

capable of doing that. And she's also capable of running the shop that she'll be in charge of.

And so we say to the man we admire a lot, good luck, Godspeed. And to Dana Perino, I'm looking forward to working with you, and I'm looking forward to the American people to get to know you like I've gotten to know you.

Tony.

*President's Staff*

Q. You've lost a lot of members in your administration—

*The President.* Hold up there. We're not quite through yet. [*Laughter*]

[*At this point, Press Secretary Snow and Press Secretary-designate Perino made remarks.*]

*The President.* Thank you.

*President's Staff*

Q. How do you feel about losing everybody?

*The President.* Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:45 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Press Secretary Snow and Press Secretary-designate Perino.

## Statement Following a Meeting With Military Leaders August 31, 2007

The Vice President and I met today with Secretary of Defense Gates and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. We had a very productive discussion.

We discussed our commitment to provide our military all it needs to meet the challenges of this new century. This includes a larger Army and Marine Corps. In January, I accepted Secretary Gates's recommendation to increase the overall strength of the two services by 92,000 soldiers and marines over the next 5 years. This will strengthen our military and help reset our forces to respond to multiple contingencies around the world at any given moment. The effort is well underway, but there is more to do, and the Joint Chiefs are doing a terrific job monitoring the health of our All-Volunteer Force.

We also discussed military and civilian coordination. We now have joint civilian and military teams deployed in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, and the Philippines. In Iraq, we have more than doubled the number of civilian-led Provincial Reconstruction Teams this year, most of

which are embedded with U.S. combat brigades. These teams are a force multiplier for our men and women in uniform, and they are essential to the bottom-up political progress taking place in Anbar, Diyala, and other Provinces across Iraq. The Civilian Reserve Corps now being developed will enlarge the pool of civilian volunteers to support and enhance our missions.

The American people will soon hear an assessment of the situation on the ground in Iraq and recommendations from Ambassador Crocker and General Petraeus. This status report comes less than 3 months since our new strategy became fully operational and will assess what is going well, what can be improved, and what adjustments might be made in the coming months. Congress asked for this assessment, and Members of Congress should withhold judgment until they have heard it.

The stakes in Iraq are too high and the consequences too grave for our security here at home to allow politics to harm the mission of our men and women in uniform. It is my hope that we can put partisanship

and politics behind us and commit to a common vision that will provide our troops what they need to succeed and secure our vital national interests in Iraq and around the world.

I always leave these meetings inspired by our men and women in uniform and resolved to do everything I can to support them. The brave men and women of our Armed Forces and their families are mak-

ing heroic sacrifices to secure our country. America will honor these sacrifices by ensuring that our children and grandchildren inherit a more peaceful, just, and democratic world.

NOTE: The statement referred to Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq.

### Statement on Senator John W. Warner's Decision Not To Seek Reelection *August 31, 2007*

John Warner is one of the most dedicated Senators in American history. Five Presidents have relied on his steady judgment, wise counsel, and candid advice. With Senator Warner's retirement, the Senate will lose one of its most independent and widely respected voices, and the Commonwealth of Virginia will lose one of its fiercest advocates.

John Warner has served our country in many roles throughout his distinguished career, always putting the American people's needs first. He enlisted in the Navy shortly before his 18th birthday and chose to interrupt his law studies to commence a second tour of active military duty as an officer

in the Marine Corps, volunteering for duty in Korea. He went on to practice law, serve as an assistant U.S. attorney, and serve as Secretary of the Navy before his election to the Senate. Our military had no greater friend than Senator Warner during his service as chairman of the Senate Committee on Armed Forces.

I look forward to working with Senator Warner in the coming months as we assess the situation in Iraq and pursue policies to keep our country safe.

John Warner is a true statesman. Laura and I wish Senator Warner, his wife Jeanne, and the rest of his family all the best.

### Message on the Observance of Labor Day *August 31, 2007*

I send greetings to those celebrating Labor Day 2007.

Our country's economy is built on the hard work and ingenuity of the American people. There is no limit to what our citizens can accomplish when they have the skills to compete and the freedom to achieve their dreams. Through vision and determination, American workers are transforming their neighborhoods, strengthening

our economy, and realizing the great promise of our Nation.

Today, productivity is high, consumers are confident, and incomes are rising across our country. Our economy has experienced one of the fastest growth rates of any major industrialized nation. More than 8.3 million jobs have been created in America since August 2003, and the unemployment rate