

the innocent to achieve their political objectives. These are just different fronts in the same war.

And you know, I am not surprised that a lethal enemy pushes back through the use of their indiscriminate violence to stop the advance of free societies, because this is an ideological war. When they see freedom on the march, it frightens them and it worries them to the point where they kill innocent people to try to shake the will of the people in that country and to shake the will of those trying to help them.

And so, one, we've taken on the enemy, and two, we've had good success against Al Qaida. The first and second person is still alive, but the number-three person in Al Qaida has had a dangerous existence—Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, al-Libi, a series of leaders. And we are pressuring them today, and we'll keep pressuring them. And my hope is, whoever the next President—understands this is a war, and that we can't relax. And that there's an enemy that wants to do free people harm, and that we have an obligation as free societies to keep the pressure, not only for our own security, but for the security of others.

This is back to this man's question down here about, why should we care about Afghanistan? The answer is, is because safe haven is a risk. But there's also another answer. That's one of the great lessons of our relationship. You know, I marvel at the fact, and I talk about it a lot to the American people, of the irony about Prime Minister Koizumi and my relationship. It's a great testament to our respective countries

and the transformative power of liberty that my dad fought the Japanese, and his son sits at the peace table with the Japanese leaders in a spirit of respect and friendship and common values.

Anyway, thank you. Enjoyed it.

Q. Thank you very much.

The President. Very good questions.

Q. Thank you very much, sir.

NOTE: The interview began at 12:46 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda and former Prime Ministers Yoshiro Mori, Junichiro Koizumi, and Shinzo Abe of Japan; Sakie Yokota, mother of Megumi Yokota, who was abducted by North Korean authorities; Chairman Kim Jong Il of North Korea; President Mahmud Ahmadi-nejad of Iran; Prime Minister Vladimir V. Putin of Russia, in his former capacity as President of Russia; Bobby Valentine, manager, Nippon Professional Baseball's Chiba Lotte Marines; Sadaharu Oh, manager, Nippon Professional Baseball's Fukuoka SoftBank Hawks; President Hu Jintao and former President Jiang Zemin of China; Republican Presidential candidate John McCain; Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commander, Multi-National Forces—Iraq; and Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and Abu Faraj al-Libi, former senior leaders of the Al Qaida terrorist organization currently in U.S. military custody. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 4. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks at an Independence Day Celebration and Naturalization Ceremony in Charlottesville, Virginia July 4, 2008

The President. Thank you, and happy Fourth of July. I am thrilled to be here at Monticello. I've never been here before.

[At this point, there was an interruption in the audience.]

The President. To my fellow citizens-to-be, we believe in free speech in the United States of America.

And this is a fitting place to celebrate our Nation's independence. Thomas Jefferson once said he'd rather celebrate the Fourth of July than his own birthday. For me, it's pretty simple, the Fourth of July weekend is my birthday weekend.

For some of you, today will be your first Fourth of July as American citizens. A few moments, you will take part in the 46th annual Monticello Independence Day celebration and naturalization ceremony. When you raise your hands and take the oath, you will complete an incredible journey. That journey has taken you from many different countries; it's now made you one people. From this day forward, the history of the United States will be part of your heritage, the Fourth of July will be part of your Independence Day, and I will be honored to call you a fellow American.

I appreciate Alice Handies [Handy],* the chairman of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation, and Dan Jordan, president of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation. I'm honored that the Governor of the great Commonwealth of Virginia would join us, and Anne Horton [Holton].* Appreciate you being here; Lieutenant Governor Bill Bolling, the Lieutenant Governor of the State of Virginia; the Attorney General Bob McDonnell of the State of Virginia is with us; and all local officials. I appreciate Jim Jones of the U.S. District Court and other distinguished jurists who are with us today. Thank you for coming.

[*The interruption in the audience continued.*]

The President. Seems like I brought a little action with me.

[*The interruption in the audience continued.*]

* White House correction.

The President. Most of all, I'm glad you're here. And we welcome you and your families, and we're honored to be celebrating with you this joyous occasion.

You know, long before anyone had ever heard of Crawford, Texas, Charlottesville, Virginia, was the home to the first western White House. The majesty of this home is a monument to the genius of Thomas Jefferson. Every hundreds of years—every year, thousands of visitors come here. And I think today it's fitting to thank the men and women of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation for preserving this historic treasure.

You just can't help but marvel at Thomas Jefferson's many accomplishments. As a scholar, few were better read. He was known to have read five books at a time on a revolving book stand. Later in life, he founded a public university that has become one of the Nation's finest, the University of Virginia.

As a statesman, Thomas Jefferson held all three top posts in the executive branch. He served as the first Secretary of State, the second Vice President, and the third President. Not bad for a man who hated public speaking. [*Laughter*] It seems Jefferson got away with only delivering two public speeches during his Presidency. I'm sure a lot of Americans wish that were the case today. [*Laughter*]

In a life full of accomplishments, Thomas Jefferson was especially proud of the Declaration of Independence. Looking back 232 years later, it's easy to forget how revolutionary Jefferson's draft was.

At the time, some dismissed it as empty rhetoric. They believed the British Empire would crush the Thirteen Colonies in the field of battle. And they believed a nation dedicated to liberty could never survive the world ruled by kings.

Today, we know history had other plans. After many years of war, the United States won its independence. The principles that Thomas Jefferson enshrined in the Declaration became the guiding principles of the

new nation. And in every generation, Americans have rededicated themselves to the belief that all men are created equal, with a God-given right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Thomas Jefferson understood that these rights do not belong to Americans alone; they belong to all mankind. And he looked to the day when all people could secure them. On the 50th anniversary of America's independence, Thomas Jefferson passed away. But before leaving this world, he explained that the principles of the Declaration of Independence were universal. In one of the final letters of his life, he wrote, "May it be to the world, what I believe it will be—to some parts sooner, to others later, but finally to all—the signal of arousing men to burst the chains and to assume the blessings and security of self-government."

We honor Jefferson's legacy by aiding the rise of liberty in lands that do not know the blessings of freedom. And on this Fourth of July, we pay tribute to the brave men and women who wear the uniform of the United States of America.

We also honor Jefferson's legacy by welcoming newcomers to our land. And that is what we're here to celebrate today.

Throughout our history, the words of the Declaration have inspired immigrants from around the world to set sail to our shores. These immigrants have helped transform 13 small Colonies into a great and growing nation of more than 300 [million]^{*} people. They've made America a melting pot of cultures from all across the world. They've made diversity one of the great strengths of our democracy. And all of us here today are here to honor and pay tribute to that great notion of America.

Those of you taking the oath of citizenship at this ceremony hail from 30 different

nations. You represent many different ethnicities and races and religions. But you all have one thing in common, and that is a shared love of freedom. This love of liberty is what binds our Nation together, and this is the love that makes us all Americans.

One man with special appreciation for liberty is Mya Soe from Burma. As a member of the Shan ethnic group, Mya faced discrimination and oppression at the hands of Burma's military junta. When he tried to reach local villagers—when he tried to teach local villagers how to read and write the Shan language, the regime interrogated him and harassed him. In 2000, he left a life of fear for a life of freedom. He now works as a painter in the Charlottesville community. Today we welcome this brave immigrant as a citizen-to-be of the United States of America.

I'm sure there are other stories like Mya's among you. But we must remember that the desire for freedom burns inside every man and woman and child. More than two centuries ago, this desire of freedom was—had inspired the subjects of a mighty empire to declare themselves free and independent citizens of a new nation. Today that same desire for freedom has inspired 72 immigrants from around the world to become citizens of the greatest nation on Earth, the United States of America.

I congratulate you. I welcome you. I wish you all a happy Fourth of July. Thanks for inviting me. May God bless you, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:07 a.m. at Monticello. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Timothy M. Kaine of Virginia and his wife Anne Holton.

^{*} White House correction.

Statement on the Death of Senator Jesse Helms *July 4, 2008*

Laura and I are deeply saddened by the passing of our good friend and a great American, Senator Jesse Helms. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Dot and all the members of the Helms family.

Throughout his long public career, Senator Jesse Helms was a tireless advocate for the people of North Carolina, a stalwart defender of limited government and free enterprise, a fearless defender of a culture of life, and an unwavering champion of those struggling for liberty. Under his leadership, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee was a powerful force for freedom. And today, from Central America to Central Europe and beyond, people remember,

in the dark days when the forces of tyranny seemed on the rise, Jesse Helms took their side.

Jesse Helms was a kind, decent, and humble man and a passionate defender of what he called “the miracle of America.” So it is fitting that this great patriot left us on the Fourth of July. He was once asked if he had any ambitions beyond the United States Senate. He replied, “The only thing I am running for is the Kingdom of Heaven.” Today Jesse Helms has finished the race, and we pray he finds comfort in the arms of the loving God he strove to serve throughout his life.

The President’s Radio Address *July 5, 2008*

Good morning. This weekend, Americans are celebrating the anniversary of our Nation’s independence. Two hundred and thirty-two years ago, our Founding Fathers came together in Philadelphia to proclaim that all men are created equal and that they are endowed by their Creator with unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

The man who wrote those immortal words was Thomas Jefferson. Yesterday I celebrated the Fourth of July at Monticello, Jefferson’s home in Virginia. While there, I witnessed an event that would have made the author of the Declaration of Independence proud. On Monticello’s lawn, more than 70 men and women from dozens of countries raised their right hands to take the oath of American citizenship. They swore their allegiance to the Constitution. They promised that they would defend the laws of the United States. And they re-

minded everyone in attendance that the promise of America is open to all.

These new citizens come from countries as diverse as Burma, Afghanistan, Norway, and Iraq. These new citizens are proof that there is no American race, just an American creed. In the United States, we believe in the rights and dignity of every person, we believe in equal justice, limited government, and the rule of law, and we believe in personal responsibility and tolerance towards others. This creed of freedom and equality has lifted the lives of millions of Americans, whether citizens by birth or citizens by choice.

This creed of freedom has required brave defenders, and every generation of Americans has produced them. From the soldiers who fought for independence at Bunker Hill and Yorktown to the Americans who broke the chains of slavery, liberated Europe and Asia from tyranny, and brought