought to have more nuclear power in the United States of America. It's clean; it's renewable; it's safer than it ever was in the past. And we need to be thinking about how we can use solar batteries better. I mean, there's a lot of things we can be doing. I'm confident that with the right policies and the right incentives, technology will help us diversify away from a hydrocarbon world.

But we've got plenty of certain kinds of hydrocarbons we can use, coal. I'm also convinced, with the right expenditure of money, that we'll be able to have zero-emissions coal-fired plants that will make us less dependent. Do you realize we've got about 250 years of coal here in America? It seems like to me, a wise investment is to figure out how to use that coal in a way that heats your homes and fuels your businesses, and at the same time, protects the environment. So we have to think about how to incorporate new technologies to diversify away from foreign sources of energy, not only for economic security but for national security purposes.

I want to talk real quick about trade. I believe it's important to open up markets. I think it's a mistake for this country to go isolationist when it comes to economic policy. Do you realize we're 5 percent of the world's population, which means 95 percent of the rest of them could be customers, so long as we've got a level playing field. My job is to make sure that if you're producing a product, that it has fair access to markets. We ought to treat people—people ought to treat us just like we treat them. And I'm a strong believer that if the playing field is level, this country can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere. And if we can't, we ought to figure out why not. Competition is good, so long as it's fair competition.

And finally, I want to talk about education. As you expand your businesses, as they become—you know, as they change because of technology, you're going to need a workforce that is capable of filling the jobs. We've got to make sure we get education right in the United States, otherwise the jobs of the 21st

century are going to go somewhere else. This is a competitive world in which we live; there's no way to deny that there's competition in the world. We can play like it. We can put up, you know, foolish, short-term economic policies that will hurt the small-business sector, protectionist policies. But it's a competitive world, and people are going to go to where the skill sets of the labor market are such that they'll be able to produce the products of the 21st century. It's a reality.

So what do you do about it? Well, the first thing you do about it is you make sure your kids at the elementary school get an education; teach them how to read, write, and add and subtract. The No Child Left Behind Act is a great piece of legislation. I think as small-business owners, you'll understand where I'm coming from. It says, you've got to measure to determine whether or not you're succeeding.

I was concerned when I was the Governor of Texas that we had an education system that didn't measure, and therefore, we didn't know. And oftentimes when you don't know whether a child can read and write and add and subtract, they just end up being shuffled through the system. I believe that we ought to measure. As a matter of fact, we are now measuring as a result of the No Child Left Behind Act that says, "We want to determine whether or not you can read at grade level by the third grade and whether or not you're grade level at the fourth grade and the fifth grade and so on. And if not, here's some money to help you make sure the child is up at grade level."

You cannot solve a problem until you diagnose a problem. And the No Child Left Behind Act is a diagnostic tool for local school districts. We're not telling you how to run your schools; that's up to you. We didn't design a Federal test; we just said, "You design an accountability system." And it's working. We have an achievement gap in America that is not right and needs to be closed. We have too many African American kids not reading at grade level, and they should be. And I say a lot of that is due to just moving kids through without determining early whether or not they've got the skills necessary to read, write, and add and subtract. And we're changing that. The achievement gap is clos-

ing. It's a really positive development. I can tell you how I know, because we measure, and we solve problems early, before it's too late.

We've got to have these same high standards in high school, with an emphasis on math and science. We've got to use our community college systems to constantly upgrade the skills of people. As you know, the job market changes. And the easiest thing for a society is to have technological change; the hardest thing is to make sure that the education systems are flexible enough to help the job market change with technology.

Community college is a great asset in our country. They're available; they're affordable. And if they're run right, they have a curriculum that changes with the times. They're not one of these institutions to just stay stuck. They're an institution that says, "We're going to change our curriculum to be able to educate people for the jobs which actually exist." That's what we need to do, what I'm telling you.

So I'm going to go to Congress here pretty soon and call on them to put economic policy, energy policy, health policy in place that understands that this economy is strong, but we need to do the right things to keep it going—with the centerpiece of our economic policy being the small business in America.

Anyway, that's all I've got to tell you right now. I'll be glad to answer a few questions. Yes, sir.

### **Transportation**

**Q.** [Inaudible]

**The President.** Thank you.

**Q.** [Inaudible]

**The President.** You have got a transportation problem here.

**Q.** [Inaudible]—Northern Virginia. Down time in traffic is loss of productive time for businesses, and it's time away from home and family for individuals. We don't get to use helicopters. [Laughter]

**The President.** Right. I won't in 3 years, either. [Laughter]

**Q.** How can the Federal Government help States and localities address transportation problems?

**The President.** We passed the highway bill, and it's set. Congress argued about it,

and I argued with them about it. And it's a \$270 billion-plus bill that is the law for a period of time, and now it's up to you to spend the money allocated to you by formula in a wise way. I think it's an issue where the Federal Government's responsibility is clear on the law. And that is that we take the gasoline taxes and pass them back to you, but you get to decide where the roads go. And that's probably the way it should be.

I was noticing that the inauguration—or the campaign for Governor here, part of the campaign was roads. And that's good; that's the way it should be. People say, "Vote for me; I'm going to do something about your roads or I hear your problem with your roads." And so you want the decisionmaking about the roads to be here at the local level. But the Federal Government's role in highways is pretty well fixed for 5 or 6 years.

Yes, sir. Go ahead and yell it out.

### **Taxation**

**Q.** Yes, good morning. I'm a CPA here in Loudoun County.

**The President.** Right.

**Q.** [Inaudible]—prepare a couple hundred tax returns a year, and the IRS does not spend a lot of time auditing. The last administration turned the IRS into a customer service department. And here, the last 3 years, it's been reorganized. There's quite a few people that do not comply. I really think that the IRS needs to get out there and audit. I hope none of my clients are here. [Laughter]

**The President.** That's a very unbelievably interesting statement from a—[laughter]. No, but you've got a good point. Look, here's the point the man is saying. He's right. There are too many honest people—first of all, there are people who feel like they don't have to pay taxes, and that's not fair to the millions of honest people who do. A tax system is—[applause].

Look, I don't know the inner workings of the IRS; I know there is strong enforcement. And with the millions of filings, I would suspect there's programs in place that highlight irregularities that then call up the audits. I don't think you can ever audit everybody, nor would you subscribe for everybody being audited who files a return. But if there's fla-

grant anomalies in reporting, I suspect they take a good look at it.

You'll be pleased to hear that I'm audited every year—[laughter]—one way or the other. More than happy to put out my income tax returns for my friends in the press to scrutinize. [Laughter] I see them nodding—yes, they love—[laughter]—as it should be, by the way, for people in public office. Those of us in public office have the high responsibility to uphold the integrity of the process. And people ought to be held to high standards. In Washington, DC, there needs to be high standards for conduct of public officials.

Yes, sir.

### **Homeownership/Market Adjustments**

**Q.** [Inaudible]

**The President.** Homebuilder, good.

**Q.** [Inaudible]—substantially over the past housing boom. And I guess my question is, as the consequence of this great housing boom has increased the cost of housing so much not only in this area but throughout the country, it's very difficult for me to envision my kids being able to afford a home, or even the workforce that drives much of, you know, our school systems and our police and fire forces—[inaudible]. How do you see the Federal Government helping this workforce out—[inaudible]—to be able to afford housing close to where their jobs are?

**The President.** Markets adjust, and the role of the Government is to make sure the market is able to adjust in a way that is not precipitous and disruptive. When you have wage and price controls, for example, in history, it's tended to not allow the market to adjust in a smooth function, a smooth way. It doesn't function properly. And therefore, the consequences of Government trying to either manage price or demand is very severe.

So to answer your question, one role of the Government is to make sure that markets are given the flexibility to adjust in a way that doesn't cause major disruption. If houses get too expensive, people will stop buying them, which will cause people to adjust their spending habits.

Secondly, setting of interest rates affects your business. You'll be happy to hear that

the White House doesn't set interest rates; the Federal Reserve Board sets interest rates. I get to name the Chairman; I named a good guy in Ben Bernanke. But it's their job to be independent from the political process and look at market forces—in all aspects of our economy—to determine the interest rate to be set. Obviously, they look at inflation, consumer demand, et cetera.

And so to answer your question, a simple answer is, let the market function properly. Let the market function properly. I guarantee that your kind of question has been asked throughout the history of homebuilding—you know, prices for my homes are getting bid up so high that I'm afraid I'm not going to have any consumers—or my kid—and yet, things cycle. That's just the way it works. Economies should cycle. We just don't want the cycles to be so severe that it gets disruptive so that, you know, you get thrown out of business, for example, or somebody gets thrown out of work.

Yes, ma'am.

### **Health Care Reform**

**Q.** Thank you for coming to Loudoun County, Mr. President. I run a nonprofit that provides health care to the uninsured—

**The President.** Good.

**Q.** —something near and dear to your heart—45 million uninsured people in the country, and of course, Loudoun County is no different. We provide health care free by volunteer physicians who are involved in a nonprofit, and it's a good private-public partnership. You talked about creating health—[inaudible]—as part of the health care delivery systems. We, too, are part of health care delivery systems. How do you see your role and the Government's role in helping us do what we do, when we've discovered recently that we're not going away anytime in the near future?

**The President.** Yes. Well, first, I think there ought to be—well, first, there are tax incentives to encourage people to contribute to your nongovernmental organization, which is good. That's what we want. We want people to have a Tax Code such that if you give to your group or a church, synagogue, or mosque, or somebody whose job it is to help the unfortunate, you get a deduction for it.

Secondly, the uninsured is—first of all, there's the working uninsured; a lot of them work for small businesses because small businesses can't afford insurance. A small-business owner would like to pay for the insurance, but the cost of medicine is increasing.

And I just gave you two prescriptions for that. One is—well, a bunch of prescriptions—to help control the cost and enable small businesses to be able to manage the expense. If you stand alone as a small-business owner—10,000 businesses, 80 percent of which have got 10 employers or less—and you try to buy insurance as an employer of 10 people, it's going to cost you a heck of a lot more than if you try to buy insurance with your 10 people in a pool of 5,000 people. It's just the way insurance works. It's called spreading the risk.

There are some in the uninsured world who simply choose not to buy insurance. That would be your bulletproof 22-year-old person—you know, just out of college—[laughter]—“I'm never going to be sick; nothing ever bad is going to happen, I just don't think I'm going to want any.” [Laughter]

Health savings account is an interesting opportunity for the young 22-year-old healthy person, who is able to put money aside, tax-free, and watch that money grow, tax-free, and take the money out of the health savings account, tax-free, coupled with a high deductible catastrophic health plan. In other words, this is a product that will say to those who choose, here's an opportunity for you. You start putting aside \$1,000 a year—in other words, you buy a high deductible policy with a \$1,000 deductible, and you put the \$1,000 cash—you do or your employer does, or however you negotiate it—that \$1,000 grows. And it can grow to be pretty substantial, particularly as you're a healthy person, over a period of time, tax-free. And all of a sudden, you've got quite a nest egg.

I'm going to call on Congress, by the way, to make these health savings accounts more attractive, more portable, more individualized.

There are some who come to our country that don't have any health insurance, but work. We've got immigrants coming that can't afford health care. Their employers—

the type of job they have is one that doesn't lend itself to health care. One way the Government can help is to have community health centers as primary care facilities, to deliver health care and take the pressure off the emergency rooms. We're expanding these a lot. In my judgment, it's a good use of taxpayers' money to provide health clinics for the poor and the indigent. So that they don't go to where the health care is more expensive, the emergency room, but go to where the health care—primary health is more manageable.

And so there's a series of ways to address the issue. But the truth of the matter is, Government policy has got to aim at the increasing cost of health care.

Part of the issue in Medicare is the projections of health care costs going up the way they are. The issues that small-business owners face in the short term is increasing premiums. And so we need medical liability reform to help address the costs. We need to encourage information technologies, and I'm told that there would be a significant reduction of medical costs as we modernize medicine and bring medicine into the 21st century through the use of information technology.

Health savings accounts encourage consumers to pay attention to price. There needs to be transparency in pricing. Do you realize the medical field is one where you don't do any comparative shopping? When you buy tile, I presume, for your house, you're out there shopping it. You know, say, look, what am I bid? You know, when you're buying pipe or things you put in the wall, insulation, you're out there bidding price. There's no transparency in pricing in medicine. You don't know whether the guy next door is going to offer a better deal when it comes to some kind of medical procedure.

It seems like to me the more transparency in pricing, the more likely it is consumers will have an input into the cost of health care. And so these are ways to address the cost of health care. Obviously, as health care costs—the rate of increase is manageable, there will be less people coming in to see you.

One of the reasons why the uninsured is going up, because the cost is going up. And so the Government needs to address the cost.

There is a debate in Washington. Some will say the way to address the cost is to have the Federal Government be the decider, the decider for the consumer and the decider for the provider, and that will be—in my judgment—terrible for this country. And so this is—we're talking about a very important and interesting debate. And I'm going to continue pushing policies that address cost and empower the patient and the doctor into a relationship that is not only good for the patient but also one in which I think will affect the pricing mechanisms and the prices here in the country.

Yes, ma'am.

#### **U.S. Armed Forces**

**Q.** [*Inaudible*]*—and we're proud of you Mr. President, and your—*

**The President.** Keep it up, will you? [*Laughter*] About time.

**Q.** [*Inaudible*]

**The President.** Thank you. [*Laughter*] It's always good to have a plant in every audience, you know? [*Laughter*]

**Q.** Well, the timing of this opportunity is uncanny. I want to thank you for your unwavering support of the Veterans Administration. My father spent the last 2 years at the Martinsburg, West Virginia VA, where he was loved and respected and so well cared for. And we buried him 2 weeks ago in Arlington, and it struck me then how strong the promise still is for our veterans and our wonderful men and women of the service. And I thank you.

**The President.** Thanks. You know what I thought just when you said that at first, our country is great because we've got a lot of people who have been willing to serve. It's really important that we keep an all-volunteer military. And one way to do that is to make sure that people are paid well, or as good as you can pay them; that they're trained well; that their loved ones have got adequate housing on the bases—in other words, family life is good; that the education systems work on our bases. But also after service, there is a health care system that will provide modern health care for them.

So thanks for bringing that up. The Volunteer Army is really an important part of our Nation, and it's a really important part of

fighting this war on terror. We've got kids who know the stakes. They saw the attack on September the 11th. They have made a conscious decision to swear-in to serve the country. So thanks for brining that up. I just wanted to share that with you, to tell you that our troops are always on my mind; their families are always on my mind. And it's important to leave a legacy behind of a strong military based upon patriotic Americans saying, "I want to serve. I'm stepping up. Nobody is telling me to. I have made the decision to do so."

Yes, sir.

#### **President's Personal Values/Leadership**

**Q.** Good morning, Mr. President, thank you for being here. My son is one of those young men, at 18 years old almost—I hope I don't cry, but I——

**The President.** I hope you don't, too, because I will, as well, and then we—[laughter].

**Q.** Okay. He asked me to take him to the Army recruiter. He didn't drive yet, but he wanted to go to the Army recruiter to join the Army. He's in the National Guard in Christiansburg, Virginia. And he's also at the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets.

**The President.** Oh, good, thanks. I know you're proud of him.

**Q.** Yes, I am.

**The President.** Good.

**Q.** He sends his best wishes to you.

**The President.** To the old Commander in Chief, that's a smart move, you know. [Laughter]

**Q.** He and I discussed a question, and I want to ask you. Most people in this room today are leaders of some type. I'm a leader of an adult education center for Marymount University. And my question to you is how do you remain upbeat when you're surrounded by the burdens of leadership?

**The President.** Thanks. My faith and my family and my friends, for starters. I like going home to be with my family. I was teasing about Laura waking me up this morning at 12:45 a.m., but I'm glad she did. I take great pride in my little girls. I'm not going to talk about them too much, otherwise these people will put it in the newspaper. And I'm trying—[Laughter]. Right, Jackson [David Jackson, USA Today]? I'm trying to spare

them because I think that one of the hardest decisions about going into public life is exposing people you love to the public nature of public life.

I'm proud to tell you that my friends that I knew before I became in public office are still my friends. One of the coolest things to do in my Presidential work, one of the—[laughter]—seeing if you're paying attention up there—[laughter]—things I like to do is to welcome my buddies. And Laura feels the same way, people we grew up with—we both grew up in Midland, Texas. I remember having some of my friends that I went to first grade with, a guy I grew up across the street with, Michael Proctor, they came up to have dinner at the White House. You know, and they kind of walk in there. You can imagine what it's like. It's a great honor, pretty awe-inspiring deal. They walk in there and, kind of, "What are you doing here, Bush?" You know. [Laughter]

But I really like it. And they're my friends. They help me keep—help me remind myself that what's important is what you believe. And leaders have got to know the core principles on which you'll make decisions, and you can't change. There's a lot of temptation to change to try to make people want to like you. That's not the job of a leader. The job of a leader is to know where he or she wants to lead and know the principles on which you'll make decisions.

I take great comfort in having people around me who can walk in my office and tell me what's on their mind. Part of my job is—they say, "What's your job?" My job is, decisionmaker. I make a lot of decisions. Obviously, some of which you've seen, and a lot of them you don't. And they're big ones and little ones, but you make a lot of decisions. And if you don't—if you're uncertain about all the facts surrounding a decision, you've got to rely upon people. And you've then got to create an environment in which people are willing to come in and say, "Here's what's on my mind."

It's important at the Presidential level. It's important in business. You've got to have people comfortable about saying, "Here's what I think you ought to do, Mr. CEO." You've got to listen and have a—I've always believed in a flat organizational chart. I think

the worst thing that can happen for decision-makers is to get a filtered point of view.

And it's pretty hard as President, needless to say, but I've got a group of people around me that are empowered to walk in. Condi Rice, when she walks in, she comes in as a close friend, but as someone who knows that our friendship will be sustained, whether she agrees with me or not. Rumsfeld comes in—and he's a crusty old guy who—[laughter]—and he's got an opinion, and he tells it. And that's important. And that's the way it is throughout the White House.

I like to tell people, the first decision I made as President was this—the guy called me—I was at the Blair House looking at my Inaugural speech, trying to get comfortable with it, get ready to go—it was a pretty big event coming up, and wanted to make sure that it worked well. And he said, “Mr. President-elect, what color rug do you want in the Oval Office?” I said, “Man, this is going to be a decisionmaking experience—[laughter]—what color rug do I want in the Oval Office?” [Laughter] He said, “No, I'm not kidding you.” Turns out Presidents design rugs. [Laughter] Or somebody designs them for them. And I said, “I don't know anything about rug designing,” so I delegated to Laura. [Laughter]

Interestingly enough, the job of a leader is to think strategically. It's important for your businesses; it's important for the country. And so she said, “Tell me about the rug.” And I said, “I want it to say, ‘optimistic person comes here to work every day.’” It was the strategic thought for the rug. She figured out the colors. It looks like a sun, with nice, open colors. You walk into that Oval Office, I think you're going to say, it looks like, you know, this guy is optimistic. I'm optimistic—by the way, you can't lead your company and say, “Follow me, the world is not going to be good.” You're not going to have a lot of employees say, “Great, I love working here,” you know. [Laughter] It's got to be, “Follow me, the world is going to be better, and I have a plan to do it.”

And one reason I'm optimistic is because I'm sustained by my faith, family, and friends. I'm also sustained by the fact that I believe strongly in the values of the United States of America: human rights, human dignity, in-

dividuals count, freedom is the future of the world. And I'm sustained by those beliefs.

And thanks for the question. It was an interesting question.

Yes.

### **Broadband Technology**

**Q.** On behalf of the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors, we welcome you.

**The President.** Thanks. Thanks for having me. You don't look old enough to have run. [Laughter]

**Q.** I'm the youngest member of the board. [Laughter]

**The President.** Yes, is this your board, here?

**Q.** This is—[inaudible].

**The President.** Yes, you certainly are the youngest, I can—[laughter]. He's a pretty young guy too.

**Q.** And you probably know we've got health savings accounts for our county employees—[inaudible].

**The President.** Good move. Good move.

**Q.** But on transportation, one of the solutions that I've been putting forward is telework and expansion of broadband.

**The President.** Yes.

**Q.** [Inaudible]—so that people don't get caught in traffic. But Congress is contemplating revisions to the Telecommunication Act of '96 that would essentially shut down the options that States and localities are exploring to give broadband to every business and every home. So what is your thought on, as we are falling behind in the world on delivering broadband to businesses and homes and residences—what will you do to—

**The President.** Yes, I need to find out—it's interesting you said that because I laid out the opposite vision, which was that broadband ought to be available and accessible all throughout the country by a set period of time. I need to make sure I understand what you mean—Congress is trying to unwind that vision, because it sounds like you and I share—I believe you. Thank you for the heads-up. I'll take a look.

You're very smart to—part of the role of Government is to create an environment in which people are willing to risk capital. Broadband expansion is part of creating an environment in which it will make it easier

for people to be competitive in this part of the world. It's a brilliant idea. People are able to do so much more from their home, particularly if you've got the technology capable of carrying information.

You're right—want to make sure—you mentioned that other nations are ahead of us. True, we're catching up, and we'll do better, by the way. But if part of making sure America is competitive, is to make sure that we've got broadband available and accessible. One of the interesting questions we're going to have is the last-mile issue, and a lot of that, hopefully, will be changed, or at least options—more options will be available with the development of a dish that is capable of passing broadband over the air, as opposed to cable.

Good question. I need to check and see what you're talking about, and will. Thanks for bringing it up.

Yes, ma'am.

#### **First Lady Laura Bush**

**Q.** [*Inaudible*]

**The President.** Yes, well——

**Q.** ——who happens to be one of the best First Ladies we've had.

**The President.** Thank you. I thought you might say "top two," but you know—[*laughter*].

**Q.** Well, the top two.

**The President.** If not, I won't tell her. [*Laughter*]

**Q.** I was just wondering, when we'll see our lovely First Lady run for the Senate in the——

**The President.** Never. [*Laughter*]

**Q.** Come on. Ask her, will you?

**The President.** No, I'm not going to ask her. Never. [*Laughter*] You know, I think—I'm pretty certain when I married her, she didn't like politics or politicians. [*Laughter*] She's a great lady. She's interested—she's not interested in running for office.

She is interested in literacy. We're going to meet with foundations later on today to encourage them to step in where Government can't step in, in New Orleans and the gulf coast. Laura is coming to the meeting. And the reason why is she wants to help these schools get their libraries up. She was a

school librarian, and she believes strongly in literacy.

I can remember her reading to the girls all the time. And I would encourage moms all over the country—and dads—to sit down and read to your young children over and over and over again. It's one of the lessons she taught me—right after she taught me how to read. [*Laughter*] She's great. Thank you for bringing her up. She's not going to run for office.

Yes, sir.

#### **Spread of Democracy/Progress in the Middle East**

**Q.** Mr. President, my wife, Sandy, and I send our prayers and our appreciation for all that you're doing and these difficult issues that you're dealing with. I'm a grandfather, about your age, but I have——

**The President.** You got started earlier.

**Q.** I got started a little earlier. And I'm really proud of my family. You touched on a lot of issues that really affect us. We have a health care provider and an attorney, in the building industry, in the defense industry, and a young grandson who is espousing to—[*inaudible*]—the military academy. We are very happy with the foundations that President Reagan and your father laid 23 years ago, about the time that—[*inaudible*]—started. We're building off of that today. We're living in that security, with a good defense system, and we have a strong economy, some of which extends from those days. Do you look forward—and what can I tell my grandchildren—do you look forward 20, 25 years from now and see a vision of America?

**The President.** Yes. I tell people this story a lot. When my dad was 18, he went to fight the Japanese. And some 60 years later, his son sits at the table with the Prime Minister of Japan, to help keep the peace. Someday, I firmly believe that leaders in the broader Middle East will be duly elected and will be sitting down with future American Presidents to keep the peace.

So part of the vision for your children and grandchildren is to understand history and the power of democracy and freedom and liberty to change enemies into allies. And I talk about a lot in my speeches, laying the foundation of peace. And I firmly believe that

what we're doing today is laying the foundation of peace.

I know—I know that some say democracy can't take hold in parts of the world, "You're wasting your time, Mr. President." I strongly disagree with that. The natural rights of men and women—that's part of our founding—says that inherent in every soul, I believe implanted by a higher being, is the desire to live in freedom, no matter the color of your skin or the religion you embrace. And so part of the vision is to lay that foundation of peace by believing and acting on the principles that caused our own existence to be and on principles and values that have proven over time to yield the peace.

Think about Europe. It's hard for some of us to think about Europe because Europe didn't really affect our lives, did it, much. But if you look back over the recent history of the United States and the world, two world wars started in Europe. And today, Europe is whole, free, and at peace because of democracy, in my judgment. The Far East—[*applause*].

And the reason this is important is because we're in an ideological struggle. The enemy which attacked us on September the 11th was not just acting out of anger, although they were not acting out of hate, although I believe their hearts are hateful, but they were acting based upon an ideology.

The best way to make sure the American people understand what happens when their ideology takes hold is to think about life in Afghanistan under the Taliban. If you're a young girl in Afghanistan under the Taliban, you have no chance for success. You have no chance for education. If your mother speaks out in the public square, you get whipped—she would get whipped. These people have a vision that is the opposite of America. Their vision is, "Here is my view of religion, and if you don't agree with me, you're in trouble."

Our belief is, is that what matters is your view of religion; you can choose. The great freedom in America is the ability to choose your religion, to be religious or not religious. We're equally American—Jew, Muslim, Christian—we're all equally American in this country. That's the opposite of what these people think. They have got a strategy;

they've got a goal, which is to spread this vision throughout the world, starting in the broader Middle East. I say it's to go from Spain to Indonesia, to establish their—a caliphate with their point of view. These are ideologs.

And so you defeat an ideology with a better ideology. If there's no competition, if there's a vacuum, if there's poverty, hunger, and anxiety and a vacuum is created because of that, this ideology will move in. However, there is a competing ideology available. If there's an alternative for people to choose from, then all of a sudden their march to their vision is impeded in the long run. And democracy is the alternative: Liberty.

It's not American-style democracy. Japan didn't say, "Let's just look like America." Japan said, "We'll have a democracy that suits our needs." That's the way democracies develop. They develop with history and culture of the people in mind.

And so what you're seeing in Iraq is two-fold: One, a commitment to defeat an enemy overseas so they don't hit us again, coupled with allowing these Iraqis to live a dream of being free. And it's tough work; it's tough because some of the enemy are these ideologs that are trying to stop the march of freedom. Some of them are people that are irritated because Saddam is not in power. They liked it being the, you know, the power elite. Some of them are wondering whether or not—the Sunni rejectionists are wondering whether or not they'll even have a say in the future government and therefore are nervous given the dynamics and the demographics. But some of them are people there intent upon destroying the advance of democracy because they understand—they know that they can't compete with liberty.

And the amazing thing that happened last year that I hope—at least gives me heart is that millions of Iraqis made a choice. They defied terrorists. We see them. The terrorists have got a weapon: It's called our TV screens. These people are coldblooded killers; I'm telling you. As you know, I don't need to tell you that. And what they're trying to do is they're trying to drive us out before democracy can take hold because they understand—I haven't talked to one so I'm not exactly sure—I'm putting words in somebody's

mouth. I would suspect, though, deep in their soul, they understand they can't compete. Their ideology cannot compete with liberty.

And so to answer your question—it's a long answer, but it's an important question. The President has got to be thinking down the road. We've got a short-term battle we're going to win, but there's a long-term struggle as well. It's an ideological struggle.

At home, I think two things that I would like to be remembered for, and one is promoting ownership. I want people to own something. I want people owning their own small business. I want people owning their own homes. I think people ought to be allowed to own their own health care account and make decisions for what is best for them. And there ought to be incentives. I know a vibrant Social Security system is one in which people are able to take some of their own money if they so choose and put in a personal savings account so they can get a better rate of return on their own money than the Government can get through the Social Security trust. But more importantly, I want people owning something.

I'll never forget going to a Mississippi automobile manufacturing plant. And I was on—a lot of the floor workers there, you know. And I said, "How many of you own your own 401(k)?" Just needless to say it was a very diverse audience. I don't know, I'd say 95 percent of the hands went up—men, women, black, white. I said, "How's it feel to own your own assets?"

See, one of the problems we've had that shows—what we found out in New Orleans there's not—there wasn't a lot of—we take—some things we take for granted like the generations passing assets from one generation to the next just didn't happen in the African American community, and should. We ought to encourage—we take that for granted, don't we? Some of us do. You know, you pass the house on. A lot of these people didn't own their own homes. A lot of them didn't have checking accounts. And yet one of the things we ought to encourage is systems—is reforms that enable somebody to own something so they can pass it on to their child. It's part of creating stability and

healthy families and strength. And so I want to be known as an ownership guy.

I also want to be known as the person that kept the de Tocqueville vision for America alive—de Tocqueville was a Frenchman. He came to America in the 1830s, and he studied America, and he came away impressed by our democracy, but really impressed by the fact that people came together to serve a greater cause through voluntary organizations. People said, well, how best to help—in a vibrant society, help a neighbor? And that is they formed what you call voluntary organizations to help a neighbor in need. The great strength of this country is the fact that there are millions of loving souls in America who are willing to reach out to somebody in need.

I always say, Government can't love; it's just not a loving organization. There are people who work for Government who have love in their heart, but Government, itself, is not loving. It ought to be law and justice. In my judgment, Government ought to be constantly thinking about ways to rally what I call the armies of compassion, so that light can head into the dark corners of our country; so that people who have heard the call to love a neighbor are empowered to do so and encouraged to do so.

One of the most—I think one of the most important and interesting domestic initiatives, which I agree has created an interesting philosophical debate, is to allow faith-based programs and community-based programs to access Federal money in order to achieve the results we all want. I mean, for example, if you're trying to encourage people to quit drinking, doesn't it make sense to give people somebody an alternative—he can maybe go to a government counselor; or how about somebody who calls upon a higher being to help you quit drinking? All I care about is the results. And the government ought to be——

So to answer—and that's a long answer and, by the way, it's my last answer, because you're paying me a lot of money, or probably—[laughter]. I'm not going to argue about my salary. [Laughter] But I've got to get back to work. I do want to thank you

for your interest. I hope you can tell I understand the importance of making sure America is entrepreneurial heaven.

You know, one of the things that I love when I travel the world is you can get a sense for the country by asking questions. One of the things about our country is it's a place where you can start with zero, you start with a dream and a good idea—in this case, a good mom and dad—and take risk and realize your dream. And it's really important we keep it that way forever. America has got to be a place where dreamers can realize their dreams, and I love being in the midst of dreamers.

Thanks for letting me come by. God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. at JK Moving & Storage. In his remarks, he referred to Randy Minchew, chairman, Loudon County Republican Committee; President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia; Charles Kuhn, president, chief executive officer, and founder, JK Moving & Storage, Inc., and his mother, Shirley; Linda Graves, wife of former Gov. Bill Graves of Kansas; Gov. Tim Kaine of Virginia; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

### **Remarks Following a Meeting With Foundations Involved With Gulf Coast Recovery**

*January 19, 2006*

Laura and I are so thankful that Dr. Francis and Leland Speed—Dr. Francis is from Louisiana; Mr. Leland Speed is from Mississippi—are here to brief not only Don Powell and myself and Laura but also members of the compassion community here in America. We've got charities from all across the country, foundations from all across the country who have come to listen to the needs of the good people in Mississippi and Louisiana and the gulf coast region.

Don and I talked about the commitment of the Federal Government—we've committed \$85 billion thus far. But we also made it very clear that we're going to need the help of—the continued help, I might add, of America's charities and foundations. Part of making sure the money is spent well is to

hear from the local folks about what is needed; how can we help; how best can the money be spent.

And that's exactly what we've done today. We're going to make sure that the Federal money is spent wisely and local money and charitable money is spent wisely as well, all aimed at making sure that the folks in Louisiana and Mississippi get back on their feet and this vital region of our country is up and running again. There's no doubt in my mind that out of this incredible devastation will come a better tomorrow.

And again, I want to thank all the people who have taken time out of your busy schedules to come and show your interest and represent your foundations and let the good folks know, in that troubled part of the world, that their voices of despair and concern are being heard all around the country.

So thank you all for coming. I appreciate it very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:07 p.m. in Room 350 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Norman Francis, chairman, Louisiana Recovery Authority; Leland Speed, director, Mississippi Development Authority; and Donald E. Powell, Chairman, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, who is coordinating Federal gulf coast relief efforts. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

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### **Digest of Other White House Announcements**

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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.

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#### ***January 14***

In the morning, at Camp David, MD, the President had an intelligence briefing.

#### ***January 15***

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

**January 16**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

**January 17**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with Secretary of Veterans Affairs James R. Nicholson, American Legion national commander Tom Brock, and John Summer, executive director of the Washington office of the American Legion.

In the afternoon, in Room 350 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building, the President met with members of the Foreign Intelligence Service Advisory Board and participated in a swearing-in ceremony for the board.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Lech Kaczynski of Poland to the White House on February 9.

The President announced his intention to nominate Richard A. Boucher to be Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs.

The President announced his intention to nominate Tyler D. Duvall to be Assistant Secretary of Transportation (Transportation Policy).

The President announced his intention to nominate Preston M. Geren to be Under Secretary of the Army.

The President announced his intention to nominate James B. Gulliford to be Assistant Administrator for Toxic Substances at the Environmental Protection Agency.

The President announced his intention to nominate Roger Shane Karr to be Assistant Secretary of Transportation (Governmental Affairs).

The President announced his intention to nominate Nicole R. Nason to be Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

The President announced his intention to nominate David L. Norquist to be Chief Financial Officer at the Department of Homeland Security.

The President announced his intention to nominate David C. Sanborn to be Administrator of the Maritime Administration of the Department of Transportation.

The President announced his intention to nominate James S. Simpson to be Federal Transit Administrator at the Department of Transportation.

The President announced his intention to nominate Ben S. Bernanke to be U.S. Alternate Governor of the International Monetary Fund.

The President announced his intention to appoint John N. Etchart as a member of the Advisory Board of the National Air and Space Museum.

The President announced his intention to appoint Valencia Campbell, Raymond Paul Caldiero, and James T. Dyke, Jr., as members of the Board of Governors of the United Service Organization, Incorporated.

The President announced his intention to designate David L. Dunn as Acting Under Secretary of Education.

The President announced his recess appointment of C. Boyden Gray as U.S. Representative to the European Union with the rank and status of Ambassador.

The President announced his recess appointment of Dennis P. Walsh as a member of the National Labor Relations Board.

**January 18**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing followed by a meeting with Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld.

Later, he had a telephone conversation with Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany to discuss the situation in Iran.

**January 19**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Sterling, VA. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

Also in the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President-elect Michelle Bachelet of Chile to congratulate her on her election victory.

The President announced his intention to nominate Randall L. Tobias to be Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The President announced his intention to nominate Thad W. Allen to be Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard.

**January 20**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing followed by a National Security Council meeting. Later, he met with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Camp David, MD.

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 from December 15–16, 2005.

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**Nominations  
Submitted to the Senate**

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

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***Submitted January 18***

Ben S. Bernanke,  
of New Jersey, to be U.S. Alternate Governor of the International Monetary Fund for a term of 5 years, vice Alan Greenspan.

Donald T. Bliss,  
of Maryland, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as Representative of the United States of America on the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization.

Richard A. Boucher,  
of Maryland, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Career Minister, to be Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, vice Christina B. Rocca.

Gale A. Buchanan,  
of Georgia, to be Under Secretary of Agriculture for Research, Education, and Economics, vice Joseph J. Jen, resigned.

Patricia A. Butenis,  
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

Robert M. Couch,  
of Alabama, to be President, Government National Mortgage Association, vice Ronald Rosenfeld.

Tyler D. Duvall,  
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Transportation, vice Emil H. Frankel.

Preston M. Geren,  
of Texas, to be Under Secretary of the Army, vice R.L. Brownlee, resigned.

James B. Gulliford,  
of Missouri, to be Assistant Administrator for Toxic Substances of the Environmental Protection Agency, vice Stephen L. Johnson, resigned.

Roger Shane Karr,  
of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Transportation, vice Nicole R. Nason.

Nicole R. Nason,  
of Virginia, to be Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, vice Jeffrey William Runge.

David L. Norquist,  
of Virginia, to be Chief Financial Officer, Department of Homeland Security, vice Andrew B. Maner.

David C. Sanborn,  
of Virginia, to be Administrator of the Maritime Administration, vice William Schubert.

Jackie Wolcott Sanders,  
of Virginia, to be an Alternate Representative of the United States of America to the Sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations during her tenure of service as Alternate Representative of the United States of America for Special Political Affairs in the United Nations.

Jackie Wolcott Sanders,  
of Virginia, to be Alternate Representative of the United States of America for Special Political Affairs in the United Nations, with the rank of Ambassador.

John A. Simon,  
of Maryland, to be Executive Vice President  
of the Overseas Private Investment Corpora-  
tion, vice Ross J. Connelly, resigned.

James S. Simpson,  
of New York, to be Federal Transit Adminis-  
trator, vice Jennifer L. Dorn.

Mark D. Wallace,  
of Florida, to be Alternate Representative of  
the United States of America to the Sessions  
of the General Assembly of the United Na-  
tions, during his tenure of service as Rep-  
resentative of the United States of America  
to the United Nations for U.N. Management  
and Reform.

Mark D. Wallace,  
of Florida, to be Representative of the  
United States of America to the United Na-  
tions for U.N. Management and Reform,  
with the rank of Ambassador, vice Patrick  
Francis Kennedy.

#### ***Withdrawn January 18***

Eugene Hickok,  
of Pennsylvania, to be a member of the Na-  
tional Council on the Humanities for the re-  
mainder of the term expiring January 26,  
2008, vice Sidney McPhee, which was sent  
to the Senate on October 17, 2005.

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### **Checklist of White House Press Releases**

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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.

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#### ***Released January 17***

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

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of  
President Lech Kaczynski of Poland

#### ***Released January 18***

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

Statement by the Press Secretary: United  
States Pledges \$334 Million to Global Fight  
Against Bird Flu

#### ***Released January 19***

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

Fact sheet: President Bush's Pro-Growth and  
Small Business Agenda

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster  
assistance to South Carolina

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### **Acts Approved by the President**

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