

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



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Editor's Note: The President was at Camp David, MD, on August 18, 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.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This is the last publication of the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* series.

The Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, has created a new publication called the *Daily Compilation of Presidential Documents*. The *Daily Compilation* appears on the Government Printing Office's Federal Digital System (FDsys) web site and replaces the printed *Weekly Compilation* series.

Like its predecessor, the *Daily Compilation* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House. As an FDsys web publication, the *Daily Compilation* reaches a much broader audience and is updated frequently, as information is released by the White House press office. The *Daily Compilation* web site is integrated with historical *Weekly Compilation* files to provide continuity and permanent public access. The new *Daily Compilation* web site is available at www.presidentialdocuments.gov.

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Week Ending Friday, August 18, 2006

The President's Radio Address

August 12, 2006

Good morning. This week, America received a stark reminder that terrorists are still plotting attacks to kill our people. Beginning on Wednesday night, authorities in Great Britain arrested more than 20 individuals who we believed were plotting to detonate liquid explosives aboard flights from the United Kingdom to the United States. If these terrorists had succeeded, they could have caused death on a massive scale. The plot appears to have been carefully planned and well-advanced. They planned to bring the components of their explosives on board in their carry-on luggage, disguised as bottled drinks and electronic devices.

We believe that this week's arrests have significantly disrupted the threat. Yet we cannot be sure that the threat has been eliminated. So as a precaution, on Thursday, the Federal Government took several steps to increase security at our airports and aboard our planes.

First, the Department of Homeland Security has raised our Nation's threat warning to Code Red—the highest level—for flights from Great Britain to America, in coordination with British authorities. Second, we've raised the threat warning for all domestic and international flights landing in the United States to Code Orange—the second highest level. We also have sent additional Federal air marshals to Great Britain to provide extra protection aboard flights from the United Kingdom to the United States.

This plot is further evidence that the terrorists we face are sophisticated and constantly changing their tactics. On September the 11th, 2001, they used box cutters to hijack airplanes and kill thousands of innocent people. This time, we believe they planned to use liquid explosives to blow up planes in mid-air. In response, we've adjusted our security precautions by temporarily banning

most liquids as carry-on items on planes. I know many of you will be traveling during this busy summer vacation season, and I ask for your patience, cooperation, and vigilance in the coming days. The inconveniences you will face are for your protection, and they will give us time to adjust our screening procedures to meet the current threat.

I'm grateful for the outstanding work of intelligence and law enforcement officers in the United Kingdom and in our country. This week's arrests were the culmination of hard work, cooperation, and information sharing across different agencies and different governments. We're dealing with a new enemy that uses new means of attack and new methods to communicate. This week's events demonstrate the vital importance of ensuring that our intelligence and law enforcement personnel have all the tools they need to track down the terrorists and prevent attacks on our country.

Because of the measures we've taken to protect the American people, our Nation is safer than it was prior to September the 11th. Still, we must never make the mistake of thinking the danger of terrorism has passed. This week's experience reminds us of a hard fact: The terrorists have to succeed only once to achieve their goal of mass murder, while we have to succeed every time to stop them. Unfortunately, some have suggested recently that the terrorist threat is being used for partisan political advantage. We can have legitimate disagreements about the best way to fight the terrorists, yet there should be no disagreement about the dangers we face.

America is fighting a tough war against an enemy whose ruthlessness is clear for all to see. The terrorists attempt to bring down airplanes full of innocent men, women, and children. They kill civilians and American servicemen in Iraq and Afghanistan, and they deliberately hide behind civilians in Lebanon. They are seeking to spread their totalitarian ideology. They're seeking to take over

countries like Afghanistan and Iraq so they can establish safe havens from which to attack free nations. These killers need to know that America, Great Britain, and our allies are determined to defend ourselves and advance the cause of liberty. With patience, courage, and untiring resolve, we will defend our freedom, and we will win the war on terror.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 8:05 a.m. on August 11 at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 12. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 11 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on the United Nations Security Council Resolution on the Situation in the Middle East

August 12, 2006

I welcome the resolution adopted yesterday by the United Nations Security Council, which is designed to bring an immediate end to the fighting sparked last month by an unprovoked terrorist attack on Israel by Hizballah, a terrorist group supported by Iran and Syria. The United States and its allies have been working hard since the beginning of this conflict to create the conditions for an enduring cease-fire and prevent armed militias and foreign-sponsored terrorist groups like Hizballah from sparking another crisis.

Yesterday's resolution aims to end Hizballah's attacks on Israel and bring a halt to Israel's offensive military operations. It also calls for an embargo on the supply of arms to militias in Lebanon, for a robust international force to deploy to southern Lebanon in conjunction with Lebanon's legitimate armed forces, and for the disarming of Hizballah and all other militia groups operating in Lebanon. These steps are designed to stop Hizballah from acting as a state within a state, and put an end to Iran and Syria's efforts to hold the Lebanese people hostage to their own extremist agenda. This in turn will help to restore the sovereignty of Leb-

anon's democratic Government and help ensure security for the people of Lebanon and Israel.

The loss of innocent life in both Lebanon and Israel has been a great tragedy. Hizballah and its Iranian and Syrian sponsors have brought an unwanted war to the people of Lebanon and Israel, and millions have suffered as a result. I now urge the international community to turn words into action and make every effort to bring lasting peace to the region.

NOTE: The statement referred to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld and the Defense Policy and Programs Team in Arlington, Virginia

August 14, 2006

Mr. Secretary, thanks for having me. The national security team from the White House is anxious to come over and get a briefing from you. We've got a lot to discuss. It's very important for the American people to know that we're constantly thinking about how to secure the homeland, protect our interests, and use all assets available to do our jobs.

I appreciate very much you and your team providing the very important briefing. We live in troubled times, but I'm confident in our capacity to not only protect the homeland, but I'm confident in our capacity to leave behind a better world. And one reason I feel so confident is because we've got a fantastic military. It's been an honor to travel the country to meet those who wear the uniform. We're a blessed nation to have men and women who are willing to volunteer during these difficult times.

And so, Mr. Secretary, thanks for the briefing; I'm looking forward to it. And thank you all for giving us your insights and inputs.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:27 a.m. at the Pentagon. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and the Foreign Policy Team and an Exchange With Reporters

August 14, 2006

The President. Good afternoon. Today I met with members of my national security team, both here at the State Department and at the Pentagon. I want to, first of all, thank the leadership of Secretary Condi Rice and Secretary Don Rumsfeld.

During those discussions, we talked about the need to transform our military to meet the threats of the 21st century. We discussed the global war on terror. We discussed the situation on the ground in three fronts of the global war on terror—in Lebanon and Iraq and Afghanistan.

Friday's U.N. Security Council resolution on Lebanon is an important step forward that will help bring an end to the violence. The resolution calls for a robust international force to deploy to the southern part of the country to help Lebanon's legitimate armed forces restore the sovereignty of its democratic Government over all Lebanese territory. As well, the resolution is intended to stop Hizballah from acting as a state within the state.

We're now working with our international partners to turn the words of this resolution into action. We must help people in both Lebanon and Israel return to their homes and begin rebuilding their lives without fear of renewed violence and terror.

America recognizes that civilians in Lebanon and Israel have suffered from the current violence, and we recognize that responsibility for this suffering lies with Hizballah. It was an unprovoked attack by Hizballah on Israel that started this conflict. Hizballah terrorists targeted Israeli civilians with daily rocket attacks. Hizballah terrorists used Lebanese civilians as human shields, sacrificing the innocent in an effort to protect themselves from Israeli response.

Responsibility for the suffering of the Lebanese people also lies with Hizballah's state sponsors, Iran and Syria. The regime in Iran provides Hizballah with financial support, weapons, and training. Iran has made clear that it seeks the destruction of Israel. We

can only imagine how much more dangerous this conflict would be if Iran had the nuclear weapon it seeks.

Syria is another state sponsor of Hizballah. Syria allows Iranian weapons to pass through its territory into Lebanon. Syria permits Hizballah's leaders to operate out of Damascus and gives political support to Hizballah's cause. Syria supports Hizballah because it wants to undermine Lebanon's democratic Government and regain its position of dominance in the country. That would be a great tragedy for the Lebanese people and for the cause of peace in the Middle East.

Hizballah and its foreign sponsors also seek to undermine the prospects for peace in the Middle East. Hizballah terrorists kidnaped two Israeli soldiers; Hamas kidnaped another Israeli soldier for a reason—Hizballah and Hamas reject the vision of two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. Both groups want to disrupt the progress being made toward that vision by Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas and others in the region. We must not allow terrorists to prevent elected leaders from working together toward a comprehensive peace agreement in the Middle East.

The conflict in Lebanon is part of a broader struggle between freedom and terror that is unfolding across the region. For decades, American policy sought to achieve peace in the Middle East by promoting stability in the Middle East. Yet the lack of freedom in the region meant anger and resentment grew, radicalism thrived, and terrorists found willing recruits. We saw the consequences on September the 11th, 2001, when terrorists brought death and destruction to our country, killing nearly 3,000 of our citizens.

So we've launched a forward strategy of freedom in the broader Middle East. And that strategy has helped bring hope to millions and fostered the birth of young democracies from Baghdad to Beirut. Forces of terror see the changes that are taking place in their midst. They understand that the advance of liberty, the freedom to worship, the freedom to dissent, and the protection of human rights would be a defeat for their hateful ideology. But they also know that young democracies are fragile and that this

may be their last and best opportunity to stop freedom's advance and steer newly free nations to the path of radical extremism. So the terrorists are striking back with all of the destructive power that they can muster. It's no coincidence that two nations that are building free societies in the heart of the Middle East, Lebanon and Iraq, are also the scenes of the most violent terrorist activity.

Some say that America caused the current instability in the Middle East by pursuing a forward strategy of freedom, yet history shows otherwise. We didn't talk much about freedom or the freedom agenda in the Middle East before September the 11th, 2001; or before Al Qaida first attacked the World Trade Center and blew up our Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in the 1990s; or before Hizballah killed hundreds of Americans in Beirut and Islamic radicals held American hostages in Iran in the 1980s. History is clear: The freedom agenda did not create the terrorists or their ideology. But the freedom agenda will help defeat them both.

Some say that the violence and instability we see today means that the people of this troubled region are not ready for democracy. I disagree. Over the past 5 years, people across the Middle East have bravely defied the car bombers and assassins to show the world that they want to live in liberty. We see the universal desire for liberty in the 12 million Iraqis who faced down the terrorists to cast their ballots and elected a free government under a democratic constitution. We see the universal desire for liberty in 8 million Afghans who lined up to vote for the first democratic Government in the long history of their country. We see the universal desire for liberty in the Lebanese people who took to the streets to demand their freedom and helped drive Syrian forces out of their country.

The problem in the Middle East today is not that people lack the desire for freedom. The problem is that young democracies that they have established are still vulnerable to terrorists and their sponsors. One vulnerability is that many of the new democratic governments in the region have not yet established effective control over all their territory.

In both Lebanon and Iraq, elected governments are contending with rogue armed groups that are seeking to undermine and destabilize them. In Lebanon, Hizballah declared war on Lebanon's neighbor, Israel, without the knowledge of the elected Government in Beirut. In Iraq, Al Qaida and death squads engage in brutal violence to undermine the unity Government. And in both these countries, Iran is backing armed groups in the hope of stopping democracy from taking hold.

The message of this administration is clear: America will stay on the offense against Al Qaida; Iran must stop its support for terror; and the leaders of these armed groups must make a choice: If they want to participate in the political life of their countries, they must disarm. Elected leaders cannot have one foot in the camp of democracy and one foot in the camp of terror.

The Middle East is at a pivotal moment in its history. The death and destruction we see shows how determined the extremists are to stop just and modern societies from emerging in the region. Yet millions of people in Lebanon, Iraq, and Afghanistan and elsewhere are equally determined to live in peace and freedom. They have tired of the false promises and grand illusions of radical extremists. They reject the hateful vision of the terrorists, and they dream of a better future for their children and their grandchildren. We're determined to help them achieve that dream.

America's actions have never been guided by territorial ambition. We seek to advance the cause of freedom in the Middle East because we know the security of the region and our own security depend on it. We know that free nations are America's best partners for peace and the only true anchors for stability. So we'll continue to support reformers, inside and outside governments, who are working to build the institutions of liberty. We'll continue to confront terrorist organizations and their sponsors who destroy innocent lives. We'll continue to work for the day when a democratic Israel and a democratic Palestine are neighbors in a peaceful and secure Middle East.

The way forward is going to be difficult. It will require more sacrifice. But we can be

confident of the outcome because we know and understand the unstoppable power of freedom. In a Middle East that grows in freedom and democracy, people will have a chance to raise their families and live in peace and build a better future. In a Middle East that grows in freedom and democracy, the terrorists will lose their recruits and lose their sponsors and lose safe havens from which to launch new attacks. In a Middle East that grows in freedom and democracy, there will be no room for tyranny and terror, and that will make America and other free nations more secure.

Now I'll be glad to answer a couple of questions. Deb [Deb Riechmann, Associated Press].

Situation in the Middle East/Israel

Q. Mr. President, both sides are claiming victory in a conflict that's killed more than 900 people. Who won, and do you think the cease-fire will hold?

The President. We certainly hope the cease-fire holds, because it is step one of making sure that Lebanon's democracy is strengthened. Lebanon can't be a strong democracy when there's a state within a state, and that's Hizballah.

As I mentioned in my remarks, Hizballah attacked Israel without any knowledge of the Siniora Government. You can't run a government, you can't have a democracy if you've got a armed faction within your country. Hizballah attacked Israel. Hizballah started the crisis, and Hizballah suffered a defeat in this crisis. And the reason why is, is that first, there is a new—there's going to be a new power in the south of Lebanon, and that's going to be a Lebanese force with a robust international force to help them seize control of the country, that part of the country.

Secondly, when people take a look-see, take a step back and realize how this started, they'll understand this was Hizballah's activities. This was Hizballah's choice to make.

I believe that Israel is serious about upholding the cessation of hostilities. The reason I believe that is, I talked to the Prime Minister of Israel about it. And I know the Siniora Government is anxious that the hostilities stop and the country begin to rebuild.

I can't speak for Hizballah. They're a terrorist organization. They're not a state. They act independently of, evidently, the Lebanese Government, and they do receive help from the outside.

Andrea [Andrea Mitchell, NBC News].

Hizballah/War on Terror

Q. Thank you, Mr. President—

The President. It's good to see you. Thanks for breaking in with us—kind of a rough crowd here, hanging out with you.

Q. Thank you. Despite what you've just said, there is a perception, a global perception, certainly in the Arab media and in many Western media as well, that Hizballah is really a winner here because they have proven that they could, as a guerrilla force, withstand the Israeli Army. They have been the sole source of humanitarian aid to many of the Lebanese people in the south. So they've improved their position politically, within Lebanon, and militarily and globally. They've gotten an aura of being able to stand up for so long against Israel. How do you combat that and the perception that we settled for less than we originally wanted in the U.N. resolution, a less robust force? And what actions can the United States or this international force take if Iran, for instance, tries to rearm Hizballah?

The President. Yes. First of all, if I were Hizballah, I'd be claiming victory too. But the people around the region and the world need to take a step back and recognize that Hizballah's action created a very strong reaction that, unfortunately, caused some people to lose their life, innocent people to lose their life. But on the other hand, it was Hizballah that caused the destruction.

People have got to understand—and it will take time, Andrea; it will take time for people to see the truth—that Hizballah hides behind innocent civilians as they attack. What's really interesting is a mindset—is the mindsets of this crisis. Israel, when they aimed at a target and killed innocent citizens, were upset. Its society was aggrieved. When Hizballah's rockets killed innocent Israelis, they celebrated. I think when people really take a look at the type of mentality that celebrates the loss of innocent life, they'll reject that type of mentality.

And so Hizballah, of course, has got a fantastic propaganda machine, and they're claiming victories and—but how can you claim victory when at one time you were a state within a state, safe within southern Lebanon, and now you're going to be replaced by a Lebanese army and an international force? And that's what we're now working on, is to get the international force in southern Lebanon.

None of this would have happened, by the way, had we—had 1559, U.N. Resolution 1559 been fully implemented. Now is the time to get it implemented. And it's going to take a lot of work, no question about it. And no question that it's a different kind of war than people are used to seeing. We're fighting the same kind of war. We don't fight the armies of nation-states; we fight terrorists who kill innocent people to achieve political objectives. And it's a hard fight. It requires different tactics, and it requires solid will from those of us who understand the stakes.

The world got to see what it means to confront terrorism. I mean, it's the challenge of the 21st century. The fight against terror, a group of ideologists, by the way, who use terror to achieve an objective—this is the challenge. And that's why, in my remarks, I spoke about the need for those of us who understand the blessings of liberty to help liberty prevail in the Middle East. And the fundamental question is, can it? And my answer is, absolutely; it can.

I believe that universal—that freedom is a universal value. And by that I mean, I believe people want to be free. One way to put it is, I believe mothers around the world want to raise their children in a peaceful world. That's what I believe. And I believe that people want to be free to express themselves and free to worship the way they want to. And if you believe that, then you've got to have hope that, ultimately, freedom will prevail. But it's incredibly hard work, because there are terrorists who kill innocent people to stop the advance of liberty. And that's the challenge of the 21st century.

And the fundamental question for this country is, do we understand the stakes and the challenge, and are we willing to support reformers and young democracies, and are we willing to confront terror and those who

sponsor them? And this administration is willing to do so. And that's what we're doing.

And you asked about Iran? What did you say about them? My answer was too long to remember the third part of your multipart question.

Syria and Iran/Sponsorship of Hizballah

Q. I'm sorry. How can the international force or the United States, if necessary, prevent Iran from resupplying Hizballah?

The President. The first step is—and part of the mandate in the U.N. resolution was to secure Syria's borders. Iran is able to ship weapons to Hizballah through Syria. Secondly is to deal—is to help seal off the ports around Lebanon. In other words, there's—part of the mandate and part of the mission of the troops, the UNIFIL troops will be to seal off the Syrian border.

But, as well, there's a diplomatic mission that needs to be accomplished. In other words, the world must now recognize that it's Iranian sponsorship of Hizballah that exacerbated the situation in the Middle East. People are greatly concerned about the loss of innocent life, as are the Americans—American people. We care deeply about that, the fact that innocents lost their life. But it's very important to remember how this all happened. And Hizballah has been emboldened because of its state sponsors. I know they claim they didn't have anything to do with it, but sophisticated weaponry ended up in the hands of Hizballah fighters, and many assume and many believe that that weaponry came from Iran through Syria.

And so the task is more than just helping the Siniora Government; the task is also—and the task is not just America's alone; the task is the world's—and that is to continually remind the Iranians of their obligations, their obligations not to develop a nuclear weapons program, their obligations not to foster terrorism and promote terrorism.

And we'll continue working with our partners to do that, just that.

Yes, Michael [Michael Allen, Time].

Prevention of Terrorist Attacks in the United Kingdom/Security Measures

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Until the other day, few Americans thought about liquid explosives when they got on a plane. What are the other emerging or evolving threats to the homeland that are most on your mind? That is, what else needs to be hardened as convincingly as cockpits have been hardened?

The President. Michael, we will take the actions that are necessary based upon the intelligence we gather. And obviously, if we find out that terrorist groups are planning and plotting against our citizens—or any other citizens, for that matter—we will notify the proper authorities and the people themselves of actions that we’re taking.

Uncovering this terrorist plot was accomplished through the hard and good work of British authorities as well as our folks. And the coordination was very strong, and the cooperation, interagency and with the Brits, was really good. And I congratulate the Blair Government and the hard-working folks in Great Britain. And, by the way, they’re still analyzing; they’re still dealing with potential threats. And I want to thank our folks too. It was a really good effort.

But my point to you is that if we find out or if we believe that the terrorists will strike using a certain type of weapon or tactic, we will take the necessary precautions, just like we did when it came to liquids on airplanes.

Okay. Yes.

Israel

Q. The U.N. resolution says that Israel must stop all offensive action. What do you view as defensive action? If Hizballah—

The President. Somebody shoots at an Israeli soldier.

Q. They can respond in what way?

The President. Absolutely.

Q. Any way Israel responds to that, if they start another ground offensive, that is all defensive?

The President. I’m not going to—I keep getting asked a lot about Israel’s military decisions, and we don’t advise Israel on its military options. But as far as I’m concerned, if somebody shoots at an Israeli soldier, tries to kill a soldier from Israel, then Israel has

the right to defend herself, has a right to try to suppress that kind of fire. And that’s how I read the resolution. And that’s how Ms. Rice reads the resolution.

Yes, Bill [Bill Plante, CBS News].

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701

Q. Mr. President, to much of the rest of the world, the United States appeared to tolerate the bloodshed and ongoing fighting for a long time before assertively stepping in, and in the process, perhaps earned the further enmity of a lot of people in the rest of the world, particularly the Arab and Muslim world. What is your thought about that?

The President. My thought is that, first of all, we, from the beginning, urged caution on both sides so that innocent life would be protected. And secondly, I think most leaders around the world would give Condoleezza Rice and her team great credit for finally getting a U.N. resolution passed. We were working hard on a U.N. resolution pretty quickly, and it can be a painful process; diplomacy can be a painful process. And it took a while to get the resolution done. But most objective observers would give the United States credit for helping to lead the effort to get a resolution that addressed the root cause of the problem. Of course, we could have got a resolution right off the bat that didn’t address the root cause. Everybody would have felt better for a quick period of time, and then the violence would have erupted again.

And our hope is that this series of resolutions that gets passed gets after the root cause. We want peace, Bill. We’re not interested in process; what we want is results. And so—look, America gets accused of all kinds of things. I understand that. But if people analyze the facts, they were to find two things: One, we urged caution; and two, secondly, that we worked on a diplomatic process that we believe has got the best chance of achieving a long-term objective, which is peace.

Final question, then I got to go.

Homeland Security/Prevention of Terrorist Attacks in the United Kingdom

Q. Mr. President, 4 days later, now do you believe that the U.K. terror plot was developed by Al Qaida leaders? Do you believe that there are terror cells operating within the U.S.? And along with Michael's question, what do you say to critics who say there are giant loopholes in homeland security?

The President. Well, first I would say that—I don't know the loophole question. Maybe you can give me some specific loopholes. But it sounded like to me Homeland Security did a good job, along with intelligence services and FBI, in working with the British to shut down a major plot that could have killed Americans.

First part of the question? That's what happens when you get 60.

Q. Do you believe the terror plot was developed by Al Qaida leaders?

The President. We certainly—I stand by the statements that initially came out of Chertoff, which was, it sure looks like it. It looks like something Al Qaida would do. But before we actually claim Al Qaida, we want to make sure that we have—we could prove it to you. Of course, the minute I say it's Al Qaida, then you're going to step up and say, prove it. So therefore, I'm not going to say it until we have absolute proof. But it looks like the kind of thing Al Qaida would do, and—

Q. As far as terrorist cells inside the U.S.?

The President. Any time we get a hint that there might be a terrorist cell in the United States, we move on it. And we're listening; we're looking. And one thing that's important is for us to make sure that those people who are trying to disrupt terrorist cells in the United States have the tools necessary to do so within the Constitution of the United States, see.

One of the things we better make sure is, we better not call upon the Federal Government and people on the frontlines of fighting terror to do their job and disrupt cells without giving people the necessary tools to disrupt terrorist plots before they strike. And that's what we're doing here in this Government.

And that's why the terrorist surveillance program exists, a program that some in

Washington would like to dismantle. That's why we passed the PATRIOT Act, to give our folks the tools necessary to be able to defend America. The lessons of the past week is that there's still a war on terror going on, and there's still individuals that would like to kill innocent Americans to achieve political objectives. That's the lesson. And the lesson for those of us in Washington, DC, is to set aside politics and give our people the tools necessary to protect the American people.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:40 p.m. at the State Department. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel; President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority; Prime Minister Fuad Siniora of Lebanon; and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom.

Remarks Following a Meeting With the Counterterrorism Team in McLean, Virginia

August 15, 2006

It's been my honor to be here at the NCTC. A couple of observations: One, that because of the work being done here by some really fine Americans from different agencies in our Government, America is safer than it has been. But it's not yet safe. The enemy has got an advantage when it comes to attacking our homeland—they've got to be right one time, and we've got to be right 100 percent of the time to protect the American people.

I'm proud to report that there's a lot of good folks that are working hard to see to it that we're right 100 percent of the time. And I want to thank all the people in this building and around our Government who spend an incredible amount of time and energy and effort to do a very difficult job, and that's to protect the American people.

Recently we saw the fruits of their labor in conjunction with their counterparts in Great Britain. Because of the good work in Great Britain, and because of the help of the people there at NCTC, we disrupted a terror plot, a plot where people were willing to kill innocent life to achieve political objectives.

And that plot is—and this building and the work going on here really is indicative of the challenge we face, not only this week but this year and the years to come, because the United States of America is engaged in a war against a extremist group of folks bound together by an ideology, willing to use terror to achieve their objectives.

Our most solemn duty in the Federal Government is to protect the American people, and I will assure the American people that we're doing everything in our power to protect you. And we've got some good assets, and the best asset we have is the people, people represented right here in this building.

So I've come to listen and learn and to look at reforms that have been put in place. And I've also come to thank the good people who work here and elsewhere in our Government for doing what they are doing.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at noon at the National Counterterrorism Center.

Remarks at Harley-Davidson Vehicle Operations in York, Pennsylvania

August 16, 2006

I want to thank the folks here at the Harley plant for their wonderful hospitality. I've been impressed by Harley-Davidsons. It's one of America's finest products. And today I add to my impressions about the product with the impressions of the workforce. I was—really enjoyed walking the floor and shaking hands with the people who work here. I'm impressed by the esprit de corps; I'm impressed by the fact that these people really enjoy what they're doing; I'm impressed by the fact that they're impressed by the product they make.

One of the things we talked about with some of the employees here and some of the management was the need for Government to do a couple of things to help them here. One is to open up markets around the world for products like Harley-Davidsons. Harleys get shut out of certain markets, like other American products. And it makes sense that if you're making something people want around the world, that we ought to work hard to open up those markets. There's a direct

correlation between exports and jobs. In other words, the more Harleys that are sold in a place like Vietnam or China or India, the more likely it is somebody is going to be able to find work.

And so we talked about that. We also talked about the fact that one reason this company is successful is that they invest a lot in technologies and that there is a part of our Tax Code that encourages investment, called the research and development tax credit. And I assured them that when I said I'm for it being permanent, I meant I was for it being permanent. We hope Congress makes the research and development tax credit a permanent part of the Tax Code. That encourages folks here at Harley to make new investments; it means that the workforce becomes more productive; it means that the product is more likely to be able to compete.

And so I come away from this plant with a lot of very positive impressions, and it is a joy to be here. And again I want to thank you all for opening up your facility, and thank the good folks there on the line for being—for greeting me in such a warm fashion.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:55 p.m.

Remarks at a Reception for Gubernatorial Candidate Lynn C. Swann in Lancaster, Pennsylvania

August 16, 2006

Thank you all for coming. Thanks for being here. The people of Pennsylvania know that when you draft Lynn Swann—[laughter]—you get a man who performs. I am proud to be here with the next Governor of the great State of Pennsylvania, Lynn Swann. I know something about being a Governor. Here's what you need. You need somebody who tells the truth, somebody who sets the people's agenda above political parties, somebody who makes decisions based upon principle, not based upon polls or focus groups, somebody who doesn't go around the State trying to become everybody's friend, but somebody who goes around the State to try to improve the lives of the people of the State. And there's no doubt in my mind that

Lynn Swann has got the characteristics necessary to be a great Governor of this important State.

And I'm proud to be here with Lynn and Jim Matthews. You know, one of the interesting things—I'll never forget; one time I was campaigning for my dad in the sixties in Texas. And I went to a county courthouse on his behalf, and it was empty. It turns out he was a Republican, and they were all Democrats. [Laughter] It was my first lesson of how important it is to stay in touch with the people who run the counties. You see, really good politicians and smart people understand that county politics is where you find the pulse of the people and where you're able to do your best work. And so it's a smart thing that Lynn Swann asked Jim Matthews, a man who understands the county structure in Pennsylvania, to run on his ticket. You've got vision and you've got experience side by side, which makes a powerful ticket for the people of Pennsylvania.

I just had my picture taken with some of you, and about every fourth person said, "Where's Laura?" [Laughter] What they're really saying, "How come you didn't send Laura and you stay at home?" [Laughter] Laura sends her love to the Swanns. She is very fond of Lynn and Charena. She respects them like I respect them. These are noble, decent people. They don't have to be running for politics, see. They can be sitting, doing a lot of other things—watching a football game, talking on TV—[laughter]—helping people help themselves. They're great, charitable people. They've got big hearts. But instead, they've decided to serve a State they love and a people they love. So Laura stands with me in saying to the people of Pennsylvania, you've got two really fine people in Lynn and Charena. Put them in office, and you'll be proud of the job they'll do for you.

It's good to meet Lynn's sons and Jim's sons. There's nothing better than having a family by your side when you're running for office. This is a big State you got here, and it takes a lot of work. And these candidates are going to do the work necessary to get elected. I know they'll work hard. There's nothing better to—coming home to somebody you care for after a hard day's work.

And so when you're voting for a candidate, you're really voting for a family as well.

And I like people who put their families ahead of all else in life. I like people who prioritize. I think it's going to be good for this State to have a Governor who sets the right priorities. It starts with faith and family, and then you can get into politics.

I'm proud to be here with Congressman Joe Pitts. Joe, thank you for serving the district with distinction. I'm glad you're here. I appreciate you being here.

I just came from the district next door, where they put me on a Harley-Davidson. [Laughter] It was a static display—[laughter]—fortunately. [Laughter] But that district is also represented by a person of dignity and character, and that's Todd Platts. Congressman, thanks for coming.

The attorney general—you're going to need to have a good attorney general by your side, Governor, and you got one in Tom Corbett. Thanks for coming, General.

I want to thank Rob Gleason and Bob Asher and all who else are involved with party politics. I want to thank those of you who have given of your hard-earned money to help these folks. You can't run unless the people are willing to contribute. That's just the way it is. And the fact that Lynn and Jim have raised so much money tonight is a good sign. I want to thank you for those of you who have helped organize this event, and thank you for giving of your money. It really means a lot to them. I know. I speak with firsthand experience how much it means to have people willing to contribute.

And now you need to contribute your time. You need to go to your coffee shops and your community centers and your houses of worship, and you need to talk to your friends and neighbors and let them know the quality of the people that are seeking their vote. You need to let them know that these two good men will do a fine job for the people of Pennsylvania. Getting ready—coming down the stretch here pretty soon, going to need you to put up the signs and lick the envelopes and make the phone calls and knock on the doors. They need your help. They'll work hard, but they can't win alone. And so it's one thing to give of your money, and now I hope you give of your time when they're

coming down the stretch—because they can win this race. And when they do, Pennsylvania will be better for it.

Not only do you have to have the character to serve in office, but you have to run for a reason. There's got to be a compelling reason why you seek the vote, and Lynn Swann has got compelling reasons why he'll be a good Governor for the State of Pennsylvania. It starts with his philosophy about the role of government in the economy. He understands that governments don't create wealth, that governments create an environment in which the entrepreneur can flourish or which the small-business owner can grow bigger or which a person can realize their dreams by creating their own company. That's the kind of Governor you want. You want a Governor who understands entrepreneurship; a Governor, when the small-business person looks out and says, "That person understands my needs, and he understands my concerns." And that means you have to have a Governor who is willing to cut the taxes on the people, creating the jobs and doing the work.

He said, "I know how to prioritize a budget." If you don't prioritize in State government or Federal Government, they'll figure out how to spend every single dime that they raise from you. But if you can get somebody to prioritize, that leaves money for you—to stay in your pocket. See, that's how you end up cutting the taxes. You say, "Here's my priorities; here's what I think is essential," and then with the money left over—since I recognize it's your money, you get to keep it. It's amazing what happens to the economy when you cut the taxes on the people who work. I know him well enough to say to the people of Pennsylvania, when he says he's going to cut the taxes by a billion dollars, you can take it to the bank.

You know, one of the issues that hurts people a lot is property taxes. People struggle to own their own home. One of the things we stand for is ownership. We love it when somebody opens the door to the place they live and says, "Welcome to my home; this is my piece of property." We stand strong for the ownership society. It's harder to own a home when your property taxes are going up too high. It's good to have somebody running for Governor who says, "I hear the prob-

lems you have when it comes to owning your home, and I'll do everything I can to cut your property taxes as well."

I used to tell people this: Education is to a State what national defense is to the Federal Government. Education must be the number-one priority of your Governor. And it is the number-one priority for Lynn Swann. See, one of the reasons he's decided to run is because he's concerned about an education system that's not educating every child. Sure, it educates some children, but we want an education system to educate every child, and here's our vision of how it's done.

First, you must have leadership that sets high standards. It's amazing what happens when you have low standards. Guess what happens? You get low results. It's what I call the soft bigotry of low expectations. If you don't have high standards, you get lousy results, particularly in some neighborhoods. And that's unacceptable to a person like Lynn Swann and me.

Secondly, you measure. You say to somebody, "Are you achieving the results I expect?" There's a justified role for that, as far as I'm concerned, in government. The Federal Government spends a lot of money, about 7 percent of the education budget, around the country. I've said, since we're spending 7 percent, we'd like to see the results for the money we spent. Lynn Swann says the same thing. He understands the primary driver of education in Pennsylvania is the State. Therefore, he has got a legitimate right to say to the educators, "We like what you do; we stand squarely with you, but please show us whether or not a child can read or write and add and subtract early, before it's too late."

There's a pitiful practice in some schools that say, "You're too hard to educate; we're just going to shuffle you through." It may be the color of somebody's skin or somebody's demographics that says to somebody, "We're just going to quit on you." That's not right. It's not good for Pennsylvania. It's not good for the United States. You need to have a Governor who'll set high standards and hold people to account. And when you find people learning to read, write, and add and subtract, you say, thank you for what you're doing. But when you don't, you challenge the

status quo so no child is left behind in America.

I like his education plan. It's well-thought-out. It makes a lot of sense. But most importantly, it's going to deliver the results for the families of Pennsylvania. And it doesn't matter whether you're Republican or Democrat or independent; these are results that affect all children. And that's the kind of Governor you need.

One of the things I learned when I campaigned here was that you had a problem with your doctors—like, a real problem. As a matter of fact, I was deeply concerned when I sat down at these roundtables with ob-gyns to find out what it's like to try to practice medicine in the State of Pennsylvania. You can't have good quality of life if you can't find good docs. And the truth of the matter is, many of your doctors are leaving the State or quitting practice because of the junk and frivolous lawsuits.

Now, I understand something, that these trial lawyers are strong politically. They're tough, and that's why you need a tough Governor to stare them down and say, for the sake of good medical care, for the sake of availability and affordability of medicine, we've got to end these frivolous and junk lawsuits that are hurting the people of Pennsylvania.

Now, he's got the right platform. He's running on the right issues, and he's running for the right reason. He's a fellow that doesn't need to say, "I try to make myself feel better by being Governor." He's had plenty of accolades—[laughter]—just ask the Dallas Cowboy fans. [Laughter] See, he's not running for his ego. He's running because he wants to serve the people of this State, and he's got a platform that makes a lot of sense. And I'm proud to help him. I'm proud to help him. And I know you are as well.

You know, we're living in historic times. These are difficult times for the American people because we're in a war. We're in a war we did not ask for but in a war that we must wage and win for the sake of our future generation of children. Much of my thinking about the world changed on September the 11th. I recognized on that day that we face a threat and that the responsibility of the Federal Government, working with State

government, is to do everything we can to secure the homeland to protect the people. That's my most important job now, and it's the most important job of a lot of other people too.

I learned that we face an enemy that knows no bounds of cruelty. I understand the nature of this enemy. This is an enemy that has an ideology. Some people say, well, this may be a law enforcement matter. No, these are people that are politically driven. They've got motives. They do not believe in freedom. They don't believe in freedom of religion; they don't believe in freedom of dissent; they don't believe in women's rights. They have a backward view of the world. And yet they want to impose their vision on other people. That's what they're trying to do. And the United States of America must never retreat and let them have their way.

This is a different kind of war. Veterans of World War II and Korea would tell you, we were able to measure progress based upon miles gained or based upon tanks destroyed, or however people measured war in those days. This is different. We're facing people with an ideology but without a nation-state. Sometimes they have people sponsor them and help them, but this is not a nation-state. It's a different kind of conflict. And it's hard on the American people, and I understand that. But we shouldn't let the difficulties of facing this war force us to retreat from the world. If your most important responsibility is to protect the American people, the best way to do so is to stay on the offense and bring these people to justice before they hurt us again.

A different kind of war requires a different kind of approach. It means we better have good intelligence in order to be able to figure out the designs of the enemy before they strike. Just last week, we had good intelligence in working with our partners in Great Britain to disrupt a plot. I know it's hard for Americans to believe this, but the enemy that attacked us before has got people that want to act like them, are maybe taking instruction from—I can't tell you whether this plot we disrupted was Al Qaida. I'm not going to say that unless I'm certain it was. But it's the kind of activities that Al Qaida has done in

the past, and that is to place suiciders on airplanes to destroy innocent life, trying to shake the will of the United States, trying to send a political message.

And so we've got to use new tactics, new efforts, new assets to protect ourselves against an enemy that will strike us at any moment. This war on terror is more than just chasing down people hiding in caves or preventing people from getting on airplanes to blow them up; the war on terror is fought in many theaters, and the central front in the war on terror now is Iraq. I say it's the central front because that's what the enemy themselves have said, that they want to drive us from the region—that they view it as the central front as well. They've got objectives in Iraq. They want the United States to suffer a defeat in Iraq. They want us to retreat from Iraq. They want to create such havoc on our TV screens by killing innocent people that the American people finally say, we've had enough—leaving Iraq before the mission is complete.

And the mission is to have a country, a free country that can sustain itself and govern itself and defend itself and serve as an ally in the war on terror in the heart of the Middle East. That's the mission. And they want us to leave; they want us to cut and run. And there's some good people in our country who believe we should cut and run. They're not bad people when they say that; they're decent people. I just happen to believe they're wrong, and they're wrong for this reason: This would be a defeat for the United States in a key battleground in the global war on terror. It would create a—leaving before we complete our mission would create a terrorist state in the heart of the Middle East, a country with huge oil reserves that the terrorist network would be willing to use to extract economic pain from those of us who believe in freedom.

If we were to leave before the mission is complete, it would hurt U.S. credibility. Who would want to stand with the United States of America if we didn't complete the mission—and a mission that can be completed and will be completed? If we cut and run, if we don't complete the mission, what would that say to those brave men and women who have volunteered to wear the uniform of the

United States of America? If we leave before the mission is complete, if we withdraw, the enemy will follow us home.

By defeating the enemy in Iraq, jihadists who try to spread sectarian violence through brutal suicide bombings, jihadists who have declared openly that their mission is to convert that country into a safe haven for them to launch attacks—when we defeat them, there will be a major defeat for the terrorists. It will strengthen the spread of democracy in the Middle East.

Look, our strategy is this: We will stay on the offense—and we are. Any time we get a hint that somebody is going to hurt us, we respond. And we're keeping the pressure on the enemy. By the way, anybody who follows me should always understand, you must keep the pressure on the enemy; otherwise, they will put the pressure on us. They still exist. It's important to understand this is a global war on terror, not an isolated moment of law enforcement. This is the first war of the 21st century, and the United States of America must lead that war. And we must be firm, and we must be resolved.

We will stay on the offense so we don't have to face them here in the United States of America. The way to defeat this enemy in the long term is to defeat their hateful ideology with a hopeful ideology; is for the United States of America to understand the power of liberty to help transform people's lives to the better and the power of liberty to help spread the peace that we want for our children and our grandchildren.

You know, when you have resentment and anger, that breeds hatred; that breeds recruiting grounds for people to become a suicider. Imagine the mentality of somebody willing to kill for an ideology that just doesn't—is not hopeful, and yet I believe a lot of that has to do with the fact that parts of the world breed resentment. And I believe that is due in part to the nature of the governments. I believe a system of government that encourages people to participate and a government that says, "We respond to your will," is the kind of government that ends up creating a hopeful alternative to resentment and hatred.

Our foreign policy in the past in the Middle East has been, let's just work for stability;

let us not care what the form of government is; let's just make sure everything appears stable. The problem was, that foreign policy came home on September the 11th, 2001. It didn't work. What looked placid, what looked serene, what looked calm was not. Beneath the surface was this deep resentment brewing that caused people to come and kill 3,000 of our fellow citizens. The best way to defeat this enemy in the long run is to spread liberty, is to give people the hope of freedom.

Isn't it interesting today that the most violent parts of the world are where young democracies are trying to take root? Isn't it interesting that Hizballah would attack Israel, a democracy in the heart of the Middle East, try to destabilize the Middle East so that Lebanon doesn't get to be a strong democracy, and starts to try to turn the world against Israel? Isn't it interesting that the young democracy of Iraq is the place where the enemy is trying to stop the progress? That should tell the American people the following things: One, we face an enemy that has an ideology that can't stand freedom; and secondly, as freedom progresses, it changes the world for the better. Otherwise, the enemy wouldn't be trying to stop it.

And so in the long term, the United States of America must take the lead in spreading liberty. And we've got to have great confidence that it will work. I believe there's an Almighty, and I believe in the heart and soul of everybody is the gift of freedom from that Almighty. I believe Muslim women, Hindu women, Christian women, Jewish women want their children to grow up in peace and hope. I believe there is the universality of freedom, and I know it works.

You might remember, I recently went down to Graceland—that's Elvis's place—with the Prime Minister of Japan. Wasn't that interesting? [Laughter] I thought it was. [Laughter] More importantly, my guest thought it was. He was an Elvis fan. I bet you, in 1949, 1950, if somebody had stood up and said, "You know, I bet one of these days an American President is going to take the Japanese Prime Minister to visit the heartland," they'd have said, "Man, you are nuts." [Laughter]

It's interesting, isn't it, that the Prime Minister of a country with which we had a mighty war, thousands lost their lives—as a matter of fact, it took us, I don't know how long, a decade or so to even get racial slurs out of our vocabulary because of the enmity that arose as a result of fighting the Japanese. We couldn't stand them, and they couldn't stand us. And yet 60 years after the end of World War II, George W. Bush flies on the airplane with Junichiro Koizumi to go to Elvis' place. [Laughter] And we didn't spend much time talking about Elvis's place on the way down; we talked about the peace. Isn't that interesting? A former enemy, the sworn enemy of the United States, the leader of that country now sat down with the President of the United States doing something that our forefathers could not have possibly imagined—that we talked about the peace.

Something happened between World War II and today, and what happened was, Japan adopted a Japanese-style democracy. Something nobody would have thought as possible after World War II, except for Harry S. Truman and some other people that had great faith in the desire for people to live in freedom and in the capacity to change—for freedom to change an enemy into an ally.

Someday, an American President will be sitting down talking to a duly elected leader of Iraq, talking about how to keep the peace. And our children will be better off.

The stakes are high. But I clearly see where we need to go. And the stakes are high in Pennsylvania, and Lynn Swann clearly sees where the State needs to go. You can't lead unless you see the end result. You've got a man who has got the vision. He's got the skills necessary to lead toward that vision. He's the right man for the job. I'm honored to be with him.

I want to thank you all for supporting Lynn Swann and Jim Matthews. God bless you all, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:18 p.m. at the Lancaster Host Resort and Conference Center. In his remarks, he referred to Jim Matthews, candidate for Lieutenant Governor of Pennsylvania; Robert A. Gleason, Jr., chairman, Republican State Committee of Pennsylvania; Robert Asher, Pennsylvania national committeeman, Republican

National Committee; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Remarks on Signing the Pension Protection Act of 2006

August 17, 2006

Thank you. Please be seated. Thanks. Welcome to the White House. We're glad you're here. In a few moments, I will have the honor of signing the most sweeping reform of America's pension laws in over 30 years, the Pension Protection Act of 2006. And we welcome you here to witness the signing.

Americans who spend a lifetime working hard should be confident that their pensions will be there when they retire. Last year, I asked Congress to strengthen protections for the pensions of our workers. Members of both parties came together to pass a good bill that will improve our pension system, while expanding opportunities for Americans to build their own nest eggs for retirement. And I'm really pleased to sign this bill into law.

I want to thank two members of my—three members of my Cabinet who have joined us today: Secretary of Treasury Hank Paulson, Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao, and the Director of the OMB Rob Portman. As an aside, while Portman served in Congress, he was the principal author of some of the important provisions of this bill.

I also want to welcome Members of the United States Senate and the House of Representatives here. I welcome Senator Mike Enzi, who is the chairman of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. I welcome Senator Blanche Lincoln from Arkansas. I welcome Congressman John Boehner, House Majority Leader, who was instrumental in getting this bill passed; along with Buck McKeon, who's the chairman of the Education and Workforce Committee; Congressman Bill Thomas, chairman of the Ways and Means Committee; Congressman John Kline of Minnesota. Thank you all for coming. Thanks for coming back from your vacations.

Many Americans work for private companies that offer traditional pensions, and most of those companies are meeting their obliga-

tions to their employees and their retirees. Yet, some businesses are not putting away the cash they need to fund the pensions they promised to their workers. These companies get into financial trouble and go bankrupt; their underfunded pension plans can leave some retirees with checks much smaller than the ones they were promised.

The Federal Government has created an insurance system for businesses offering private pensions, and that insurance is funded by premiums collected from these employers. When some businesses fail to fund their pension plans and are unable to meet their obligations to their employees, it puts a strain on the entire system.

And if there's not enough money in the system to cover all the extra costs, American taxpayers could be called on to make up the shortfall. Every American has an interest in seeing this system fixed, whether you're a worker at a company with an underfunded pension or a taxpayer who might get stuck with the bill.

The Pension Protection Act of 2006 will help shore up our pension insurance system in several key ways. It requires companies who underfund their pension plans to pay additional premiums. It extends the requirement that companies that terminate their pensions must provide extra funding for the system. This legislation insists that companies measure their obligations of their pension plans more accurately. It closes loopholes that allow underfunded plans to skip pension payments. It raises caps on the amount that employers can put into their pension plans so they can add more money during good times and build up a cushion that can keep pensions solvent in lean times.

Finally, this legislation prevents companies with underfunded pension plans from digging the hole deeper by promising extra benefits to their workers without paying for those promises up front. The problem of underfunded pensions will not be eliminated overnight. This bill establishes sound standards for pension funding, yet in the end, the primary responsibility rests with employers to fund the pension promises as soon as they can.

The message from this administration, from those of us up here today, is this: You

should keep the promises you make to your workers. If you offer a private pension plan to your employees, you have a duty to set aside enough money now so your workers will get what they've been promised when they retire.

In addition to reforming the laws governing traditional private pensions, the bill I signed today also contains provisions to help workers who save for retirement through defined contribution plans like IRAs and 401(k)s. These savings plans are helping Americans build a society of ownership and financial independence.

And this legislation will make it easier for workers to participate in these plans. It will remove barriers that prevent companies from automatically enrolling their employees in these savings plans, ensure that workers have more information about the performance of their accounts, provide greater access to professional advice about investing safely for retirement, and give workers greater control over how their accounts are invested.

Finally, this bill makes permanent the higher contribution limits for IRAs and 401(k)s that we passed in 2001, and that will enable more workers to build larger nest eggs for retirement.

To ensure more secure retirement for all Americans, we've got more work to do. We must also prepare for the impact of the baby boomer generation's retirement, and what that impact will have on Federal entitlement programs like Social Security and Medicare. As more baby boomers stop contributing payroll taxes and start collecting benefits—people like me—it will create an enormous strain on our programs. Entitlement programs are projected to grow faster than the economy, faster than the population, and faster than the rate of inflation. If we fail to act, spending on Social Security and Medicare and Medicaid will be almost 60 percent of the entire Federal budget in the year 2030. And that's going to leave future generations with impossible choices: staggering tax increases, immense deficits, or deep cuts in benefits.

We have an obligation to confront this problem now. The Secretary of Treasury understands what I'm telling the Congress: Now is the time to move; now is the time

to do our duty. I'm going to continue to work with the Congress and call on the Congress to work with the administration to reform these programs so we can ensure a secure retirement for all Americans.

Today we've taken an important step toward ensuring greater retirement security for millions of American workers. I want to thank the House and the Senate for their good work on this vital legislation. It's been hard work. It took a lot of pages to write that bill, as you can see. [*Laughter*] But the Members did good work, and now I'd ask them to join me as I sign into law the Pension Protection Act of 2006.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:13 p.m. in Room 450 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. H.R. 4, approved August 17, was assigned Public Law No. 109-280.

Statement on Signing the Pension Protection Act of 2006

August 17, 2006

Today I have signed into law H.R. 4, the "Pension Protection Act of 2006." This legislation strengthens the pension insurance system and ensures that workers will receive better information about their pension plans. The legislation makes permanent the deductible limits for contributions to Individual Retirement Accounts and 401(k) plans, encourages employers to automatically enroll workers in 401(k) plans, and expands workers' access to investment advice.

The executive branch shall construe sections 221(a) and 1632(b)(1) of the Act, which call for the submission of legislative recommendations to the Congress, in a manner consistent with the constitutional authority of the President to supervise the unitary executive branch and to recommend for the consideration of the Congress such measures as the President shall judge necessary and expedient.

Section 1634(e) purports to require the United States Trade Representative to submit to congressional committees the contents of the negotiating positions of the United States and foreign countries in certain international trade negotiations. The executive branch shall construe section 1634(e) in a

manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to conduct the Nation's foreign affairs including negotiations with foreign countries, supervise the unitary executive branch, and to withhold information the disclosure of which could impair foreign relations, national security, the deliberative processes of the Executive, or the performance of the Executive's constitutional duties.

George W. Bush

The White House,
August 17, 2006.

NOTE: H.R. 4, approved August 17, was assigned Public Law No. 109-280.

**Presidential Determination on
Continuation of United States Drug
Interdiction Assistance to the
Government of Colombia**

August 17, 2006

Presidential Determination No. 2006-19

*Memorandum for the Secretary of State, the
Secretary of Defense*

Subject: Presidential Determination on
Continuation of U.S. Drug Interdiction
Assistance to the Government of Colombia

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by section 1012 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1995, as amended (22 U.S.C. 2291-4), I hereby certify, with respect to Colombia, that: (1) interdiction of aircraft reasonably suspected to be primarily engaged in illicit drug trafficking in that country's airspace is necessary because of the extraordinary threat posed by illicit drug trafficking to the national security of that country; and (2) that country has appropriate procedures in place to protect against innocent loss of life in the air and on the ground in connection with such interdiction, which shall at a minimum include effective means to identify and warn an aircraft before the use of force is directed against the aircraft.

The Secretary of State is authorized and directed to publish this determination in the

Federal Register and to notify the Congress of this determination.

George W. Bush

**Remarks Following a Meeting With
Economic Advisers and an Exchange
With Reporters at Camp David,
Maryland**

August 18, 2006

The President. Thank you all for coming. We've just finished a really informative meeting with my economic team. I want to thank them for their service to the country. I'm really proud to be serving the American people alongside them. I've put together a really good team of people; smart, capable, decent, honorable people who are serving America with great distinction.

We discussed the state of the economy. We discussed where our economy is headed, and we discussed the steps that we're going to take to ensure that our economy continues to lead the world. The foundation of our economy is solid, and it's strong. Because of the tax cuts we passed, American workers and families and small businesses are keeping more of the money they earn. And they're using that money to drive this economy of ours forward.

The economy grew at 4 percent annual rate during the first half of 2006, and this means that our economy is maintaining solid growth and performing in line with expectations. Our solid economic growth is creating real benefits for American workers and families and entrepreneurs. Since August 2003, we've added more than 5.5 million new jobs. The unemployment rate is 4.8 percent. Productivity growth is strong. Behind the numbers are stories of hard-working Americans who are realizing their dreams. The entrepreneurial spirit in this country is strong, and that's good for America.

You know, in Miami a couple of weeks ago—and I met a fellow named Nelson Gonzalez. Ten years ago, he and a friend started a computer business in a garage with \$10,000. Their revenues are \$192 million today. They employ about 750 people around the world.

I visited a fellow in Wisconsin named John West. He runs a manufacturing company. Over the past 2 years, John's factory has expanded from 65 employees to 90 employees. He told me he's receiving more orders than he can fill, and he's looking for more workers.

The other day I went to York, Pennsylvania, to visit the Harley-Davidson plant. They're selling motorcycles all over the world. Harley has doubled its workforce in the past decade. In other words, things are good for American workers and good for the entrepreneurs, and that's good for the country.

The economic growth has had a positive impact on the budget, and that's good for the taxpayers. Last year, economic growth pushed up Federal tax revenues by 14.5 percent—it's the largest increase in 24 years. This year, tax revenues are projected to increase by another 11.4 percent, and at the same time, we are working with Congress to restrain Federal spending. We're meeting our priorities, and we're restraining Federal spending.

We recently learned that this year's deficit is projected to be 30 percent lower than we initially thought, and that means we're on track to cut the deficit in half by 2008, a full year ahead of the original goal.

We've got to keep this economy growing through pro-growth economic policies. Taxes need to be kept low. We're working with Congress to restrain spending. Congress needs to pass the line-item veto so we can work together to cut out wasteful and unnecessary spending. We're going to work to make sure health care is more affordable for our businesses and our families. We will continue to invest in new energy technologies so we can promote alternative sources of energy and be wise stewards with the environment. We'll continue to work to stop the spread of junk lawsuits, and we'll continue to open up markets for American products.

We also discussed ways to keep this economy of ours competitive, flexible, and dynamic into the future. We discussed ways to make sure we improve education and job training. It's really important for our workers to have the skills necessary so we can remain a competitive country. It's really important for Congress to fully fund the American

Competitiveness Initiative to make sure this country remains the economic leader we want it to be.

And we also talked about the need for this administration to work with Congress to really deal with the biggest challenge facing our budget and a huge challenge for our economic growth in the future, and that is the unsustainable growth of spending on programs like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. These programs need to be reformed so that they will be available for our children and our grandchildren. It's a difficult issue, I know, for Members of Congress. The people here with me clearly see the problem, and we look forward to working with both Republicans and Democrats to do our duty, and that's to solve the problem.

All of us here are confident about the future of this country. Over the past 5 years, our economy has faced unprecedented challenges, from recession to corporate scandal to terrorist attack to natural disasters. And through it all, our free enterprise system has proved to be the most resilient and responsive in the world.

With hard work and wise policies, we'll meet every challenge that comes. And in so doing, we'll help more Americans realize their dreams and continue to make this country a grand—a land of great opportunities.

And now I'll answer a couple of questions. Deb [Deb Riechmann, Associated Press], you got any?

Situation in the Middle East/United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701

Q. Mr. President, on Lebanon, how can you say that Hizballah has suffered such a bad defeat when it's rebuilding—helping rebuild in southern Lebanon and it remains intact? And secondly, are you disappointed at all about France's decision to scale back its support of the international force?

The President. I think when people take a sober look at what took place in Lebanon, they'll realize that the destruction was caused by Hizballah. Hizballah caused the crisis. It was Hizballah's kidnaping of Israeli soldiers as well as Hizballah's launching rockets that

caused Israel to defend herself from an action that the Lebanese Government didn't support.

Hizballah acted as a government within a government, and the world came to that recognition very quickly. I remember—I don't know if you traveled to St. Petersburg with us, but one of the first things that happened in the G-8 after this crisis occurred was that we all sat around the table and came to the conclusion very quickly, this type of behavior from a state within a state is intolerable for peace.

The first reaction, of course, of Hizballah and its supporters is, declare victory. I guess I would have done the same thing if I were them. But sometimes it takes people a while to come to the sober realization of what forces create stability and which don't. Hizballah is a force of instability. I appreciate the Siniora's Government's efforts to make it clear to the Lebanese people that they are the legitimate Government of Lebanon and they will work to rebuild that country. Prime Minister Siniora gave a very—I thought, a very interesting speech the other night, and a powerful speech, about how it's now time for the duly elected Government of Lebanon to do its duty and help rebuild. And they're getting help from around the international community to do so.

Other part of your—oh, the peacekeepers. Diplomacy takes a while, as you know. You watched the unfolding of the U.N. resolution necessary to get a cease-fire in the first place—it took a while. And we will continue to work with friends and allies to make it clear to them, now is the time to address the root causes of the problem, and that's being Hizballah's state within a state, particularly in southern Lebanon. And we'll work with nations to step up to the plate and do what they voted to do at the United Nations, and that is to provide robust international forces to help the Lebanese Army retake the south.

Hizballah, they're pretty comfortable there in south Lebanon. They're now going to find themselves not only that which caused the destruction, but they'll find themselves with now a Lebanese army, with U.N. help, making it clear they won't have the safe haven

necessary—that they think is necessary to launch attacks.

The issue is broader than just Hizballah. The issue is also Syria and Iran, two nations that supported Hizballah in its attempts to create enough havoc so that—I guess people feel like they could take political advantage of the situation; we just can't let them do it.

French Role in Lebanon

Q. But what about France, though?

The President. France has said they'd send some troops. We hope they send more. And there's been different signals coming out of France. Yesterday they had a statement. Today they had a statement. We're working with France. France is a friend. France is an ally. France has got a great stake in the future of Lebanon.

President Chirac has made it very clear that he believes that democracy in Lebanon is very important—been supportive of the Siniora Government like we have. France and the United States cosponsored 1559. That's the U.N. resolution that was the beginning of the end of Syria's involvement in—or Syria's occupation in Lebanon. So we have common interests with France, and they are a very important part of the international scene and will be a very important player in Lebanon.

Toby [Tabassum Zakaria, Reuters].

North Korea

Q. Mr. President, are there indications that North Korea is preparing to conduct its first nuclear bomb test? And if that were to occur, how would the United States respond?

The President. Well, it's a hypothetical question, and you're asking me to divulge any intelligence information I have, and I'm not going to do that, as you know. I'm not going to break tradition.

If North Korea were to conduct a test, it's just a constant reminder for people in the neighborhood, in particular, that North Korea poses a threat. And we expect there to be—we expect our friends and those sitting around the table with us to act in such a manner as to help rid the world of the threat.

War on Terror/Terrorist Surveillance Program

Q. Mr. President, the Federal ruling yesterday that declared your terrorist surveillance program unconstitutional—the judge wrote that it was never the intent of the Framers to give the President such unfettered control. How do you respond, sir, to opponents who say that this ruling is really the first nail in the coffin of your administration’s legal strategy in the war on terror?

The President. I would say that those who herald this decision simply do not understand the nature of the world in which we live. You might remember, last week, working with the—with people in Great Britain, we disrupted a plot. People were trying to come and kill people. This country of ours is at war, and we must give those whose responsibility it is to protect the United States the tools necessary to protect this country in a time of war.

The judge’s decision was a—I strongly disagree with that decision, strongly disagree. That’s why I instructed the Justice Department to appeal immediately, and I believe our appeals will be upheld.

I made my position clear about this war on terror. And by the way, the enemy made their position clear yet again when we were able to stop them. And I—the American people expect us to protect them, and therefore I put this program in place. We believe—strongly believe it’s constitutional.

And if Al Qaida is calling in to the United States, we want to know why they’re calling. And so I made my position clear. It would be interesting to see what other policymakers—how other policymakers react.

Listen, thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:33 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Fuad Siniora of Lebanon; President Jacques Chirac of France; and U.S. District Court Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan Anna Diggs Taylor.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

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.

August 12

In the morning, at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, the President had an intelligence briefing.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Fuad Siniora of Lebanon to discuss U.N. Security Council Resolution 1701 to establish a cease-fire in Lebanon.

August 13

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

August 14

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Romano Prodi of Italy to discuss the situation in Lebanon. He then traveled to Arlington, VA.

In the afternoon, at the Pentagon, the President had a working lunch with experts on Iraq. Later, he returned to Washington, DC. Then, in the Oval Office, he participated in a bill signing ceremony for Public Law 109–272, providing for the Federal acquisition of the Mt. Soledad Veterans Memorial in San Diego, CA.

August 15

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to McLean, VA, where, at the National Counterterrorism Center, he participated in a National Security Council and Homeland Security Council briefing.

In the afternoon, the President had a working lunch with counterterrorism and homeland security experts. Later, he met with his homeland security team. He then returned to Washington, DC.

The President declared a major disaster in Texas and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by flooding beginning July 31 and continuing.

The President announced his intention to appoint John Edward Niederhuber as Director of the National Cancer Institute at the Department of Health and Human Services.

The President announced his intention to appoint Marta Brito Perez as Chief Human Capital Officer at the Department of Homeland Security.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the Congressional Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China: Christopher R. Hill (At Large Representative); Franklin L. Lavin (Department of Commerce Representative); and Barry F. Lowenkron (State Department Representative).

The President announced his intention to appoint Nancy Davenport as a member of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

August 16

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he granted pardons to 17 individuals.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to York, PA, where he toured Harley-Davidson Vehicle Operations. Later, he participated in a roundtable discussion on the economy with Harley-Davidson managers and workers. He then participated in an interview with USA Today.

Later in the afternoon, the President traveled to Lancaster, PA.

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

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Roh Moo-hyun of South Korea to the White House on September 14.

The President announced that he has named David McCormick as Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Adviser for International Economic Affairs.

The President announced that he has named Jennifer Christie as Special Assistant to the President for Presidential Personnel.

August 17

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he met with Secretary

of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld, military commanders, and senior military advisers to discuss the war on terror.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Camp David, MD.

In the evening, the President met with his economic team.

August 18

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Alan Garcia Perez of Peru to the White House on October 10.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

NOTE: No nominations were submitted to the Senate during the period covered by this issue.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

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.

Released August 14

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Tony Snow

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that on August 14 the President signed H.R. 5683 and on August 12 the President signed S. 250, H.R. 3682, and S. 3693

Released August 15

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Tony Snow

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Texas

Released August 16

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Tony Snow

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of President Roh Moo-hyun of the Republic of Korea

Released August 17

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Tony Snow

Statement by the Press Secretary on a Federal judge's ruling on the terrorist surveillance program

Statement by the Press Secretary on U.S. assistance to the Government of Colombia Airbridge Denial Program

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 4646, H.R. 4811, H.R. 4962, H.R. 5104, H.R. 5107, H.R. 5169, and H.R. 5540

Fact sheet: The Pension Protection Act of 2006: Ensuring Greater Retirement Security for American Workers

Released August 18

Transcript of a press briefing by Secretary of the Treasury Henry M. Paulson, Jr., Director of the Office of Management and Budget Robert J. Portman, and Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers Edward P. Lazear on the President's meeting with economic advisers

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit by President Alan Garcia of Peru

**Acts Approved
by the President**

Approved August 12

H.R. 3682 / Public Law 109-269
To redesignate the Mason Neck National Wildlife Refuge in Virginia as the Elizabeth Hartwell Mason Neck National Wildlife Refuge

S. 250 / Public Law 109-270
Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006

S. 3693 / Public Law 109-271
To make technical corrections to the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005

Approved August 14

H.R. 5683 / Public Law 109-272
To preserve the Mt. Soledad Veterans Memorial in San Diego, California, by providing for the immediate acquisition of the memorial by the United States

Approved August 17

H.R. 4646 / Public Law 109-273
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 7320 Reseda Boulevard in Reseda, California, as the "Coach John Wooden Post Office Building"

H.R. 4811 / Public Law 109-274
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 215 West Industrial Park Road in Harrison, Arkansas, as the "John Paul Hammerschmidt Post Office Building"

H.R. 4962 / Public Law 109-275
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 100 Pitcher Street in Utica, New York, as the "Captain George A. Wood Post Office Building"

H.R. 5104 / Public Law 109-276
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1750 16th Street South in St. Petersburg, Florida, as the "Morris W. Milton Post Office"

H.R. 5107 / Public Law 109-277
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1400 West Jordan Street in Pensacola, Florida, as the "Earl D. Hutto Post Office Building"

H.R. 5169 / Public Law 109-278
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1310 Highway 64 NW, in Ramsey, Indiana, as the "Wilfred Edward 'Cousin Willie' Sieg, Sr. Post Office"

H.R. 5540 / Public Law 109–279

To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 217 Southeast 2nd Street in Dimmitt, Texas, as the “Sergeant Jacob Dan Dones Post Office”

H.R. 4 / Public Law 109–280

Pension Protection Act of 2006