

superintendent, School District of Philadelphia; political activist Rev. Alfred C. Sharpton, Jr.; Eileen Spagnola, principal, General Philip Kearny School; Adam Bruck-

ner, assistant coach, Major Indoor Soccer League's Philadelphia Kixx; and Lawrence Jones, president, Pennsylvania Coalition for Charter School.

## Statement on the Death of Father Richard John Neuhaus *January 8, 2009*

Laura and I are saddened by the death of Father Richard John Neuhaus. Father Neuhaus was an inspirational leader, admired theologian, and accomplished author who devoted his life to the service of the Almighty and to the betterment of our

world. He was also a dear friend, and I have treasured his wise counsel and guidance.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Father Neuhaus's family, friends, and fellow clergy during this difficult time.

## Statement on Senator Christopher S. "Kit" Bond's Decision Not To Seek Reelection *January 8, 2009*

Senator Kit Bond has been a wonderful public servant and statesman for the people of Missouri. During more than three decades of service as Governor and United States Senator, Kit has been a tireless advocate for our children, our military, and our Nation's intelligence community. He played a vital role in the effort to modernize the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act. Be-

cause of his leadership, we are protecting the liberties of our citizens while gathering vital information we need to prevent attacks on our soil.

I have been honored to work with Senator Bond during my time as President, and Laura and I wish Kit, Linda, and their son Samuel all the best in the future.

## The President's Radio Address *January 10, 2009*

Good morning. This week, I gave my official farewell speech to the men and women of America's Armed Forces in a ceremony at Fort Myer, Virginia. For the past 8 years, I have had no higher honor than serving as the Commander in Chief of these brave patriots. And when Laura and I depart for Texas later this month, we will take with us many inspiring memo-

ries of the valor that we have seen these brave Americans display time and again.

We saw their valor on September the 11th, 2001, in servicemembers rushing into smoke-filled corridors to save their colleagues at the Pentagon and in planes patrolling the skies above New York City and Washington, DC.

We saw their valor in the days after that attack, when Americans crowded into recruiting centers across our country, raised their hands to serve, and pledged to defend our people and our freedom.

We saw their valor in the forces who deployed to Afghanistan within weeks of 9/11, closed down the terrorist training camps, and drove the Taliban from power.

We saw their valor in the fearless troops who stormed across the Iraqi desert and destroyed a regime that threatened America.

We saw their valor in battle-tested warriors who signed up for a second or third or fourth tour and made the troop surge in Iraq that I announced 2 years ago today one of the great successes in American military history.

America's Armed Forces have liberated more than 50 million people around the world and made our Nation safer. They have taken the fight to the terrorists abroad so that we have not had to face them here at home. And the world has seen something that almost no one thought possible: More than 7 years after September the 11th, there has not been another terrorist attack on American soil. This is no coincidence.

In addition to our military, many other Americans have worked tirelessly to ensure our safety in the years since 9/11. Law enforcement officials have worked to secure our country and remained watchful against future attacks. Intelligence analysts have tracked information that allowed us to dis-

rupt terrorist plots before they reached our shores. And homeland security agents have worked to secure our ports, our borders, and our skies.

We owe a debt of gratitude to all of these patriots. Because of their devotion to service, many Americans live their lives without the fear and uncertainty that they felt in the days just after 9/11. This continued safety has been a blessing. But we must never allow it to foster complacency. America still faces sworn enemies intent on striking our Nation and our people. And we must remain vigilant for as long as that threat remains.

I know that our men and women in uniform have remained vigilant. These Americans answer the call to defend freedom when it is under attack. They put their lives on the line to defend democracy and keep our country safe. And they inspire a nation with their selflessness and their courage. I am proud to have served as their Commander in Chief.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:55 a.m. on January 9 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 10. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 9, but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

## Remarks at the Commissioning Ceremony of the USS *George H.W. Bush* in Norfolk, Virginia

*January 10, 2009*

*The President.* Thank you very much. Secretary Gates, thank you for your introduction. I know I speak on behalf of President 41 when I say it has been a privilege

for both of us to serve with this fine and distinguished man.

I want to thank you all for coming. Laura and I are thrilled to be here to help commission an awesome ship and to honor an