

Travel

Q. [*Inaudible*]*—ask your average American to do besides spend, to help?*

The President. Well, I think the average American must not be afraid to travel. We opened Reagan Airport yesterday for a reason: We think it's safe and that people ought to feel comfortable about traveling around our country. They ought to take their kids on vacations. They ought to go to ball games. The mayor wants them to come to the Yankee games, of course. [*Laughter*]

Mayor Giuliani. The World Series.

The President. The World Series, yes. [*Laughter*] No question he's an incurable optimist. [*Laughter*] But people ought to—listen, we ought to be aware in America—we are aware; how can you not be aware that we've entered into a new era? The imagery is vivid in people's minds. But nevertheless, Americans must know that their Government is doing everything we can to track down every rumor, every hint, every possible evildoer. And therefore, Americans ought to go about their business, and they are beginning to do so.

The load factors were up on the airlines, which means more people will be going to hotels and restaurants. I fulfilled my pledge, my promise last night to take the Mayor of Washington, DC, for dinner. I did—Morton's Steakhouse. We had a nice slice of beef—plus, I paid. [*Laughter*]

Defense Secretary Rumsfeld's Visit to the Middle East

Q. Mr. President, why did you send Secretary Rumsfeld over to the Middle East to visit some countries?

The President. Pardon me, John [John Dickerson, *Time*]?

Q. Why did you send him, and what is he doing over there, visiting those countries?

The President. John, he's visiting with our friends. As you know, we've put together a broad coalition of nations that are interested in battling, joining us to battle terrorism. And Secretary Rumsfeld went over to visit with the leaders of a group of nations to share with them information, to discuss the determination of our Nation.

People need to be able to look us in the eye and know that when we say that we're

in this for the long run, that we're going to find terrorism—terrorists and bring them to justice, we mean it; that this is a nation—see, it's hard for people around the world to understand the resolve of America. They may hear my speech occasionally, but they need to look at the eyes—in the eyes of members of my administration, because—and hear them say that not only is this President resolved, but America is resolved to rout out terrorism, to make sure that legitimate governments can survive as we head into the 21st century, and to make a strong stand for freedom.

And Secretary Rumsfeld is going to do a fine job of delivering that message, because he knows exactly how I feel about the mission we have ahead of us.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:20 a.m. in the first floor rotunda of the Federal Hall National Memorial. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani of New York City and Gov. George E. Pataki of New York.

Exchange With Reporters in New York City

October 3, 2001

President's Visit

Q. What's your message for New York, sir?

The President. My message for New York is they've got great leadership—got great leadership with the mayor, got great leadership with the Governor, and all of America is proud, proud of the resilience of this city, too. People are coming together. It's an amazing feeling to be here in New York City. On the one hand, you see the destruction; on the other hand, you see—feel the compassion of a great city. I'm real proud to be here with my friends.

See you at the school.

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:44 a.m. outside the Federal Hall National Memorial. In his remarks, the President referred to Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani of New York City and Gov. George E. Pataki of New York. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks at DeSoto Elementary School in New York City

October 3, 2001

The President. Okay. Thanks for letting us come. Can I introduce some people here? Mayor Rudy—do you know the mayor of New York, Rudy Giuliani? The Governor, George Pataki, of New York. And I'm President George Bush. And I wanted to come by your school to say a couple of things.

First, I want to say to the teachers who work in this school, and all throughout New York, how much we appreciate the courage that New York teachers showed. There are some—there's a lot of talk about heroes in our society. A hero is somebody you look up to, of course, and the teachers of New York City were very heroic.

They were not only heroic in taking boys and girls your age out of the buildings and helping them find places to stay at night or making sure nobody got hurt; they're heroic today. You know why? Because they love you. And if you've got any worries about what took place at the World Trade Center, they want to help you. Some of you—yes, they do want to help you, sure. They want to comfort you, and they want to make sure that you understand what went on. And I want to thank the teachers a lot. And I know the mayor and the Governor join me, as well.

I also want to tell you, you live in a great country. You know that; you've been telling me that. The principal's saying that you're practicing—that they're learning about patriotism. It looks like they've got—Stephen, for example, "I love America," he writes. Do you know what? There's a lot of people who love America today.

And one of the things that we're learning out of our sadness is what a great country this is. And the best way to realize this country is to learn how to read and write, and that's what you're doing here; is to study hard, because this country says, if you work hard, you can realize your dreams. And that's what we're here to say to you.

We want to thank you very much for letting us come by. We want to thank your principals and thank your teachers. Tell your moms and dads hello. It's good to see you.

Anybody have any questions for me or the mayor?

Q. Mr. President—

The President. You've already asked your questions. [*Laughter*] I've never seen somebody try to ask so many questions in one day in my life. [*Laughter*]

Well, anyway, thank you very much—are you planting questions? [*Laughter*]

Thanks for letting us come by. A lot of people care for you—they really do—starting with your moms and your dads and your teachers here. A lot of people love you, too. Thanks for letting us come by to say hello. Bye-bye.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:14 p.m. in room 204 of the school, which is also known as P.S. 130. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani of New York City; Gov. George E. Pataki of New York; and Lily Woo and Howard Epstein, principal and assistant principal of the school.

Statement on Senate Action on a Bilateral Trade Agreement With Vietnam

October 3, 2001

Today's Senate action to establish a bilateral trade agreement with Vietnam is a significant step toward strengthening the ties between our two countries and promoting strength and stability in this important region. The agreement will provide American companies with access to a large and growing market and, through the reforms it promotes, it will help create a more prosperous and engaged Vietnam. The trade agreement also brings hope for improving human rights. I look forward to signing this legislation into law.