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Weekly Compilation of

Presidential Documents

Monday, May 7, 2007
Volume 43—Number 18
Pages 541–585

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WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* is published pursuant to the authority contained in the Federal Register Act (49 Stat. 500, as amended; 44 U.S.C. Ch. 15), under regulations prescribed by the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, approved by the President (37 FR 23607; 1 CFR Part 10).

Distribution is made only by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* will be furnished by mail to domestic subscribers for $80.00 per year ($137.00 for mailing first class) and to foreign subscribers for $93.75 per year, payable to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The charge for a single copy is $3.00 ($3.75 for foreign mailing).

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Week Ending Friday, May 4, 2007

Proclamation 8135—Law Day, U.S.A., 2007

April 27, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Our Nation is built upon the rule of law and guided by our founding promise of freedom, equality, and justice for all. Law Day is an opportunity to celebrate the Constitution and the laws that protect our rights and liberties and to recognize our responsibility as citizens to uphold the values of a free and just society.

Generations of Americans have served the cause of justice and shaped our legal institutions to ensure that the blessings of liberty extend to every citizen. The men and women of America's legal community have worked to defend the Constitution, protect the innocent, and secure the rights of their fellow citizens. Their efforts have helped make our Nation a shining example of justice.

America's faith in the rule of law has endured through the centuries. Today, we strive to prepare our next generation of leaders to carry on America's tradition of freedom and democracy. The theme of this year's Law Day, "Liberty Under Law: Empowering Youth, Assuring Democracy," highlights the importance of teaching our young people about the vital role they can play in our democratic society. We all have a duty to help our youth become responsible citizens by promoting the virtues that sustain our democracy and fostering a deeper understanding and respect for our Constitution and laws. These young men and women will shape the future of our country, and their spirit and character will help promote justice, equality, and opportunity throughout our country.

The strength of our legal system requires the ongoing commitment of every citizen. As we observe Law Day, we celebrate our Nation's legal heritage and honor those who work to advance the cause of justice.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, in accordance with Public Law 87–20, as amended, do hereby proclaim May 1, 2007, as Law Day, U.S.A. I call upon all the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities. I also call upon Government officials to display the flag of the United States in support of this national observance.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-seventh day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., May 1, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 28, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on May 2.

The President's Radio Address

April 28, 2007

Good morning. This weekend I am traveling to Florida to address the graduating class of Miami Dade College. This college serves one of our Nation's most vibrant and diverse communities. Miami is home to people whose families have been in our country for generations and to people who have only just arrived. This diversity is one of the great strengths of that city, and it is one of the great strengths of our country.

The opportunities America offers make our land a beacon of hope for people from every corner of the world. America's ability to assimilate new immigrants has set us apart

from other nations. In this country, our origins matter less than our dreams. What makes us Americans is our shared belief in democracy and liberty. Our Nation now faces a critical challenge: to build an immigration system that upholds these ideals and meets America's needs in the 21st century.

In Washington, we are in the midst of an important discussion about immigration. Our current immigration system is in need of reform. We need a system where our laws are respected. We need a system that meets the legitimate needs of our economy. And we need a system that treats people with dignity and helps newcomers assimilate into our society.

We must address all elements of this problem together or none of them will be solved at all. And we must do it in a way that learns from the mistakes that caused previous reforms to fail. So I support comprehensive immigration reform that will allow us to secure our borders and enforce our laws, keep us competitive in the global economy, and resolve the status of those already here, without amnesty and without animosity.

I know convictions run deep on the matter of immigration. Yet I am confident we can have a serious, civil, and conclusive debate. My administration is working closely with Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle. We are addressing our differences in good faith, and we are working to build consensus. And I am pleased that some of those who had doubts about comprehensive reform last year are now open to supporting it.

There is a desire on the part of Republicans and Democrats alike to get this problem solved. And by working together, we can enact comprehensive immigration reform this year.

Our Nation deserves an immigration system that secures our borders and honors our proud history as a nation of immigrants. By working together, we will enforce our laws and ensure that America forever remains a land of opportunity and a great hope on the horizon.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:40 p.m. on April 26 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 28. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 27 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Commencement Address at Miami Dade College—Kendall Campus in Miami, Florida

April 28, 2007

Thank you very much, Mr. President. You're on your way. [*Laughter*] Christopher, thank you for your fine introduction. I know—see your mom over there. I know she's awfully proud of you. [*Laughter*] Dr. Padron; Dr. Gray; members of the board of trustees; members of the administration; faculty and staff; former Governor Bush—always *mi hermano*—[*laughter*]—Senator Martinez; Congressman Lincoln Diaz-Balart; *y tambien* Mario Diaz-Balart; proud alumni, especially Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen; distinguished guests; family, friends, and members of the class of 2007: Thank you for your warm welcome, and thank you for the honor of addressing you.

This is a joyous day for the graduating class at Miami Dade College. Yet on campuses across America, our thoughts turn to the students and faculty and staff at Virginia Tech. We remember lives cut short, teachers taken from their students, and young men and women who will never attend their commencement ceremonies. Members of the Miami-Dade community share this sense of loss. One of the young victims was a former Miami Dade student who transferred to Virginia Tech—Daniel Cueva. Daniel's family knows, or should know, that we pray for them today, and we offer our comfort to the families who grieve the loss of a loved one during this commencement season.

It is always a pleasure to be back here to Miami, and I thank Dr. Padron for asking me. It hasn't escaped my attention that when you were looking for Bushes to invite—[*laughter*]—I came in fourth. [*Laughter*] Laura spoke at your North Campus commencement in 2004, my mother spoke—[*laughter*]—brother Jeb has spoken here twice. [*Laughter*] Before I stepped on the stage, I asked him for some advice. I said,

"Jeb, give me some advice." He said, "Floridians hold their politicians to strict term limits: 8 years for a Governor, and 15 minutes for a commencement speaker." [*Laughter*] I will do my best.

This afternoon, some of you are graduating with high honors, and I congratulate you. That's something I never experienced. [*Laughter*] Of course, today I have done something that most of you have never experienced; I made it to campus with absolutely no traffic. [*Laughter*] And I found a nice parking spot. [*Laughter*]

The members of the class of 2007 have worked hard for this day. When you arrived on this campus, you set a goal for yourselves, and you met that goal with determination and discipline. Today you are leaving this fine college with a degree with your name on it and a promise of a better future. And I congratulate you on this important achievement.

To reach this day, you had the support of outstanding professors. They taught you well; they gave you extra help when you needed it; and they inspired you to aim high. I thank the faculty members for their dedication to their students and for their dedication to the teaching profession.

To reach this day, you also had the support of loving families. Many of you had moms and dads who sacrificed to put you through school and to give you this opportunity. Others of you put yourselves through school while providing for your own families. Those of you with young children found yourselves keeping tabs on two sets of homework—yours and theirs. I ask all the families—the moms and dads, husbands and wives, sons and daughters, to receive—to stand and receive the thanks of the class of 2007.

As this graduating class goes forward, you enter a world of unbounded opportunity. America's economy is prospering; our trade with the world is flourishing; and new possibilities are opening every day. And the key to unlocking those possibilities is a good education.

Here at Miami Dade, the college administration has teamed with local industries, from health care to aviation to information technology, to make sure the students who leave here do so with the skills that will enable them to succeed. The school slogan is "opportunity changes everything." And in newspapers and billboards and buses around this city, people can see how high you can rise with a degree from Miami Dade.

Kathy Sparger graduated from Miami Dade with a degree in nursing, and today she is vice president of patient services and chief nursing officer at South Miami Hospital. Jimmie Allen graduated from Miami Dade with a degree in architectural technology and went on to start his own architecture firm. Robert Parker graduated from Miami Dade with a degree in criminal justice, and today he is the director of the Miami-Dade Police Department. These people have followed different paths in life, but they all have one thing in common. Their road to success began right here at Miami Dade.

And today you join their ranks as proud graduates of this fine college. If you leave here determined to succeed, as they did, you will achieve your dreams as well. I ask you to dream big, to be confident in your future, and use the diploma you receive today to stake your claim in this land of opportunity.

The opportunities of America make our land a beacon of hope for people from every corner of the world. It says something about this college that more than half of the students were raised speaking a language other than English. Some of you are the children and grandchildren of immigrants who risked everything to give you opportunities they never had. Others of you are immigrants yourself, who came to this country with the hope of a better life and the determination to work for it. Over the years, this school has helped open the door for opportunity for hundreds of thousands of immigrants, and that is why Miami Dade proudly calls itself "democracy's college."

This college has had a significant impact on thousands of our citizens. Take, for example, Gwen Belfon, who graduates today. As a single mother in Trinidad and Tobago, Gwen dreamed of attending college. But she put her own dreams on hold to raise her four children. A few years ago, Gwen came to the United States and enrolled at Miami Dade. Today this proud mother fulfills a lifelong dream. When Gwen crosses the stage this

afternoon, she will receive her associate's degree in education. And she's not done yet. Next January, she will return to Miami Dade to start on her bachelor's degree.

Another immigrant who knows what a Miami Dade degree can do is the president of this college, Dr. Padron. At age 15, he left his home and family in Cuba for a new life in the United States. He arrived with a desire to learn and a will to succeed. At Miami Dade, he earned a degree in economics, while still learning the English language. Today, he is the first president of this college to speak English as a second language. Some people might say I am the first President of the United States who can make the same claim. [*Laughter*] Dr. Padron has gone on to serve as a leader in the academic community and an inspiring example for immigrants studying at this school today.

Immigrants like Gwen and Eduardo Padron came from different countries, at different times, under different circumstances. They are evidence that in America, your origins matter less than your dreams. They prove that if you work hard and make a commitment to learning, you will find that the doors have a way of opening for you. So my call is this: Use the degree you earn today as the first step in a lifetime of learning. By doing so, you will build a brighter future for yourselves and your families and help maintain the promise of the United States of America.

Maintaining the promise of America requires that we remain an open and welcoming society. This college serves the City of Miami, which is one of the most vibrant and diverse communities in our Nation. Miami is home to people whose families have been in Florida for generations and to those who have only just arrived. This diversity is one of the great strengths of this city, it is one of the great strengths of this college, and it is one of the great strengths of America.

Over the years, America's ability to assimilate new immigrants has set us apart from other nations. What makes us Americans is a shared belief in democracy and liberty. And now our Nation faces a vital challenge: to build an immigration system that upholds these ideals and meets America's needs in the 21st century.

In Washington, we are in the midst of an important discussion about immigration. Our current immigration system is in need of reform. It is not working. We need a system where our laws are respected. We need a system that meets the legitimate needs of our economy. And we need a system that treats people with dignity and helps newcomers assimilate into our society.

We must address all elements of this problem together or none of them will be solved at all. And we must do it in a way that learns from the mistakes that caused previous reforms to fail. I am a strong supporter of comprehensive immigration reform that will allow us to secure our borders and enforce our laws once and for all, that will keep us competitive in a global economy, and that will resolve the status of those who are already here, without amnesty and without animosity.

At Miami Dade, you know firsthand the contributions that immigrants make to our country. You see every day the values of hard work and family and faith that immigrants bring. This experience gives you a special responsibility to make your voices heard. One of the great strengths of America is that the most important issues are decided by the will of the people. That's why an educated citizenry is so vital to the success of our country. As graduates of Miami Dade, you are well-equipped to make a contribution to these vital debates. Speak out on the issues that matter to you. Participate in your Nation's civic life. By taking part in American democracy, you will be active and responsible citizens and you will make our country stronger.

Many of the graduates of the class of 2007 have roots in countries where the opportunity to participate in an open debate does not exist. One of those countries lies just 90 miles from our shores, on the island of Cuba. In Havana and other Cuban cities, there are people just like you who are attending school and dreaming of a better life. Unfortunately, those dreams are stifled by a cruel dictatorship that denies all freedom in the name of a dark and discredited ideology.

Some of you still have loved ones who live in Cuba and wait for the day when the light of liberty will shine upon them again. That day is nearing. The reign of every tyrant

comes to an end, yet the desire for freedom is never-ending. In Cuba and across the world, all who struggle for freedom have a friend in the United States, and we will stand with them until that struggle is won.

The advance of liberty is the great story of our time. Some of your fellow students have played an important part in that story. Hundreds of veterans of the United States Armed Forces are taking classes at Miami Dade. Sixteen veterans graduate from this campus today. We thank all these brave men and women for their service and for their courageous decision to wear the uniform of the United States of America.

One of those veterans is a young man named Jimmy Zapata. Jimmy's family emigrated from Colombia when he was 14. After he finished high school, he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. In 2003, Sergeant Zapata helped provide convoy security and supplies for units pushing toward Baghdad as a part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Sergeant Zapata fought for his adopted country with honor and valor. He has earned the gratitude of his Nation, and today he earns his associate's degree from Miami Dade College. The United States will always be proud to have immigrants like Sergeant Zapata, and I know Miami Dade will always be proud to call him one of your own.

I ask every member of the class of 2007 to learn from Sergeant Zapata's example; step forward to serve a cause larger than yourself. Volunteer in a local soup kitchen or shelter. Take time to check in on an elderly neighbor. Be a mentor to a child in need. Use the skills you have learned here to help build a better nation. Our armies of compassion need men and women like you. The great test of this generation will be how you answer the call to extend the promise of America and make our Nation a more hopeful place for all. The character of the class of 2007 gives me great faith in your success and confidence in the future of a nation that makes one people from out of many.

Congratulations on your achievement. *Que Dios les bendiga*. May God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:13 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Eduardo J. Padron, president, Miami Dade College; Christopher Miles, student government president, and Gregory Gray, president, Miami Dade College—Kendall Campus; and former Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida.

The President's News Conference With European Union Leaders

April 30, 2007

President Bush. Thank you all. Please be seated. Welcome to the Rose Garden. I want to welcome Angela Merkel and Jose Barroso here. Thank you all for your friendship. Thank you for what has been a serious set of discussions.

I told the Chancellor and the President that the EU-U.S. relations are very important to our country, that not only is it important for us to strategize how to promote prosperity and peace, but it's important for us to achieve concrete results. And we have done so.

I thank the Chancellor and Jose very much for the transatlantic economic integration plan that the three of us signed today. It is a statement of the importance of trade. It is a commitment to eliminating barriers to trade. It is a recognition that the closer that the United States and the EU become, the better off our people become. And so this is a substantial agreement, and I appreciate it.

We also talked about Doha, and I thank Peter Mandelson and Susan Schwab for briefing us. The first thing I told the group in the Cabinet Room was that I am firmly dedicated to a successful Doha round. I believe it's in this country's interests that we reject isolationism and protectionism and encourage free trade. I'm under no illusions as to how hard it will be to achieve the objective, but the first thing is, there must be a firm commitment by the leadership to get a deal.

Secondly, I reminded the people that this country is dedicated to working to eliminate poverty and disease, and the best way to help the developing world is through a successful Doha round. We told our trade ministers, "Work hard; work often; work constructively." And I believe we can be successful.

We're committed to reducing our agricultural subsidies in order to advance the process. We expect others to follow suit and market access.

Anyway, I am optimistic we can achieve the objective. And today's meetings gave us a chance to discuss a way forward. We talked about the visa waiver program. We talked about Iran and the need for our nations to continue to work closely together to send a unified message to the Iranians that their development of a nuclear weapon is unacceptable to peace. We talked about Darfur.

We talked about Afghanistan and Iraq. And I appreciate very much the EU support of the International Compact that will be meeting on Iraq here in Sharm al-Sheikh. We talked about Cuba and the importance for Cuba to be a free society, a society that respects human rights and human dignity, a society that honors the rule of law.

We also talked about climate change, and here we share a common interest. One, we recognize that we have a problem with greenhouse gases; two, we recognize we have a problem with a dependence on oil; three, we recognize that we can use technologies to help solve this problem; and four, we recognize we have an obligation to work together to promote the technologies necessary to solve the problem and encourage the developing world to use those technologies.

And so I found the discussion refreshing and interesting, and I appreciate the candid conversations we had.

Madam Chancellor, welcome back here to the Rose Garden, and I'm looking forward to your comments.

President Angela Merkel. Thank you, Mr. President, dear George. Thank you for the hospitality. Thank you for the hospitality you accorded to the European Union and also for the fact that you made it possible to hold this summit meeting between the EU and the United States of America, which already has a very good and rich tradition.

It was a very interesting debate and one that was actually—we were talking about a lot of issues—about transatlantic economic integration, obviously, first and foremost. And let me thank you very warmly for the fact that we've been able to enjoy such substantial progress in such a relatively short time. That was only possible because the American administration—but in particular, you, Mr. President—were behind, full-square behind this project and because we not only agreed on general frameworks but on very concrete projects.

And I think that's exactly what the people in our country expect from us, all the representatives of our respective business communities. They ask us, "What can we do in order to really pool our resources and make sure that we work on one and the same level playing field as regards, for example, our shared values." So I am confident that what with the Economic Council that we have set up, we will be able to make progress on very concrete projects, for example, mutual recognition of standards and other areas. It is, as I see it, a significant step forward.

I would also like to thank you for the progress we've been able to make on climate and energy issues. There is a common basis. We are aware of the fact that we do have a problem here, that we need to solve this problem. There are different approaches, obviously, as to how to solve that.

But we have been able, actually, to find a lot of common ground. And one of the issues we talked about, for example, was a commitment of the United States of America to introduce 20 percent biofuels over the next few years to come, until 2020, and to have this at their disposal. And for that too we need to develop a common market, common standards which, as I see it, has been, again, giving a more—a very important impetus to that particular industry and that technology.

Now, on climate, we will also need to work on this in view of the upcoming G–8 summit, where we will make it clear, as European Union, as United States of America, that we don't want to isolate ourselves or shut ourselves off against the rest of the world, but where we want to enlist the support of others, invite them to join us.

And I also note that the trade talks have been taking place here on the margins of this meeting. They also, obviously, will then have to take part—place in the more wider group, the multilateral group. Let me just tell you, this agreement between the European Union and the U.S. is not in any way against free

trade. No, not at all. And what we need to do here is really to look at the larger picture. And I feel it's so good that the President is committed to make a step forward also on reducing non-tariff barriers to trade. All of the partners will have to be in on this, but we will do our bit to make this true.

I don't want to go through the whole agenda of international issues. And let me just tell you, it was an open and candid discussion that clearly showed us that we need to work together, that diplomacy can only be successful if we stand together, be this on the Middle East, on other issues.

And let me tell you that we have been talking at greater length also about the situation in Darfur, which we consider to be totally unacceptable, and that we need to do everything we can in order to help the people there on the ground who suffer immensely, because we have not made progress so far and that we ought to use all of our possibilities in order to achieve progress also in the European—in the United Nations.

Thank you yet again for your hospitality, for the commitment that, I think, the number of documents that we have been able to agree on here today show—is born out—it's a good day for EU-U.S. relations.

President Jose Manuel Durao Barroso. [*Inaudible*]—a very friendly exchange, the one we had today, covering the whole range of European Union-United States relations and also some international issues. President Bush and Chancellor Merkel already mentioned the basic points, so let me just underline one or two that I believe are specifically important, namely in terms of economic relations and also on climate.

On economic relations, we signed very important framework for advancing transatlantic European integration. This was already welcomed by business community on both sides of the Atlantic. Our economic relation is by far the most important in the world. Transatlantic trade in goods and service totals over 1.7 billion euros a day. But we can work together more to make that relation even easier. And I believe there is some untapped potential, namely if we can achieve more regulatory cooperation, in some cases regulatory convergence, put down some barriers to trade and investment on both sides, and to fight, of course, protectionism and isolationism that sometimes happens on both sides of the Atlantic as well.

So this is, indeed, a very important agreement and an agreement that also brings with it a Transatlantic Economic Council to be a permanent body, with senior people on both sides of the Atlantic as we look at all those issues in a concrete manner, in which way we can make it move forward.

On the European Union side, I decided to appoint Vice President of the Commission Gunter Verheugen as our leading personality in that council.

Another important point linked with this, to be signed later this afternoon, is the Air Transport Agreement. It is a very important first-stage agreement on air transport, but it also brings with it the same idea of putting, in an easier footing, the relations—economic relations, people's relations—between the United States of America and the European Union. And I think it's also very important, is by far the most important, in terms of air traffic liberalization, since the convention of Chicago so many years ago.

But trade—we also welcomed very strong statement that President Bush made during our meeting and—just now. We are very committed to a successful conclusion to Doha round. We believe we can do it. We should do it. It will be good for trade, for the economy globally, but also for developing world and also for having all the main players in a true multilateral system for trade. So we are going to make efforts to get that done.

Regarding climate, I really welcome the fact that there was progress in this meeting. We agree there is a threat; there is a very serious and global threat. We agree that there is a need to reduce emissions. We agree that we should work together. That's why I decided to have a forum where we are going to address many of these issues, namely technology and other issues that are important to fight climate change. And let's be frank: Without the United States and Europe working together, we cannot engage others so that we can have a real global effort to face this very important threat to our economy but also to our security. So climate and energy security are important in the agenda.

And I'm very happy with the progress that we have achieved in this meeting today.

Once again, President Bush, dear George, thank you very much for all the preparations and all the support you are giving personally to these very deep and strong relations.

President Bush. Thank you, Jose. Two questions for the three of us, starting with Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

Emergency Supplemental Appropriations

Q. Mr. President, you're about to veto a bill that would force troop withdrawals from Iraq. How much of a voice are you willing to give Congress in the way that you conduct the war?

President Bush. Yes. I am about to veto a bill that has got artificial timetables for withdrawal, but that's not the only bad thing about the bill. It also imposes the judgment of people here in Washington on our military commanders and diplomats. It also adds domestic spending that's unrelated to the war. I have made my position very clear—the Congress chose to ignore it, and so I'll veto the bill.

That's not to say that I'm not interested in their opinions. I am. I look forward to working with members of both parties to get a bill that doesn't set artificial timetables and doesn't micromanage and gets the money to our troops. I believe there's a lot of Democrats that understand that we need to get the money to the troops as soon as possible. And so I'm optimistic we can get something done in a positive way.

Russia/Missile Defense System

Q. Mr. President——

President Bush. How could we ever forget your face? [*Laughter*]

Q. That's great. Thank you very much. I remember yours too. [*Laughter*]

President Bush. Thank you.

Q. Mr. President, concerning the nuclear dispute about missile defense, the missile defense with Moscow, what concrete steps are you planning to convince President Putin that this is a good idea of NATO and the U.S.? And can the German Chancellor help you on this issue?

President Bush. As you know, I'm having a regular conversation with the German Chancellor. We have a secure video that is beamed in the White House and her office, and so we consult regularly. And she expressed her concerns that the U.S. position wasn't very clear about the missile defense systems and that there were some people concerned in Germany, as well as Europe, about our intentions. And she also suggested that it might make sense for me to share my intentions more clearly with President Putin. And I took her advice very seriously.

Our intention, of course, is to have a defense system that prevents rogue regimes from holding Western Europe and/or America to hostage. Evidently, the Russians view it differently. And so upon the advice of the Chancellor, I asked Secretary Gates to go to Moscow, where he had a very constructive meeting with President Putin. I called President Putin and asked him to see Secretary Gates, and that we would put forth an interesting information-sharing proposal.

Our intention is to say to Russia that the system is something you ought to think about participating in. It's in your interests to have a system that could prevent a future Iranian regime, for example, from launching a weapon—it's in Russia's security interests. And therefore, we have started a dialog that, as a result of Secretary Gates's visit, that hopefully will make explicit our intentions and hopefully present the—an opportunity to share with the Russians, so that they don't see us as an antagonistic force, but see us as a friendly force.

Trade/Iran

Q. If I could ask you, President of the Commission, first of all, on the trade agreement you've reached. Presumably this is an agreement that's going to make wealthy countries richer, yet there's no progress to report on Doha to help the plight of poor countries. Aren't your priorities wrong?

And on a separate issue, your foreign policy chief has said that the U.S. should talk to Iran. I wondered whether you could tell us exactly what the U.S. should be talking to Iran about.

President Bush, if I can just add a question on that, your Secretary of State is going to a conference in Iraq where the Foreign Minister from Iran is going to be present. Do

you expect her to have conversations with the Foreign Minister of Iran? What will she talk about? And if she does have a conversation, is there going to be a change of U.S. policy? Thank you very much.

President Durao Barroso. Regarding the framework for advancing transatlantic-European integration, we said it very clearly—and it is clearly stated in the declaration and also in all our conversations—that this is not detrimental to the global trade talks. On the contrary, you just heard President Bush, Chancellor Merkel, and myself saying it clearly that completion of Doha round remains a priority for all of us.

But there are some artificial barriers to trade and investment—it's more about investment than to trade, to be frank—still between the United States and Europe. And through harmonization of standards, through a giant effort, for instance, to promote the enforcement of intellectual property rights, through some common approaches to investment, to capital markets integration, to common—or at least commonly accepted rules for accounting—we are trying to untap a lot of potential that exists in the United States-European Union relations.

So this is not at all against global trade talks. On the contrary, we remain and we, in fact, we are urging for a completion of the Doha trade talks, not only because they are about trade, but because they are about development. And today we had extensive conversations about it. And as President Bush has said, we've heard a complete briefing by Susan Schwab on the American side and Peter Mandelson on the European Union side.

Regarding Iran, we also share the same views, basically, about how to deal with Iran. And it's not only the United States and Europe, I'll say—there are several resolutions with the United Nations Security Council. And the Iranians should understand that this message they are receiving from the global community—by the United States, by Europe, but from others; the Security Council adopt several resolutions. Proliferation, nuclear proliferation is, indeed, a threat, not only to regional stability but to the global peace and global stability. So I believe we are united in sending this very clear message here, but also in the United Nations, to the Iranian authorities.

President Bush. Should the Foreign Minister of Iran bump into Condi Rice, Condi won't be rude. She's not a rude person. I'm sure she'll be polite. But she'll also be firm in reminding this representative of the Iranian Government that there's a better way forward for the Iranian people than isolation. My hopes, of course, is that the Foreign Minister would see the resolve of our Government, through Condi, to continue to rally the world to convince the Iranians to give up their nuclear weapons ambitions. I happen to believe a significant threat to world peace, today and in the future, is the Iranian threat if they were to end up with a nuclear weapon—"today" is the wrong word—"in the future." They don't have a weapon today.

And so I—if, in fact, there is a conversation, it will be one that says, if the Iranian Government wants to have a serious conversation with the United States and others, they ought to give up their enrichment program in a verifiable fashion. And we will sit down at the table with them, along with our European partners and Russia as well. That's what she'll tell them.

President Merkel. Allow me, if I may, one remark on the transatlantic economic partnership and how that tallies with the Doha round. The Doha round actually is mainly about reducing tariffs. And the transatlantic economic partnership has to do more with standards that have nothing to do, actually, with tariffs.

What we are after is to see to it that we try for convergence on standards in many, many areas where we do not have mutual recognition of standards or areas where we can actually harmonize those standards, and therefore, reduce costs by millions, for example, in drug testing, in crash tests for automobiles. And if we look at where the challenges lie, I am firmly convinced that both the United States and the European Union would be far more competitive and need to be far more competitive, vis-a-vis the emerging countries.

So in this way, this will liberate money to put into new technologies, into developing techniques that can enable us to do that. And we're actually squandering money that could

be put to better use. So the two are complementary, but they also serve strengthening competitiveness of both the European Union and the United States.

World Bank President Paul D. Wolfowitz

Q. For all three of you, did you at any point today, either informally or not, have discussions about the fate of World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz? Should he resign, keep his job? And your reason for that, please.

President Bush. The answer is, no, we didn't have a discussion. My position is, is that he ought to stay. He ought to be given a fair hearing. And I appreciate the fact that he has advanced—he's helped the World Bank recognize that the eradication of world poverty is an important priority for the bank.

President Merkel. Well, today we did not address that issue, and my position is, and this is going to be relayed by a minister in the board—in the individual bodies of the World Bank, and they have the respective commissions as well, that this ought to be a very transparent, very candid conversation. This is, I think, where this belongs, this particular issue.

Alternative Fuel Sources

Q. A question addressed to you, Mr. President, and also to the Chancellor. You were speaking of progress that you have been able to achieve on climate. Are these true and genuine—is this true and genuine progress if we still don't agree on the instruments to get there? The Europeans seem to be banking more on limiting CO_2 emissions, sort of national limits that are imposed by governments. You seem to be more in favor of, sort of, a voluntary regime. But apparently, we're sort of reaching the 11th hour.

President Bush. Actually, that's not an accurate portrayal of my position. For example, take tailpipe emissions from automobiles. I have said we'll have a mandatory fuel standard—not a voluntary fuel standard, but a mandatory fuel standard—that will reduce our uses of gasoline by 20 percent over a 10-year period of time. We believe that ethanol and biodiesel—the spread of ethanol and biodiesel are—the goal of spreading ethanol and biodiesel is achievable. That's what we believe. And we're spending a lot of money to achieve that goal.

Now, the spread of ethanol in the United States is not going to be achievable if we rely only upon corn. There is a limit to the amount of ethanol we can produce with corn as the feedstock. So our research dollars are going to what they call cellulosic ethanol, and that means the ability to make ethanol from switch grasses or wood chips. And we're spending a lot of money to that end.

And it is a mandatory approach. And the reason why I laid it out is because one, I do believe we can be better stewards of the environment, and two, I know it's in our national interest to become less dependent on foreign sources of oil. The fundamental question is, will America be able to develop the technology necessary for us to achieve the goal? I think we can. It's in our interest to share that technology, not only with our partners who are wealthy enough to spend money on research dollars but also with the developing world.

Now, you talk about helping alleviate poverty in the developing world. Wouldn't it be wonderful if the developing world could grow crops that would enable them to power their automobiles so they wouldn't have to be dependent on foreign oil either? And that's the message I took down to South America, with Lula, and to Central America. For example, sugar cane is the most efficient—you're learning a lot about ethanol here—but sugar cane is the most efficient way to make ethanol. It turns out, in Central America, there is a lot of land and opportunity to continue to produce cane, which means that the Central American countries could be eventually net exporters of energy. And so we've got a lot of common ground and a lot of area to work on.

As to how each country approaches it, that's an interesting question. And I think that each country needs to recognize that we must reduce our greenhouse gases and deal, obviously, with their own internal politics to come up with an effective strategy that, hopefully, when added together, that it leads to a real reduction.

Finally, you've got to recognize that in order to make—achieve progress on greenhouse gases, we've got to make sure that the

developing nations, which are significant emitters, are a part of the process. As I reminded the people around the conference table today, the United States could shut down our economy and emit no greenhouse gases, and all it would take is for China, in about 18 months, to produce as much as we had been producing, to make up the difference about what we reduced our greenhouse gases to.

So it's a—this is a very important issue. It's got global consequences. The good news is, is that we recognize there's a problem. The good news is, we recognize technology is going to lead to solutions, and that we're willing to share those technologies. And we all recognize we've got to deal with the developing world, particularly China and India.

President Merkel. I feel—just look back a year ago. I feel that we would have had a lot more difficulty actually bringing about language that describes this problem adequately than we have to now. And it is thanks to the President and his team clearly mentioning what the problem is in this document. It says clearly, we need to do everything we can in order to work against these detrimental consequences. A lot is being done discussing this issue. For example, we need to discuss possible pricing of CO_2, how can we translate this into a market-economic compatible scheme.

And we are also agreed that we, as industrialized country, need to address this issue; we need to develop the necessary technology. But we, alone, without the emerging countries, will not be able solve this problem. And this is why—how it's—why it's so important that this EU-U.S. result is translated into the G–8, debated together with the outreach countries—China and South Africa, Brazil, among others, and India—because if we were not doing that, we will—we would not be able to combat this problem that is truly a global one.

But what is also true is that if the developed countries who have the best technology don't do anything, it will be even harder to convince the others. But without convincing the others, CO_2 emissions worldwide will not go down. And I do think that we, together, need to define steps. We have done it. For example, we said we need a proper agenda for the Indonesian talks at the end of this year. That's an enormous step forward. And I think this is where we should be clear about the glass being half full instead of half empty. So think again for this.

U.S.-EU Cooperation on the Environment

Q. For Mr. Barroso, I would like to know how happy the European Union is, really, with the final document on climate change? Is it as ambitious as you were planning? Thank you.

President Durao Barroso. To be very frank, it's better than what I was planning. I think it was real progress. Of course, it's working in progress, but as President Bush said, we agree there is a global threat; it's a serious threat. We agree there is the need to establish a limit to greenhouse gases. We agree with many of the mechanisms, namely the market-based mechanisms, the technology cooperation. We have agreed to establish a high-level group, a forum, between the European Union and the American administration to look at those issues. And as Chancellor Merkel just said, we have to engage others. So now we can go to the G–8 summit in Heiligendamm in June, in Germany to discuss this issue also with others that are very relevant for a global solution to a global problem.

So I really believe that there was progress and very concrete progress. For instance, standards for biofuels—it's good. The idea to have a conference on renewables between the European Union and the United States, it will be next year here in Washington. And some concrete—it's very detailed in our document—some concrete mechanisms, in terms of energy efficiency.

So I really believe that by linking those different files—climate protection, energy security—we can really achieve a very important goal of having a sustainable development that is friendly to our environment. But I think it was a very important progress, and we are working along the same lines. But it is, of course, still work in progress.

President Bush. Good. Thank you all very much. Madam Chancellor, thank you.

President Merkel. Thank you.

President Bush. Mr. President, thank you.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 1:18 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. Participating in the event were Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany, in her capacity as President of the European Council; and President Jose Manuel Durao Barroso of the European Commission. President Bush referred to European Union Commissioner for Trade Peter Mandelson; President Vladimir Putin of Russia; Minister of Foreign Affairs Manuchehr Motaki of Iran; and President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil. A reporter referred to European Union Foreign Minister Javier Solana Madariaga. Chancellor Merkel and a reporter spoke in German, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Proclamation 8136—Jewish American Heritage Month, 2007

April 30, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The faith and hard work of Jewish Americans have played an integral role in shaping the cultural fabric of America. During Jewish American Heritage Month, we celebrate the vital contributions of Jewish Americans to our Nation.

Throughout our history, Jewish Americans have contributed to the strength of our country and the preservation of our values. The talent and imagination of these citizens have helped our Nation prosper, and their efforts continue to remind us of America's gift of religious freedom and the blessings of God's steadfast love. Jewish Americans have worked to promote civil rights and build bridges of mutual understanding among the world's religions. Their deep commitment to faith and strong ties to family enrich our country and set a positive example for others.

This month is also a time to recognize the sacrifices of Jewish Americans who serve our Nation in the Armed Forces. These brave men and women are dedicated to freedom's cause, and all those who live in freedom live in their debt.

Jewish American Heritage Month is an opportunity to honor the accomplishments of Jewish-American citizens and to remember that our Nation is a melting pot of cultures. I join all Americans in celebrating the rich Jewish heritage and the many ways Jewish Americans contribute to a bright future for our country.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 2007 as Jewish American Heritage Month. I call upon all Americans to observe this month with appropriate programs and activities to honor Jewish Americans across the country.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:54 a.m., May 2, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 3.

Proclamation 8137—Loyalty Day, 2007

April 30, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

America was founded by patriots who risked their lives to bring freedom to our Nation. Today, our citizens are grateful for our Founding Fathers and confident in the principles that lead us forward. On Loyalty Day, we celebrate the blessings of freedom and remember our responsibility to continue our legacy of liberty.

Our Nation has never been united simply by blood, birth, or soil, but instead has always been united by the ideals that move us beyond our background and teach us what it means to be Americans. We believe deeply in freedom and self-government, values embodied in our cherished documents and defended by our troops over the course of generations. Our citizens hold the truths of our founding close to their hearts and demonstrate their loyalty in countless ways. We are inspired by the patriotic service of the

men and women who wear our Nation's uniform with honor and decency. The military spouses and families who stand by their loved ones represent the best of the American spirit, and we are profoundly grateful for their sacrifice. Our country is strengthened by the millions of volunteers who show deep compassion toward their neighbors in need. All citizens can express their loyalty to the United States by flying the flag, participating in our democracy, and learning more about our country's grand story of courage and simple dream of dignity.

The Congress, by Public Law 85–529, as amended, has designated May 1 of each year as "Loyalty Day." This Loyalty Day, and throughout the year, I ask all Americans to join me in reaffirming our allegiance to our Nation.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 1, 2007, as Loyalty Day. I call upon the people of the United States to participate in this national observance and to display the flag of the United States on Loyalty Day as a symbol of pride in our Nation.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:54 a.m., May 2, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 3.

Remarks at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida

May 1, 2007

Thank you all. Thank you all for letting me come by to say hello. I am proud to address the CENTCOM Coalition Conference. CENTCOM's Coalition Village is a welcome reminder that in the fight against radicals and extremists and murderers of the innocent, we stand as one. We appreciate your country's contributions to this enormous challenge in the 21st century.

I appreciate the fact that your work has helped to liberate millions of people. I appreciate the fact that your work has helped keep millions of people safe. And so I thank you for defending the security of the civilized world.

I appreciate the fact that Fox Fallon has taken on this very important command. I can remember visiting him on the Hawaiian Islands. He had a house that overlooked the Pacific. It was quite a luxurious place. I told him, though, Tampa Bay is a good place to live, and the mission is vital. And so I thank you for taking it on, Admiral.

I appreciate General Doug Brown, commander of the U.S. Special Operations Command. I'm proud to be here with General David Petraeus, commander, Multi-National Force—Iraq. I thank the coalition members here. I welcome the ambassadors who have joined us. I thank Dr. Rubaie, National Security Adviser to the Prime Minister of a free Iraq. It's good to see you, sir. Please give my very best to the Prime Minister. I thank the other Iraqis who are here with us. Thank you for your courage; thank you for your determination; thank you for making history.

CENTCOM has built an impressive record of achievement in a short period of time. This command was established by President Ronald Reagan to deter a Soviet invasion of the Middle East in the latter days of the cold war. That era is receding into memory, but it was a long struggle—one of constant dangers and one of fierce debates. Victory often seemed elusive. Yet victory did come, because America and her allies stood firm against an empire and an ideology that vowed to destroy us.

Once again, history has called on great nations to assume great responsibilities. And once again, it is vital that allies, despite occasional disagreements, hold firm against vicious and determined enemies.

We saw the action of this vicious and determined enemy here in America on September the 11th, 2001. Terrorists murdered citizens from more than 80 countries. Since that September morning, acts of terror have appeared in places like Mombasa and Casablanca and Riyadh and Jakarta and Istanbul and London and Amman and Madrid and Beslan and Bali and Algiers and elsewhere.

September the 11th was not an isolated incident. These terrorists bring death to innocents all across the globe. They bring death to commuters on subway trains and guests who have checked into the wrong hotel and children attending their first week of school.

Our main enemy is Al Qaida and its affiliates. Their allies choose their victims indiscriminately. They murder the innocent to advance a focused and clear ideology. They seek to establish a radical Islamic caliphate so they can impose a brutal new order on unwilling people, much as Nazis and Communists sought to do in the last century. This enemy will accept no compromise with the civilized world. Here is what Al Qaida charter says about those who oppose their plans: "We will not meet them halfway, and there will be no room for dialog with them." These enemies have embraced a cult of death. They are determined to bring days of even greater destruction on our people. They seek the world's most dangerous weapons. Against this kind of enemy, there is only one effective response: We must go on the offense, stay on the offense, and take the fight to them.

America is joined in this fight by more than 90 nations, including every country represented in this room. An era of new threats requires new forms of engagement, new strategies, and new tactics. So we have reinvigorated historic alliances, such as NATO, and formed new and dynamic coalitions to address the dangers of the—of our time. Our broad coalition has protected millions of people. We have worked to stop the spread of dangerous weapons. We have taken the fight to the enemy where they live so we don't have to face them where we live. This is a record that all our countries can be proud of, and the United States of America is proud to stand with you.

Working together, America and our allies have shared intelligence that helped thwart many attacks. We uncovered and stopped terrorist conspiracies targeting Embassies in Yemen and Singapore and ships in the Straits of Hormuz and the Straits of Gibraltar. We stopped a Southeast Asian terror cell grooming operatives for terrorist attacks. We stopped an Al Qaida cell seeking to develop anthrax. British authorities disrupted a plot to blow up aircraft flying over the Atlantic toward the United States.

Working together, coalition forces have captured or killed key leaders of terrorist networks. Philippine forces killed top leaders of an Al Qaida affiliate. Spanish police captured fugitives wanted in connection with the Madrid train bombings. Terrorist cells have been broken up by countries including Britain and Canada and Denmark and Italy and France and Indonesia, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and Turkey. We must stay on the offense. We must defeat the enemy overseas so we don't have to face them in our countries.

Working together, America and our allies have shut down funding channels and frozen terrorist assets, making it harder for our enemies to finance attacks. It makes it hard for the enemies to purchase weapons, to train and move around their recruits. The international community, through the United Nations, has imposed measures to identify terrorist financiers and prevent them from using international financial systems to fund their acts of murder and terror.

Working together, America and our allies are training local forces to conduct counterterrorism activities in their own regions. We are helping key nations stop terrorists from establishing safe havens inside their borders, including Indonesia and the Philippines and Yemen. The Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership provides counterterrorism and military assistance to Chad and Mali, Niger, Mauritania, Algeria, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, and Tunisia. The East African Counterterrorism Initiative provides border security and police training to Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Tanzania, and Uganda.

We're active. We're working together to make this world a safer place. Working together, our coalition is taking steps to stop terrorists from obtaining the world's most dangerous weapons. More than 80 nations have joined the Proliferation Security Initiative. We're working to stop shipments of materials related to weapons of mass destruction on land, at sea, and in the air.

Working together, America and other nations have acted boldly to confront adversaries who threaten international security. In

Afghanistan, coalition forces drove the Taliban from power, removed Al Qaida training camps, and helped bring freedom to 25 million people.

Since their liberation, the Afghan people have made enormous strides. Afghans chose the first democratically elected President in their history. They've held free elections for a National Assembly. The Afghan economy has doubled in size. And more than 4.6 million Afghan refugees have come home. It's one of the largest return movements in the history of the world.

The Taliban and their Al Qaida allies are actively working to undermine this progress. They want power to impose their vision. Our coalition, led by NATO, is going on the offense against them. Coalition and Afghan forces have conducted dozens of operations over the past few months to go after enemy strongholds, including an operation launched this week targeting the Taliban in Helmand Province in the south of Afghanistan. We've seized dozens of caches of weapons and ammunition and improvised explosive devices. We're making progress in training the growing Afghan National Army. At least 20 other nations are supporting efforts to rebuild Afghanistan. We appreciate these contributions. And we will stand with our partners and the Afghan people until this important work is done.

Just as America and our allies are standing together in Afghanistan, a determined coalition is committed to winning the fight in Iraq. Four years ago, we confronted a brutal tyrant who had used weapons of mass destruction, supported terrorists, invaded his neighbors, oppressed his people, and tested the resolve and the credibility of the United Nations. Saddam Hussein ignored every opportunity to comply with more than a dozen resolutions passed by the U.N. Security Council. So coalition forces went into Iraq, removed his vicious regime, and helped bring freedom to the Iraqi people.

In 2005, nearly 12 million Iraqis demonstrated their desire, their deep desire to live in freedom and peace. Iraqis voted in three national elections—choosing a transitional government, adopting the most progressive, democratic Constitution in the Arab world, and then electing a Government under that Constitution. In 2006, a thinking enemy, a brutal enemy responded to this progress and struck back, staging sensational attacks that led to a tragic escalation of sectarian rage and reprisal in Baghdad.

As sectarian violence threatened to destroy this young democracy, our coalition faced a choice. One option was to help the Iraqi Government tamp down the sectarian violence and provide them with the breathing space they need to achieve reconciliation, provide them the breathing space they need to take the political and economic measures necessary to make sure our military efforts were effective. The other option was to pull back from the capital before the Iraqis could defend themselves against these radicals and extremists and death squads and killers. That risked turning Iraq into a cauldron of chaos. Our enemy, the enemies of freedom, love chaos. Out of that chaos, they could find new safe havens.

Withdrawal would have emboldened these radicals and extremists. It would have confirmed their belief that our nations were weak. It would help them gain new recruits, new resources. It would cause them to believe they could strike free nations at their choice.

Withdrawal would have increased the probability that coalition troops would be forced to return to Iraq one day and confront an enemy that is even more dangerous. Failure in Iraq should be unacceptable to the civilized world. The risks are enormous.

So after an extensive review, I ordered a new strategy that is dramatically different from the one we were pursuing before. I listened to our military commanders; I listened to politicians from both sides of the aisle. I made a decision. And I appointed our new commander, General David Petraeus, to carry out this strategy. This new strategy recognizes that our top priority must be to help the Iraqi Government secure its capital so they can make economic and political progress.

The Iraqis cannot yet do this on their own. So I ordered reinforcements to help Iraqis secure their population, to go after those inciting sectarian violence, and to help the Iraqis get their capital under control.

This strategy is still in its early stages. Some of the reinforcements General Petraeus requested have not yet arrived in Baghdad. He believes it will take months before we can adequately gauge the strategy's potential for success. Yet at this early hour, we are seeing some signs that give us hope. Coalition forces have captured a number of key terrorist leaders who are providing information about how Al Qaida operates in Iraq. They stopped a car bomb network that had killed many citizens of Baghdad, and destroyed major car bomb factories. There has been a decline in sectarian violence. And in some areas of the capital, Iraqis are returning to their neighborhoods with an increased feeling of security.

Terrorists and the extremists continue to unleash horrific acts of violence. Al Qaida is playing a major role. Last week, General Petraeus called Al Qaida "probably public enemy number one" in Iraq. He said that Al Qaida has made Iraq "the central front in their global campaign." And that's why success in Iraq is critical to the security of free people everywhere.

There are those who say America is engaged in this fight alone. Each of you here knows better. The Iraqis are suffering a lot, but they're in this fight. I'm impressed by the courage of the Iraqi people. Today there are more than 30 nations supporting the operations in Iraq. I appreciate the 17 NATO nations that have contributed forces or been part of the NATO Training Mission to help the Iraqis. I appreciate Georgia's recent decision to contribute 2,000 troops.

America joins in honoring the coalition troops who have been killed in Iraq and the others who have been wounded in combat. I want your countries to know that the sacrifices made by these brave soldiers are for a noble cause, a necessary cause, and we grieve for them as we grieve for our own. Your countries have risked too much and fought too hard for anyone to dismiss or disregard your contributions. Our nations are standing together in this fight, and I want your citizens to know, America is deeply grateful.

America is also grateful for the increasing contributions international organizations are making for Iraq's stability. On Thursday, the United Nations will host a conference in Egypt to sign an International Compact for Iraq, an agreement that will bring new economic assistance in exchange for greater economic reform. Then on Friday, Iraq's neighbors will meet to discuss ways to promote political reconciliation in Iraq, to promote stability in Iraq. These meetings will be attended by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and senior officials from other G–8 nations. Iran and Syria have been invited to attend, and this will be an important test of whether these regimes are truly interested in playing a constructive role in Iraq.

Everyone in this room knows the consequences of failure in Iraq, and that we should also appreciate the consequences of success because we have seen them before. Following World War II, many nations helped lift the defeated populations of Japan and Germany and stood with them as they built representative governments from societies that had been ravaged and decimated. We committed years and resources to this cause. And that effort has been repaid many times over in three generations of prosperity and peace. During the cold war, the NATO Alliance worked to liberate nations from Communist tyranny, even as allies bickered, and millions marched in the streets against us, and the pundits lost hope. We emerged from that struggle with a Europe that is now whole and free and at peace.

We look back at that history and marvel at what millions of ordinary people accomplished. Yet success was not preordained, and the outcome was not certain. Only now we can see those eras with the proper perspective. And I believe that one day, future generations will look back at this time in the same way, and they will be awed by what our coalition has helped to build. They will see that we strengthened alliances, offered new relevance to international institutions, encouraged new forms of multilateral engagement, and laid the foundation of peace for generations to come.

These are difficult times. These are tough times. These are times that test the resolve of free people. These are times that require hard work and courage and faith in the ability of liberty to yield the peace we want. And so I thank you for your contributions. Thank

you for standing for what's right. Thank you for helping the liberated. And thank you for working for peace.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:45 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq; and President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan.

Proclamation 8138—National Physical Fitness and Sports Month, 2007

May 1, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

National Physical Fitness and Sports Month is an opportunity to educate Americans about the importance of healthy habits and regular physical activity. During this annual observance, we renew our commitment to helping keep our citizens physically active, and we recognize the value of incorporating exercise and sports into our daily lives.

Regular physical activity is vital to good health. By maintaining an active lifestyle, citizens can reduce their risk of developing chronic health conditions. Participating in outdoor activities and individual or team sports helps promote physical fitness. These activities also teach young people important life lessons, including teamwork, patience, and discipline.

My Administration is committed to helping ensure the good health of all Americans. This year is the fifth anniversary of the HealthierUS initiative, which helps Americans improve their personal health and fitness and prevent disease. The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports is spreading the message that a healthy America is a country that is physically active. Additionally, this year the Department of Health and Human Services and its partners launched a public awareness campaign to promote exercise and eating well to America's youth. This campaign encourages kids to "Be a Player: Get Up and Play an Hour a Day." To find out other ways to improve health, Americans can visit fitness.gov or presidentschallenge.org. By making physical fitness a priority, our citizens can help prevent disease and live healthier lives.

Now, Therefore I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 2007 as National Physical Fitness and Sports Month. I call upon my fellow citizens to participate in athletic activities and make physical fitness a priority in their lives. I also encourage individuals, schools, and communities to celebrate this month with appropriate activities and programs.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:54 a.m., May 2, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 3.

Proclamation 8139—Older Americans Month, 2007

May 1, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

During Older Americans Month, we pay tribute to our senior citizens for the many ways they strengthen our Nation. Our country is blessed by their compassionate acts, the wisdom of their experiences, and the patriotism they demonstrate.

This year's theme, "Older Americans: Making Choices for a Healthier Future," underscores the importance of making informed decisions regarding lifestyle and personal health. The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports encourages seniors to engage in physical activity through a program called the President's Challenge. By recognizing the importance of staying active, in conjunction with nutritious eating and proper medical care, older Americans can

improve heart health, slow bone loss, and lengthen lives. By making an effort to enhance their quality of life, older Americans inspire younger generations to appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

My Administration is working to modernize the Medicare system and provide better prescription drug coverage and health care so seniors have more choices and improved care. This year, I proposed a standard tax deduction for those who purchase private health insurance. The Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 and the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit, Medicare Part D, help seniors receive the medical services and the prescription drugs they need at more affordable prices.

This month, we honor older Americans for demonstrating the spirit of our Nation through their positive attitude, strong work ethic, and personal character. America will always be grateful for the legacy of responsibility and service they are leaving to future generations.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 2007 as Older Americans Month. I commend older Americans for the many contributions they make to our Nation. I also commend the Federal, State, local, and tribal organizations, service and health care providers, caregivers, and volunteers who dedicate their time and talents to our seniors. I encourage all citizens to honor their elders, care for those in need, and reaffirm our country's commitment to older Americans this month and throughout the year.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:54 a.m., May 2, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 3.

Remarks on Returning Without Approval to the House of Representatives the "U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007"

May 1, 2007

Good evening. Twelve weeks ago, I asked the Congress to pass an emergency war spending bill that would provide our brave men and women in uniform with the funds and flexibility they need. Instead, Members of the House and the Senate passed a bill that substitutes the opinions of politicians for the judgment of our military commanders. So a few minutes ago, I vetoed the bill.

Tonight I will explain the reasons for this veto and my desire to work with Congress to resolve this matter as quickly as possible. We can begin tomorrow with a bipartisan meeting with the congressional leaders here at the White House.

Here is why the bill Congress passed is unacceptable. First, the bill would mandate a rigid and artificial deadline for American troops to begin withdrawing from Iraq. That withdrawal could start as early as July 1st, and it would have to start no later than October 1st, regardless of the situation on the ground.

It makes no sense to tell the enemy when you plan to start withdrawing. All the terrorists would have to do is mark their calendars and gather their strength and begin plotting how to overthrow the Government and take control of the country of Iraq. I believe setting a deadline for withdrawal would demoralize the Iraqi people, would encourage killers across the broader Middle East, and send a signal that America will not keep its commitments. Setting a deadline for withdrawal is setting a date for failure, and that would be irresponsible.

Second, the bill would impose impossible conditions on our commanders in combat. After forcing most of our troops to withdraw, the bill would dictate the terms on which the remaining commanders and troops could engage the enemy. That means American commanders in the middle of a combat zone would have to take fighting directions from

politicians 6,000 miles away in Washington, DC. This is a prescription for chaos and confusion, and we must not impose it on our troops.

Third, the bill is loaded with billions of dollars in nonemergency spending that has nothing to do with fighting the war on terror. Congress should debate these spending measures on their own merits and not as a part of an emergency funding bill for our troops.

The Democratic leaders know that many in Congress disagree with their approach and that there are not enough votes to override the veto. I recognize that many Democrats saw this bill as an opportunity to make a political statement about their opposition to the war. They've sent their message. And now it is time to put politics behind us and support our troops with the funds they need.

Our troops are carrying out a new strategy with a new commander, General David Petraeus. The goal of this new strategy is to help the Iraqis secure their capital so they can make progress toward reconciliation and build a free nation that respects the rights of its people, upholds the rule of law, and fights extremists and radicals and killers alongside the United States in this war on terror.

In January, General Petraeus was confirmed by a unanimous vote in the United States Senate. In February, we began sending the first of the reinforcements he requested. Not all of these reinforcements have arrived in Baghdad. And as General Petraeus has said, it will be the end of summer before we can assess the impact of this operation. Congress ought to give General Petraeus's plan a chance to work.

In the months since our military has been implementing this plan, we've begun to see some important results. For example, Iraqi and coalition forces have closed down an Al Qaida car bomb network; they've captured a Shi'a militia leader implicated in the kidnaping and killing of American soldiers; they've broken up a death squad that had terrorized hundreds of residents in a Baghdad neighborhood.

Last week, General Petraeus was in Washington to brief me, and he briefed Members of Congress on how the operation is unfolding. He noted that one of the most important indicators of progress is the level of sectarian violence in Baghdad. And he reported that since January, the number of sectarian murders has dropped substantially.

Even as sectarian attacks have declined, we continue to see spectacular suicide attacks that have caused great suffering. These attacks are largely the work of Al Qaida, the enemy that everyone agrees we should be fighting. The objective of these Al Qaida attacks is to subvert our efforts by reigniting the sectarian violence in Baghdad and breaking support for the war here at home. In Washington last week, General Petraeus explained it this way: "Iraq is, in fact, the central front of all Al Qaida's global campaign."

Al Qaida's role makes it—the conflict in Iraq far more complex than a simple fight between Iraqis. It's true that not everyone taking innocent life in Iraq wants to attack America here at home, but many do. Many also belong to the same terrorist network that attacked us on September the 11th, 2001, and wants to attack us here at home again. We saw the death and destruction Al Qaida inflicted on our people when they were permitted a safe haven in Afghanistan. For the security of the American people, we must not allow Al Qaida to establish a new safe haven in Iraq.

We need to give our troops all the equipment and the training and protection they need to prevail. That means that Congress needs to pass an emergency war spending bill quickly. I've invited leaders of both parties to come to the White House tomorrow and to discuss how we can get these vital funds to our troops. I am confident that with good will on both sides, we can agree on a bill that gets our troops the money and flexibility they need as soon as possible.

The need to act is urgent. Without a war funding bill, the military has to take money from some other account or training program so the troops in combat have what they need. Without a war funding bill, the Armed Forces will have to consider cutting back on buying new equipment or repairing existing equipment. Without a war funding bill, we add to the uncertainty felt by our military

families. Our troops and their families deserve better, and their elected leaders can do better.

Here in Washington, we have our differences on the way forward in Iraq, and we will debate them openly. Yet whatever our differences, surely we can agree that our troops are worthy of this funding and that we have a responsibility to get it to them without further delay.

Thank you for listening. May God bless our troops.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:10 p.m. in the Cross Hall at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; and Qais Khazali, member, Khazali network, and Shi'a extremist leader. He also referred to H.R. 1591.

Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval the "U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007"

May 1, 2007

To the House of Representatives:

I am returning herewith without my approval H.R. 1591, the "U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007."

This legislation is objectionable because it would set an arbitrary date for beginning the withdrawal of American troops without regard to conditions on the ground; it would micromanage the commanders in the field by restricting their ability to direct the fight in Iraq; and it contains billions of dollars of spending and other provisions completely unrelated to the war.

Precipitous withdrawal from Iraq is not a plan to bring peace to the region or to make our people safer here at home. The mandated withdrawal in this bill could embolden our enemies—and confirm their belief that America will not stand behind its commitments. It could lead to a safe haven in Iraq for terrorism that could be used to attack America and freedom-loving people around the world, and is likely to unleash chaos in Iraq that could spread across the region. Ultimately, a precipitous withdrawal could increase the probability that American troops would have to one day return to Iraq—to confront an even more dangerous enemy.

The micromanagement in this legislation is unacceptable because it would create a series of requirements that do not provide the flexibility needed to conduct the war. It would constrict how and where our Armed Forces could engage the enemy and defend the national interest, and would provide confusing guidance on which of our enemies the military could engage. The result would be a marked advantage for our enemies and greater danger for our troops, as well as an unprecedented interference with the judgments of those who are charged with commanding the military.

Beyond its direction of the operation of the war, the legislation is also unacceptable for including billions of dollars in spending and other provisions that are unrelated to the war, are not an emergency, or are not justified. The Congress should not use an emergency war supplemental to add billions in spending to avoid its own rules for budget discipline and the normal budget process. War supplemental funding bills should remain focused on the war and the needs of our men and women in uniform who are risking their lives to defend our freedoms and preserve our Nation's security.

Finally, this legislation is unconstitutional because it purports to direct the conduct of the operations of the war in a way that infringes upon the powers vested in the Presidency by the Constitution, including as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. For these reasons, I must veto this bill.

George W. Bush

The White House,
May 1, 2007.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 2.

Memorandum on Transfer of Defense Articles and Services in Support of the Southern Sudan Security Sector Reform (SSR) Program

April 25, 2007

Presidential Determination No. 2007–17

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Transfer of Defense Articles and Services in Support of the Southern Sudan Security Sector Reform (SSR) Program

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, including section 40(g) of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA) and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, I hereby:

- Determine and certify that the transaction, encompassing U.S. Government-funded transfers and commercial exports of defense articles and services necessary for an SSR program for the security sector of the Government of Southern Sudan, including support for: transformation of the Sudan People's Liberation Army from a guerrilla force into a smaller, conventional force; the Sudan People's Liberation Movement; a protective service detail, police service, intelligence, and other law enforcement entities of the Government of Southern Sudan; and private entities involved in the SSR program, is essential to the national security interests of the United States;
- Waive the prohibitions in section 40 of the AECA related to such a transaction; and
- Assign to you the functions of the President under section 40(g)(2) of the AECA to consult with and submit reports to the Congress for proposed specific transfers or exports, 15 days prior to permitting them to proceed, that are necessary for and within the scope of this waiver determination and the transaction referred to herein.

You are authorized and directed to report this determination to the Congress and arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 2.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Alvaro Uribe Velez of Colombia

May 2, 2007

President Bush. It's been my honor to welcome a true democrat, a strong leader, and a friend, the President of Colombia. We had a long discussion.

First, Mr. President, Laura and I remember fondly our trip to your beautiful country. It was my second trip to Colombia, my first to your capital, and it was a very special occasion. And we thank you and the First Lady for such gracious hospitality.

Secondly, we had a discussion today about an important vote that our Congress must take, and that is a vote to confirm a free trade agreement with Colombia. This agreement is good for the United States. It's good for job creators, farmers, workers. This agreement is good for Colombia. It's good for job creators and workers and farmers.

This agreement has strategic implications. It is very important for this Nation to stand with democracies that protect human rights and human dignity, democracies based upon the rule of law. So the free trade agreement with Colombia and Peru and Panama, these agreements are more than just trade votes; they're signals to South America that we stand with nations that are willing to make hard decisions on behalf of the people.

The President is here to speak strongly about his record, and it's a good, solid record. I thank the Members of Congress for giving him a hearing. We expect them to be open-minded, to listen to his record. And I urge the Congress to pass a trade agreement with Colombia and Peru and Panama because it's in our interest that they do so.

And so, Mr. President, it's great to see you. *Bienvenidos.*

President Uribe. *Muchas gracias, Presidente.*

Good morning, distinguished journalists. I want to thank President Bush for the new meeting. It has been, as always, very constructive. This meeting has given my team and myself the opportunity to reiterate our commitment with democracy.

We have three main objectives in our administration: to consolidate democratic security; to create more and more confidence in Colombia for people to invest in our country; and to fulfill very important social goals, to fulfill social goals before the deadline of the social millennium goals.

Many people ask me, why you call your policy on security democratic security? Because it is security with human rights; because it is security for all Colombians; because it is security for trade union leaders, for those member of the opposition, for those who agree in their ideas with my Government, security for all Colombians.

During my 5-year term, we have healthy elections, and Colombians have enjoyed effectiveness of our freedoms because of our policy on security. Before my administration, many Colombians had the idea that the only way for my country to reach peace, it was by private criminal organizations. Today, because of the efficacy of our administration, the vast majority of Colombians are convinced that we will defeat terrorists by institutional ways, that the only way Colombia has for the future is the way of our democratic institutions.

It is very important that the United State considers the necessity to advancing Plan Colombia. We haven't won yet in eradicating illicit drugs, but we are winning. And it is very important, the free trade agreement. I will explain in Capitol Hill, and I will explain to the American citizens the same I explain to President Bush this morning: The more our country can export, the better for my country to have high-quality jobs with affiliation to the social security system.

We are doing our best to defeat terrorists in a open country. Everyone in the world can go to Colombia, can oversight what our country is doing. And what our country does today is in favor of democracy.

I want to thank President Bush, his team, the people of Congress, and the American citizens for the help all of you have given our country. This integration is very important to promote democracy, to promote freedoms—freedom, to promote social justice. This is—these are our commitments.

Thank you, President Bush.

President Bush. *Gracias, amigo.*

President Uribe. *Muchas gracias.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:51 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Lina Maria Moreno de Uribe, wife of President Uribe. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks to the Associated General Contractors of America and a Question-and-Answer Session

May 2, 2007

The President. Thank you all. Please be seated. Please be seated. Steve, unlike you, I have trouble finding the front end of a front-end loader. [*Laughter*] Thanks for having me. I'm proud to be here with the AGC. It's the oldest and largest construction trade association in our country. I understand I'm not the first Bush to have ever addressed the AGC convention; a person I now refer to as 41 addressed you. [*Laughter*] And I appreciated your hospitality to him then, and I appreciate your hospitality to me today.

I want to talk about—a little bit about our economy, and I want to talk a lot about our security. And I thank you for giving me a chance to come by. What I thought I would do is try to keep my remarks relatively brief and then maybe give you all some time to ask some questions.

First, I want to thank Steve. Steve is a Virginia Tech grad, and our hearts are still heavy as a result of that terrible incident there on the campus. And yet, the amazing thing about that campus—and a lot of other places around the country—is we've got a great resiliency; people bounce back from tragedy. So, Steve, you can tell the Virginia Tech community, we're still thinking about them and appreciate very much the great kind of strength of spirit there—at least I saw that there in Blacksburg, Virginia.

I want to thank two Members of the Senate who have joined us. First, John Warner,

from Virginia. Senator, thank you for coming; ranking member of the House Military Committee he is a—Armed Services Committee—he's a strong supporter of the troops. And I appreciate Senator Joe Lieberman. John is a Republican; Senator Lieberman is an independent. Joe Lieberman is one of these—I would call him a unique soul who followed his conscience, stood for what he believed in, in the face of a political firestorm. And he proved that if you stand on conviction, the people will follow. And I look forward to working with these two really fine public servants to make the decisions necessary to protect the United States. And I'm honored you all are here, and thank you for coming.

I like to be in the room of builders and doers and problemsolvers and entrepreneurs. And I thank you for what you do every day. Your job is to improve infrastructure and provide work for people. Our job is to provide an environment so that you can build infrastructure and provide work for people. Our job is not to try to create wealth in government. Our job is to create an environment that encourages small businesses and entrepreneurials—and entrepreneurs.

I believe this administration has done that, particularly since we cut taxes. You know, most small businesses and self-employed people, people in your line of work, or many of them, are not corporations. They're sole proprietorships or subchapter S corporations or limited partnerships that pay tax at the individual income-tax level.

And therefore, when you cut taxes, we not only—individual rates, we're not only cutting them on the people who work for you or work with you; we're cutting them on you. And my attitude is the more money you have in your treasuries, the more likely it is you'll be able to expand. The more incentive you have to buy a piece of equipment, the more likely it is you'll buy one, which means that somebody is going to have to build it for you.

The best way to enhance progrowth economic policies is to cut the taxes on the American people, and that's exactly what we did. These taxes are set to expire. In my judgment, if Congress really wants to create a progrowth attitude for a long time coming, they ought to make the tax relief we passed permanent. They ought not to let them expire.

My attitude is this about the budget: The best way to balance the budget is to keep taxes low, encourage growth, which enhances tax revenues, and be wise about how we spend money. I worry about the attitude, "Don't worry; we're just going to raise the taxes on some to balance the budget." No, they'll raise the tax on some and figure out new ways to spend the money. And we're proving that progrowth economic policies with fiscal discipline can work, and our budgets are shrinking. The best way to keep them shrinking is keep the economy growing and be wise about—and setting priorities with your money.

There's other things we can do in Washington. We've got to make sure health care is affordable and available, without inviting the Federal Government to run the health care system. Got to do something about these junk lawsuits that I'm sure you're concerned about. We've got to continue to invest in the Nation's infrastructure.

We also need an immigration system that upholds the rule of law and treats people with respect. We need an immigration system that secures our borders and meets the needs of our economy. As I said in the speech down in Florida the other day, we need an immigration system without amnesty and without animosity. In other words, we need a comprehensive immigration reform. I want to thank you for the stand you have taken in working with Congress on comprehensive immigration reform. I join you.

I will work with both Republicans and Democrats to get a bill to my desk before the summer is out, hopefully. And I thank the leadership in the Senate that's working through this issue. I want to thank Senator Jon Kyl of Arizona for working hard on this, Mel Martinez, Arlen Specter, Lindsey Graham. There's a series of Senators who are working with Ted Kennedy, who is a strong advocate for comprehensive immigration reform. And I appreciate the leadership he's taken, along with Ken Salazar of Colorado. We're making progress. There's a lot more work to be done, and your help is important. And so I want to thank you for coming up with a rational, reasonable, logical plan.

I want to talk to you about the other main issue we have here in America, and that is your security. The most important job we have is to secure the United States of America. That's the most important job of the Federal Government. You expect us to spend enormous amounts of energy protecting you, and that's what we're doing. I vowed to the American people we would not tire when it came to protecting you, and we're not going to. Matter of fact, I spend a lot of time thinking about this issue. I wish I didn't have to spend time thinking about the issue, but I do because there's still an enemy out there that would like to do America harm. And therefore, at this hour, we've got men and women in uniform engaging our enemies around the world. Our strategy is, we've got to keep the pressure on them. We would rather fight them there so we don't have to face them here.

And the most visible and violent front of this global war is Iraq. And it's a tough fight. It has been a difficult year for the American people, and I understand that. It reached—last year was, this battle reached its most difficult point to date. The terrorists and extremists and radicals set off a wave of sectarian violence that engulfed that young democracy's capital. It threatened to destabilize the entire country.

So earlier this year, I laid out a new strategy in Iraq. I named a new commander to carry it out, General David Petraeus. I want to give you some facts about the new strategy and talk about why Iraq relates directly to the safety of the American people.

The most important fact about our new strategy, it is fundamentally different from the previous strategy. The previous strategy wasn't working the way we wanted it to work. It's interesting; they run polls—and I accept that—and it said, you know, "We don't approve of what's happening in Iraq." That was what the poll said last fall and winter, you know. And had they polled me, I'd have said the same thing. [*Laughter*] I didn't approve of what was happening in Iraq, and so we put a new strategy in that was fundamentally different.

First of all, Petraeus, General Petraeus is an expert on counterinsurgency, and his top priority is to help the Iraqi leaders—who, by the way, were elected by nearly 12 million of their citizens—secure their population. And the reason why is, is that this young democracy needed some time to make important political decisions to help reconcile the country. After a thorough review, we concluded the best way to help Iraq's leaders to provide security was to send more troops into the nation's capital, into the country; was to send reinforcements to those troops which were already there. And their job was to go after the extremists and radicals who were inciting sectarian violence. Their job was to help get Baghdad under control. And their job was to continue to train Iraqi forces for the day they can secure the country on their own.

Last week, General Petraeus came to Washington, and he updated me, and he updated the Congress on the early stages of this new strategy—and I repeat, early stages. He reminded us that not all the reinforcements he'd requested have arrived, that it's going to be at least until the end of this summer that he will know whether or not the new strategy has achieved successes. And that means the strategy is in early stages.

My view is the Congress and the country ought to give General Petraeus time to see whether or not this works. And it's interesting, he goes up in front of the Senate and gets confirmed unanimously. And he said, "I need more troops"—during his testimony—"send me more troops, and I will go implement a new plan." They said, okay, fine, we confirm you. And yet there are some doubts in Washington whether or not they ought to send the troops. The troops are going. The strategy is new. And the general said, "Let's give it some time to work to see whether or not it's successful, and I'll be able to report back to the country by the end of this summer."

The most significant element of the new strategy is being carried out in the capital. The whole purpose is to secure the capital. My theory is, and it's a good one, is that if the capital is in chaos, the country can't—it's going to be difficult for the country to survive.

The strategy is also being carried out in what's called surrounding belts. This is the areas that kind of arc around the capital, and

it's a place where there's been a lot of planning and plotting and attacking. Three American brigades, totaling about 12,000 reinforcements, have taken up their positions in the Baghdad area. The fourth brigade, fourth of five, is heading into Baghdad this week. And the fifth is on its way. In other words, you just don't take five brigades and move them in overnight. There's a sequencing that has to take place, and that sequencing is now being completed.

The Iraqis, by the way, have increased their own forces. In other words, this is a joint operation. This is the Americans and coalition forces helping the Iraqis provide security so that the average person can live a peaceful life. That's what they want. And so we've got about a total of 80,000 combat forces now in the Baghdad area—U.S. combined with the Iraqi forces. The position of the forces is shifting. We used to have our forces live in bases outside the city. They would go in at night or during the day and then leave and go back home at night. They did a fine job, as you'd expect our U.S. forces to do or the Iraqi forces would do so. And then when they would leave, killers would move back in.

And so now we've got American troops are now living and working in small neighborhood posts called joint security stations. This is what's fundamentally different from the strategy. Our troops, with the Iraqis, go into a neighborhood, and they stay. They operate side by side with the Iraqi forces.

What's interesting is, is that the plan, General Petraeus's plan, is to help build trust. And when you build trust, you end up getting people buying into a centralized government, a unity government, a country that is united. And not only that, you end up getting cooperation from people. Remember, most people want to live peaceful lives. I hope this make sense to you because I firmly believe that Iraqi moms want their child to grow up in a peaceful world, just like American moms do.

And so we're seeing some gains. The interesting thing about this is that the nature of this strategy is that the most important gains are often the least dramatic. It doesn't generate much attention when violence does not happen. Instead, some important indicators of progress in the security plan are less visible. I would like to share some with you.

The level of cooperation from local residents is important; it's an indication as to whether or not we're making progress. Our ability to take weapons off the street and break up extremist groups; the willingness of Iraqis to join their security forces is an interesting measurement; and finally, it's important to measure the level of sectarian violence. If the objective is to bring security to the capital, one measurement is whether or not sectarian violence is declining. These measures are really not flashy. In other words, they're not headline-grabbing measures. They certainly can't compete with a car bomb or a suicide attack, but they are interesting indications. And as General Petraeus reported, these are heading in the right direction.

For example, General Petraeus reports that American and Iraqi forces received more tips from local residents in the past 4 months than during any other 4-month period on record. People are beginning to have some confidence, and they're beginning to step forth with information, information that will help them live normal lives.

Thanks to these tips the number of weapons caches that are being seized are growing each month. Better intelligence has led American and Iraqi forces in Baghdad and the surrounding belts to conduct operations against Sunni and Shi'a extremists. My attitude is, if murderers run free, it's going to be hard to convince the people of any society that the government is worth supporting. And therefore, the Iraqis and U.S. forces and coalition forces are after murderers, regardless of their religious affiliation.

American and Iraqi forces captured the head of a major car bombing ring recently, the leader of a bombing network with ties to Iran, members of a death squad that terrorized a Baghdad neighborhood, the leader of a secret militia cell that kidnaped and executed American soldiers. These are just some examples of what happens when you start to earn the confidence of the people.

Baghdad residents see actions, they grow more confident. Interestingly enough, General Petraeus reported that in his short time he's been there and in the short time that

this plan is being implemented—remember, it's not fully implemented; three of the brigades are present, are in place; the fourth brigade has just moved into Baghdad, and it will be in place relatively soon; and the fifth is on its way—that in spite of the fact that we haven't fully implemented the plan, the number of sectarian murders in Baghdad has dropped substantially.

Even as the sectarian attacks have declined, the overall level of violence in Baghdad remains high. Illegal armed groups continue their attacks; insurgents remain deadly. In other words, as we report progress, it's very important for us to make sure that the American people understand there's still issues, there's still challenges. Illegal armed groups need to be dealt with, and we are.

The primary reason for the high level of violence is this: Al Qaida has ratcheted up its campaign of high-profile attacks, including deadly suicide bombers carried out by foreign terrorists. In the past 3 weeks, Al Qaida has sent suicide bombers into the Iraqi Parliament. Or they send a suicide attack into an American military base. These attacks may seem like random killing; they're not. They're part of Al Qaida's calculated campaign to reignite sectarian violence in Baghdad, to discourage the Iraqi citizen, and to break support for the war here at home. This is what these murderers are trying to achieve.

I don't need to remind you who Al Qaida is. Al Qaida is the group that plot and planned and trained killers to come and kill people on our soil. The same bunch that is causing havoc in Iraq were the ones who came and murdered our citizens. Now, I've got to tell you, that day deeply affected my decisionmaking. And I vowed that I would do anything that I possibly could, within the law, to protect the American citizens against further attack by these ideologues, by these murderers.

And so when I'm talking about Al Qaida in Iraq, I fully recognize what happens in Iraq matters here at home. Despite their tremendous brutality, they failed to provoke the large-scale sectarian reprisals that Al Qaida wants. The recent attacks are not the revenge killings that some have called a civil war; they are a systematic assault on the entire nation. Al Qaida is public enemy number one in Iraq. And all people of that society ought to come together and recognize the threat, unite against the threat, and reconcile their differences.

For America, the decision we face in Iraq is not whether we ought to take sides in a civil war; it's whether we stay in the fight against the same international terrorist network that attacked us on 9/11. I strongly believe it's in our national interest to stay in the fight.

As you watch the developments in Baghdad, it's important to understand that we will not be able to prevent every Al Qaida attack. When a terrorist is willing to kill himself to kill others, it's really hard to stop him. Yet, over time, the security operation in Baghdad is designed to shrink the areas where Al Qaida can operate; it's designed to bring out more intelligence about their presence and designed to allow American and Iraqi forces to dismantle their network.

We have a strategy to deal with Al Qaida in Iraq. But any time you say to a bunch of coldblooded killers, success depends on no violence, all that does is hand them the opportunity to be successful. And it's hard. I know it's hard for the American people to turn on their TV screens and see the horrific violence. It speaks volumes about the American desire to protect lives of innocent people, America's deep concern about human rights and human dignity. It also speaks volumes about Al Qaida, that they're willing to take innocent life to achieve political objectives.

The terrorists will continue to fight back. In other words, they understand what they're doing. And casualties are likely to stay high. Yet, day by day, block by block, we are steadfast in helping Iraqi leaders counter the terrorists, protect their people, and reclaim the capital. And if I didn't think it was necessary for the security of the country, I wouldn't put our kids in harm's way.

We're seeing significant progress from our new strategy in Anbar Province as well. That's a largely Sunni area west of Baghdad. It's been a hotbed for Al Qaida and insurgents. According to a captured Al Qaida document—in other words, according to what Al Qaida has said—and by the way, in a war to protect America, it's really important to

take the words of the enemy very seriously—according to this document, the terrorists' goal is to take over Anbar and make it their home base in Iraq. According to the document we captured—that is a document from Al Qaida, the same people that attacked us in America—their objective is to find safe haven in this part of Iraq. They would bring them closer—that would bring them closer to their objective, their stated objective, which is to destroy the young Iraqi democracy, to help them build a radical Islamic empire based upon their dark ideology, and launch new attacks on the United States, at home and abroad. That's what they've said they want to do.

Al Qaida has pursued their objective with a ruthless campaign of violence. They can't persuade people through logic; they have to terrorize people and force people to try to allow them to impose their point of view. And not long ago, it looked like they might prevail in Anbar—looked pretty grim, it really did. Then something began to change because we were steadfast, because our troops and our diplomats are courageous people. Tribal sheiks finally said, enough is enough. The local leaders said, we're tired of it. And they joined the fight against Al Qaida.

The sheiks and their followers knew exactly who the terrorists were, and they began to provide highly specific intelligence to American and Iraqi forces. In asymmetrical warfare, you've got to have good intelligence in order to be able to deal with the enemy. In the old days, you could see platoons moving, you could see ships floating along, aircraft in formation flying to a location. In this war it's different. In this war you have to know specifically where a IED factory may be. You have to know in advance that somebody's getting ready to slide into society and kill innocent in order to achieve an objective. Intelligence is important. And so they began to provide intelligence, all aiming to secure their part of Iraq so they could live in peace.

They began to encourage their young men to volunteer for the security forces. The number of Iraqi Army and police recruits in Anbar has skyrocketed. It's an interesting measurement, isn't it? There's a threat to the security of their people, the local leaders said, why don't you join up to help defend us, and the number of recruits is significant.

Our commanders saw this as an opportunity to step up the pressure on Al Qaida. Our commanders made the recommendation from the field that they could use more troops to help secure Anbar. And so I ordered additional U.S. marines and special operation forces to Anbar; as part of our reinforcement package, 4,000 of the troops are going into Anbar.

Together, American and Iraqi forces are striking powerful blows. We've cleared out terrorist strongholds like Ramadi and Fallujah. We're there with the Iraqis so that they can't take those cities back—"they," the enemy. American and Iraqi forces are operating in places that have been too dangerous to go before, and people are beginning to see something change.

In Ramadi, for example, our forces have seized nearly as many weapons caches in the past 4 months as they did in all of last year. We've captured key Al Qaida leaders. We're on the hunt. We're keeping the pressure on them, in Iraq and everywhere else in the world in which they try to hide. These Al Qaida leaders are revealing important details about how their network operates inside of Iraq.

Al Qaida has responded with sickening brutality. They've bombed fellow Sunnis in prayer at a mosque. They murdered local residents with chlorine truck bombs. They recruited children as young as 12 years old to carry out suicide attacks. But this time, the Sunni tribes in Anbar are refusing to be intimidated.

They are showing that Al Qaida's ideology lacks popular appeal and staying power. Ultimately, what matters is what you believe. The United States and our coalition and most Iraqis believe in liberty. Al Qaida believes in imposing their dark vision on others and are willing to use death and murder to do so.

I appreciate the determination of the Iraqi people. I appreciate their courage. I appreciate the fact that these tribal sheiks have stood up in Anbar, and we will stand with them. Our men and women in uniform took Al Qaida's safe haven away in Afghanistan,

and we're not going to let them reestablish a safe haven in Iraq.

The military gains achieved by our new operations are designed to give Iraq's Government time to make political progress. We fully recognize that the military cannot solve this problem alone, that there has to be political reconciliation and economic process—progress.

You know, the Iraq Government has been in office about a year, and they're beginning to make some progress toward political benchmarks it has set, political benchmarks I support. The legislature has passed a budget that commits $10 billion for reconstruction projects. That's $10 billion of the Iraqi people's money—positive sign. The assembly met. They appropriated money for the good of the Iraqi people. They spent $7.3 billion to train and equip their own security forces. The council of ministers has approved legislation that would provide a framework for equitable sharing of oil resources. We strongly believe—by the way, both Republicans, Democrats, and independents believe strongly—that a good oil bill will help unite the country. That's why it's a benchmark. And they're making—this Government is making progress toward an important piece of legislation that would help the security track progress, as well as the political and economic track.

The Government has formed a committee to organize Provincial elections. That's important. If you want people buying into government, there needs to be Provincial elections, so that when the money is distributed from the central government, there's a representative government there to spend the money. Leaders have taken initial steps toward an agreement on de-Ba'athification policy. That's an important piece of reconciliation that we think ought to go forward. A committee is meeting with all major Iraqi groups to review the Constitution. And there's a key conference tomorrow and Friday in Egypt, where Prime Minister Maliki will work to build greater support from Iraq's neighbors and the international community. It's in the world's interest that this young democracy survive. It's certainly in the interest of the neighborhood that Iraq be a country that can govern itself and sustain itself and defend itself, a Government which rejects radicalism. And it's in the world's interest.

And so Condoleezza Rice—I talked to her last night on her way out of town—is heading over to Egypt. And she's going to represent our country—and she represents it well, by the way—and will do so in Egypt. It's going to be an important international conference, and I'm looking forward to seeing the outcome of that conference.

Iraq's leaders still have got a lot to do, don't get me wrong. Yes, there's progress, but they've got a lot more to do. And the United States expects them to do it—just like I expect them to remain courageous and just like they expect us to keep our word. And so what's interesting is, is that the Iraqis are making a calculation: Will the United States of America keep its word? Because if not, they want to do something different. And I think it's going to be important for us to keep signaling them as they make progress, we appreciate the progress; more to do, no question about it, and we expect them to do it, but they can also count on us to keep our word.

The stakes are high, really high in Iraq. General Petraeus is beginning to carry out the strategy, yet the Democrat leaders in Congress have chosen this time to try to force a precipitous withdrawal. In other words, I was presented a bill last night that said, "There's a timetable. You had to leave—start leaving by July 1st and definitely be leaving by October 1st." That didn't make any sense to me, to impose the will of politicians over the recommendations of our military commanders in the field. So I vetoed the bill.

That phase of the process is now over, and a new phase has begun. Later on this afternoon, leaders from both parties and both chambers are coming down to the White House. And I look forward to meeting with them. I am confident that with goodwill on both sides that we can move beyond political statements and agree on a bill that gives our troops the funds and the flexibility they need to do the job that we have asked them to do.

As we move forward the debate, there are some other things that all of us in Washington should keep in mind. First of all, debate is good. I have no problem with debates.

This issue of Iraq and this war on terror deserves a serious discussion across the United States. We don't agree on every issue, but one of the things I have heard here in Washington is that people understand the consequences of failure in Iraq.

If we were to leave Iraq before the Government can defend itself, there would be a security vacuum. Extremists and radicals love vacuums and chaos. It gives them a chance to use their tactics, tactics of death, to spread their ideology. The more chaotic a region, for example, or the less control there is in a region, the more the state looks like a failed state, these people that attacked us on September the 11th can be emboldened. It will encourage them. It will enable them to achieve objectives. I'm deeply concerned about a vacuum in Iraq encouraging rival extremist factions to compete for power.

I worry about a situation where if radicals took control of a country like Iraq, they would have oil resources to use at their disposal to try to achieve their objectives. You can attack a nation several ways. One, you can get 19 kids to fly airplanes into buildings, or you can gain control of something a country needs and deny that country access to that, in this case, oil, and run the price of oil up, all attempting to inflict serious economic damage.

And by the way, an opportunity for radicals and extremists to gain resources would not only enable them to inflict economic damage, it would enable them to achieve other objectives. They'd have more resources at their disposal. All the radicals and extremists in Iraq don't want to attack America, I'm not saying that, but many do. And therein lies the danger to our country.

Al Qaida terrorists who behead captives and order suicide bombings in Iraq would not simply be satisfied to see us gone. A retreat in Iraq would mean that they would likely follow us here. A retreat in Iraq would say to a lot of people around the world, particularly in the Middle East, America can't keep its word. It would certainly confirm Al Qaida's belief that we're weak and soft as a society. It would embolden them to be able to recruit. It would more likely enable them to find safe haven and sanctuary.

No responsible leader in Washington has an interest in letting this happen. Whether you are a Republican or Democrat, there is no benefit in allowing a widespread humanitarian nightmare to consume Iraq. There would be no benefit in allowing chaos to spill out of Iraq and into the broader Middle East. There would be no benefit in emboldening Iran and endangering our allies in the region. And there would be no benefit in allowing the same terrorist network that attacked America on 9/11 to gain a safe haven from which to attack us again. Even if you think it was a mistake to go into Iraq, it would be a far greater mistake to pull out now.

This is a frustrating war. Nobody likes war. You know, I know full well how many Americans react to what they see on their TV screens. I wish there was an easy way out; that's what people wish. But there is no easy way out. The easy road would be the wrong road, in my opinion. Leaving now would be short term but bring short-term satisfaction at the cost of long-term disaster. The outcome in Iraq will have a direct impact on the security of our people here at home. And no matter how tempting it might be, it would be unforgivable for leaders in Washington to allow politics and impatience to stand in the way of protecting the American people.

Success in this fight is going to be difficult. It will require sacrifice. It's going to require time. But for all the—all we hear about the consequences of failure in Iraq, we also shouldn't forget the consequences of success. I share with people—and I do this quite often—but I find it incredibly ironic that during my time as President, certainly one of my best friends, and soon to be another best friend, are the Prime Ministers of Japan. I had a very close personal relationship with Prime Minister Koizumi. And last weekend at Camp David, Laura and I had a chance to—at the White House, and then eventually at Camp David, we hosted Prime Minister Abe. You know, my dad fought the Japanese. He was an 18-year-old kid, right out of high school, went into the Navy, was a torpedo bomber. Many of your relatives did the same thing. They fought the Japanese with all their soul and all their might in a bloody, bloody conflict. Japan was a sworn enemy of the United States of America. I doubt in 1948

or '49 anybody could have hardly predicted that a President would stand up and say, I have found that these two Prime Ministers of Japan are good to work with to achieve peace.

It's an interesting statement, isn't it, about the possibilities of liberty to change history. And so with Prime Minister Koizumi and Prime Minister Abe, we talked about security. We talked about working closely together to convince the leader of North Korea to give up his nuclear weapons ambitions and programs. We talked about helping the young democracy of Iraq survive in the midst of the Middle East. We fully understand that the long-term way to protect America is to defeat an ideology of hate with an ideology of hope. I learned firsthand the power of liberty to transform an enemy into an ally.

I firmly believe that a democracy can survive in the Middle East, and I believe it is a necessary part of laying a foundation of peace for generations to come.

Good to be with you. Thank you all. [*Applause*] Sit down. Thank you. I'll take some questions. Yes, sir. You get to start since you're the boss. [*Laughter*]

War on Terror in Iraq/Emergency Supplemental Appropriations

Q. Thank you. In May of 2006, my second cousin was on his second tour in Iraq. Corporal Cory Palmer—he's in the Marines—he was on patrol in a Humvee, and they ran over a roadside bomb. He and three others in that Humvee perished. What do I need to do, what do we need to do to help you so that my second cousin, and others like him, have not died or been injured in vain?

The President. Thank you. The horrors of war come home to every—to a lot of families in America. Yesterday I had the honor of meeting with moms and dads and wives, in this case, children, who have lost a loved one. And I've met with a lot of families, sadly enough. Most of the time, I hear that very question. Actually, it's not a question; it's a statement.

Here's what I've heard. One, my loved one died doing what he or she wanted to do. Two, do not allow that loved one to have died in vain. In other words, it is an interesting spirit amongst the—now, listen, I visit with some who say, "Get out; I wish you hadn't have done this in the first place." But by far the vast majority reflect what you asked: What does it take?

First of all, it takes, in order to make sure your loved one didn't die in vain, is to have the will and determination necessary to succeed. One of the reasons I've come to speak to you is because I must continually explain to the American people the stakes in this war, the consequences of failure, and the consequences of success. In order for me to do my part to make sure your second cousin and anybody else who lost a loved one in Iraq didn't die in vain, is to continue to take the case to the American people, why what happens in Iraq matters to them.

Secondly, one way to make sure that your second cousin didn't die in vain is to remind legislators that regardless of their position on the war, that they have got to fund our troops, that they have got to make sure that—without conditions of—that say you've got to withdraw by a certain date.

Now, here's the reason that doesn't make any sense. I'm sure a lot of Americans know intuitively it doesn't make any sense for people on Capitol Hill to say, "You must withdraw." The reason why is, first of all, we ought to rely upon conditions on the ground, and we ought to rely upon our military commanders and our diplomats on the ground to give us advice. It's the best way to conduct a war.

Secondly, imagine what a thinking enemy is doing when they hear timetables. Oh, you've got to be out by a certain date? Well, why don't we just wait. [*Laughter*]

Thirdly, what does it say to the Iraqis? Remember, there are a lot of people who basically wonder whether or not a coalition is going to stand with them as they make difficult choices. And if you're an Iraqi thinking, "Well, I may have some support; I may not. And if not, I better start hedging my bet." The Government isn't quite ready to provide the security necessary for people to be comfortable with a reduced coalition presence.

And therefore—and by the way, in order to make a unified government work, there has to be people willing to commit to that government. There have to be people willing to commit to civil society. Remember, these

people are recovering from a brutal tyrant, and they have to make a—they've got to commit, in their soul that it's worthwhile, that this Government is worthwhile. And they're not willing to make that commitment yet because they're uncertain about their future.

And so a artificial timetable of withdrawal is—really affects the psychology of the Iraqis as well. That's why I vetoed the bill. And I believe we can work together in Congress to get it done. I think that Senators would tell you there's an opportunity. And first of all, they got to fund the troops because the longer they wait in funding the troops, it's going to hurt our military. The military is spending money over in Iraq as we speak, and they need money. And if they don't get the money from the supplemental, they'll start taking it from other accounts, which could affect readiness. And it begins to affect the overall strength of our military.

And that's one reason I keep explaining that to the American people, so that they understand that this—these delays, they make nice politics in some quarters, but it's lousy for our military and the military families.

Anyway, good question, thanks for asking it. Yes, ma'am.

Freedom of the Press/War on Terror Strategy/Iraq Study Group

Q. I'd like to know, like a lot of other people in this room, we have family members who are actively involved in the security of this country in various ways. From them, we've received positive information who we consider credible, who say about the success and the good things that are happening as a result of us being in Iraq. I would like to know why and what can be done about we, the American people, receiving some of that information more from the media, more from the overall media.

The President. If you're trying to goad me into attacking the media, you're crazy. [*Laughter*]

It's interesting, people get their news all different kinds of ways. This is an interesting, different type of war. I mentioned asymmetrical warfare. That means an enemy can use inexpensive weapons to try to defeat expensive defensive armament. A car bomb, a suicide bomber, an IED, these are inexpensive weapons that create—help them achieve strategic objectives.

It's also different in that this is a volunteer army that we have fielded. And therefore, the role of government is to make sure that our families are well supported—our military families are well supported, that the veterans get everything they deserve, and that the health care is perfect as possibly can be. And we're working toward it.

By the way, I was proud of our Secretary of Defense the other day. When he found a inadequate health care, he responded, because he knows—and the Congress shares the same view—is that when we have somebody volunteering to be in combat, they and their families deserve the best that we can possibly provide.

Thirdly, back to your question. You thought I was kind of doing one of these—[*laughter*]—Washington, DC, dodges. [*Laughter*] I talk to a lot of families who have got a loved one in Iraq or Afghanistan or anywhere else in this global war on terror, and they are in constant communication with their loved one. That's amazing, isn't it. You've got a kid in Iraq who is e-mailing mom daily, talking about the realities of what he or she sees. Information is moving—you know, nightly news is one way, of course, but it's also moving through the blogosphere and through the Internets. It's amazing how many e-mails I see from people that are writing in what they think and what they hear.

We've all got—those of us who believe that we're doing the right thing must continually speak. Joe Lieberman has been great about continually speaking about the consequences. [*Applause*] Wait a minute—you didn't give me a chance to say something nice about Chairman Warner. [*Laughter*] He, too, has been strong.

It's just a—I can't answer your question beyond that people just need to be—the best messenger, by the way, for us is David Petraeus, because he's actually there in Baghdad, and Ryan Crocker who is actually—he's the Ambassador who is there in Baghdad. And freedom of the press is a valuable freedom here, and it's just something that we've all got to live with and value it for what it is and just continue to speak the

truth as best as we can without trying to gloss over the inherent dangers.

The interesting thing I find is that our—as the president here mentioned, there have been multiple rotations. People have gone back to Iraq. In other words, they've re-upped. And the reenlistment rate is high. People are signing up for the first time as well. And it's just an interesting statement, isn't it, about the character of our military, a character which is—says that we've got people willing to serve a cause greater than themselves.

I saw a marine yesterday—came out of Anbar. His brother, who was in the Army, was lost. And I was comforting his family as best as I possibly can, or could. And he said, "We're making great progress in Anbar; I just wanted to tell you that, President." You know, is he the kind of guy that tells the President what he wants to hear? I don't know. All I can tell you is what he told me. And I told that to David Petraeus, who confirmed it.

But slowly but surely, the truth will be known. Either we'll succeed, or we won't succeed. And the definition of success as I described is sectarian violence down. Success is not, no violence. There are parts of our own country that have got a certain level of violence to it. But success is a level of violence where the people feel comfortable about living their daily lives. And that's what we're trying to achieve.

I'm asked all the time about strategies. I liked what James A. Baker and Lee Hamilton reported back after a serious investigation of Iraq. I liked their ideas. And it's something that we should seriously consider. And their idea was, is that at some point in time, it makes sense to have a U.S. presence configured this way, embedded with Iraqi forces, training Iraqi forces, over-the-horizon presence to provide enough security to know that people will have help if they need it, but put the—more onus on a sovereign government of Iraq, a presence to keep the territorial integrity of Iraq intact, a special ops presence to go after these killers who have got their intentions on America. It's an interesting idea.

By the way, in the report it said, it is—the government may have to put in more troops to be able to get to that position. And that's what we did. We put in more troops to get to a position where we can be in some other place. The question is, who ought to make that decision, the Congress or the commanders? And as you know, my position is clear—I'm a commander guy.

Yes, sir.

Reconstruction Efforts in Iraq/President's Faith

Q. We're General Contractors of America, and what are we doing—I don't hear anything about the reconstruction of Iraq. Could you fill us in on that? Are we doing enough, as general contractors? And we are at your disposal.

And second is a personal question. What do you pray about, and how we can we pray for you?

The President. Thank you. The first question, our reconstruction strategy initially was to do big projects, and then those big projects would be destroyed by the enemy. In other words, they blow them up. And it became very frustrating. And some of the big projects were successful; a lot of them weren't. So therefore we restructured, and we said that the best way to help the Iraq—remember, Iraq has now put out 10 billion of their own money. So, step one, they're a sovereign government, and if we want to do business with Iraq, we can figure out how you can go do it—business with Iraq. They're spending their own money. That's what's important to remember.

That's actually a hopeful sign, that they appropriated money in a constitutionally elected assembly, and hopefully that money is spent in a way that encourages all Iraqis to have some faith that the central government can function rationally. I guess what I'm telling you is, the security situation was such that it made the initial phases of our reconstruction not as effective as we would have liked.

Now we're giving reconstruction money to two different groups—two groups of people, not different—two groups. One, our military commanders. It's called CERP money. They go into a neighborhood in Baghdad that had been ravaged by sectarian violence; they bring order with the Iraqis; they stay in place; they gain the confidence of the people; and

there is some reconstruction money to help provide jobs of cleaning up neighborhoods and rebuilding storefronts.

The other reconstruction money goes to what's called Provincial Reconstruction Teams. These are teams of diplomats living out in the hinterlands, working with local folks to meet objectives of the local folks, so that the people begin to see that there is one, security; two, hope; and three, tangible benefits. And that's how we're using—I'm not exactly sure what a proper role could be for you. The good news is I can find out pretty quick—[*laughter*]—"ly," quickly. [*Laughter*]

The fact that you would ask the question, how can I pray for you, speaks volumes about the United States of America. I have been amazed by the fact that millions of Americans of all faith, all political backgrounds, pray for me and Laura. And it is an unbelievably sustaining. It is comforting. It is humbling to be prayed for. Wisdom and strength and my family, is what I'd like for you to pray for.

Yes, sir.

Spread of Democracy/Freedom Agenda

Q. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Okay, we've got dueling questions. [*Laughter*] You just lost, because he's got the mike. [*Laughter*] It's the possession deal, you know? [*Laughter*]

Q. You talked about the terror of 9/11, and what I wanted to share with you, my wife and I had our first child 2 months after 9/11. We named her Grace because we felt that the world needed some grace at the time. And what I wanted to—[*inaudible*]—is the fact that our appreciation and keeping my family and also the families of America safe for the past 5 years is—[*inaudible*].

The President. Thank you. Thank you. Grace will live—the question is, will Grace live in a peaceful world, today and tomorrow? Today, we will continue to stay on the pressure. And we're sharing intelligence, and we're on the offense. And my attitude is, is that if the United States ever let up, it would embolden, it would send the wrong signal. So we're pressuring. And I'm—I would hope whoever takes my place would have that same sense of urgency. You know, no matter what you may be hearing, it's—people, when they get in that Oval Office and take a look at the realities of the world will, I suspect, subscribe to the—that we just need to be not only vigilant but pressuring.

You know, the interesting debate that we're now confronted with is this ideological debate about whether or not it's worth it to spread freedom. Should we spread freedom? Can the spread of freedom take root in dangerous parts of the world? And is it worth it? Does it make sense?

As you can tell, I'm a strong proponent of spreading freedom. First of all—and I've got confidence that freedom can be spread in parts of the world where it may look difficult at this moment in history to see freedom take root.

I've got confidence for a couple of reasons. One, I believe in the universality of freedom. That means I believe everybody desires to be free. I don't think freedom is uniquely American, nor do I think it's uniquely Methodist. [*Laughter*] I think it is universal.

I told you—I also, obviously, believe in the universality of motherhood. I believe mothers in Iraq want their children to grow up in peace, just like mothers in America do. I also believe people in Iraq want to live in a free society. I wasn't surprised; I was pleased when 12 million people went to the polls. That statement to me was: freedom.

Secondly, can it take hold in parts of the world that some suspect that it can't root? I would remind people of, for example, of—I mentioned Japan. There are other examples in our history. One of the unique aspects of my Presidency is I can predict to you that—with relative certainty that a violent part of the world, the Far East, is stable and headed in the right direction, absent one spot.

In 1950, that would have been a hard prediction to make. Shortly before 1950, I mentioned, thousands of U.S. citizens had died in a war with Japan; Mao Zedong was beginning an ascendancy where the form of government was repressed and that no such thing as a marketplace—was repressive, and there was no such thing as a marketplace. And Korea had just been—the Peninsula of Korea had just been torn asunder, where thousands of U.S. soldiers had died as well.

Today, Japan, as I mentioned, is a strong ally, an important economic partner and security partner. South Korea is a strong ally, important trading partner, and important security partner—albeit their democracy went through a difficult period of time. Democracies don't emerge on a straight line. Neither did ours. Our great democracy enslaved people for 100 years. All men were created equal, except some. We're reconfirming that belief that all men are created equal.

And so it takes a while for freedom to take root. It's hard work for societies to adopt the habits necessary for a free society to emerge. Interesting enough, in China, there's certainly not a free society, but there is a free marketplace emerging. And in 1950, that would have been a difficult prediction to make.

And so I believe liberty can take hold in parts of the world because history has shown it to be. Different time, no question; a different part of the world, no question. But if you have faith in the universality of freedom, and if you've seen history—liberty take hold before, it should give us confidence.

Finally, it's necessary for free societies to emerge—free societies in the image of a country's own history and tradition. And why is it in our interest that that happen? There is a root cause, there is a reason why 19 kids got on an airplane to come and kill us, and that is because societies in that part of the world have bred resentment and lack of hope.

I don't believe you can have a comfortable and secure society if half the people are not treated equally. There's something universal in our demands to be treated with respect. It matters what the form of government is, in terms of whether or not peace will emerge.

And so I believe that the liberty agenda, freedom agenda can take root, and I know it's necessary to make sure Grace can live in peace. I think people will look back at this period of time and make one or two judgments. They'll either say, what happened to them in 2007; how come they couldn't see the impending dangers that the little Graces of America would have to live with; how come they couldn't spot the radicalism that would emerge even more violent than it had been; how come they couldn't see the fact that Iran would become emboldened if the United States of America didn't keep its commitments in Iraq; what was it that prevented them from recognizing that nations in the Middle East would tend to choose up sides and back violent regimes—violent groups in order to protect their own selves; how come they couldn't remember the lesson of September the 11th, which said, what matters overseas matters at home? Or they'll look back and say, they had faith; they had faith in the ability of liberty to transform a region into a region of hope that yielded the peace so little Grace can be amazed that this generation has done its job.

And those are the risks, and that's the task, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:44 a.m. at the Willard Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Steve L. Massie, chief executive officer, Jack L. Massie Contractor, Inc.; Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; Haytham Kazim Abdallah Al-Shimari, head of the Rusafa Al Qaida-Iraq bomb network; Qais Khazali, member, Khazali network, and Shi'a extremist leader; Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq; former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan; Chairman Kim Jong Il of North Korea; and Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates. He also referred to H.R. 1591.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Ali Abdallah Salih of Yemen

May 2, 2007

President Bush. It is my honor to welcome the President of Yemen to the Oval Office. I have gotten to know the President over the past 6 years of my Presidency. I feel comfortable saying, welcome, my friend.

I had the privilege of calling President Salih after the elections of Yemen. I told him—I said it was a remarkable occurrence that his great country had a free and open election. I've had a chance to congratulate him and thank him in person today.

We had a very good discussion about the neighborhood in which the President lives. And we spent a lot of time talking about our mutual desire to bring radicals and murderers to justice. And I thanked the President

for his strong support in this war against extremists and terrorists.

So I'm glad you're here.

President Salih. Thank you very much, Mr. President, for the good reception and hospitality and also for the excellent and fruitful talks that we had. I'm very pleased for the limitless support by President Bush and the United States for Yemen in the field of combating terror. Yemen is an essential partner with the United States of America and the international community in combating terror. We will continue in this path, on this track.

We had the chance to discuss a number of issues with Mr. President, including a number of issues in the Middle East region, the Palestinian-Israeli problem and the situation in Somalia, the situation in Iraq, Lebanon, Afghanistan. We found a complete understanding on the issues that we have discussed with Mr. President Bush. We also discussed the bilateral relations between Yemen and the United States.

I would like, on this occasion, to highly express my gratification and my appreciation for the brave position taken by President Bush since the first moment he took power in this country, since he expressed his belief in the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, side by side with the State of Israel. And I wish that His Excellency would pursue his effort and will continue his efforts in implementing the Arab initiative, which was adopted in the summit of Beirut, to maintain peace in the region. I am sure that adopting such initiative would end 70 percent of the problems in the region.

Of course, you will be in history if you can be successful in establishing the independent Palestinian state before leaving the White House.

Shukran.

President Bush. *Shukran.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:44 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. President Salih spoke in Arabic, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Congressional Leaders

May 2, 2007

I thank the leaders from Congress for coming down to discuss the Iraq funding issue. Yesterday was a day that highlighted differences. Today is a day where we can work together to find common ground. I will inform the Speaker and the leader of our serious intent, and to that end, I am going to name our Chief of Staff, Josh Bolten, along with Steve Hadley and Rob Portman to work with members of both parties to fund our troops.

I think it's very important we do this as quickly as we possibly can. I'm confident that we can reach agreement. I know that it's going to require good will, but we all care deeply about our country and care about this issue. And so I want to thank the Members for coming down again. I'm looking forward to our discussions. I'm looking forward to what will be constructive set of discussions and negotiations.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:46 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House.

Remarks on the National Day of Prayer

May 3, 2007

Good morning, and welcome to the White House. I'm honored to join you for this National Day of Prayer. I'm sorry Laura is not here. She is camping in one of our national parks. [*Laughter*] I appreciate the chairman—chairwoman of the National Day of Prayer Task Force, Shirley Dobson. Thank you for your leadership on this important day. And I see you brought your husband, Jim.

The 2007 honorary chairman is with us, and that's Chuck Swindoll. Thank you, Chuck, for being here, and I'm glad you brought Cynthia as well. Welcome. I appreciate the members of the Cabinet who have joined. I appreciate the Members of the Congress. Thank you all for being here.

And the mayor—Mr. Mayor, thank you, sir. It's good to see you. Thanks for joining

us. It means a lot that you're here. I appreciate Mayor Ron Rordam, Blacksburg, Virginia. Mr. Mayor, we're honored you're here. Thanks for bringing Mary.

Members of the United States military have joined us. Thanks for wearing the uniform. I appreciate those who are participating. Rabbi, thank you for your really kind remarks and strong statement. I am glad that one of my fellow Texans has made it. Mike, thanks for coming from Prestonwood Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas. And you married a woman named Laura. [*Laughter*] Chaplain Houston Yu, Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets, proud to have you here. Bishop Coles, thank you for bringing Leona. Proud you all are here too. Thanks for joining us.

Appreciate the United States Army Chorus. By the way, Sergeant First Class Alvy Powell, friend of Presidents 41, 42, and 43. [*Laughter*] The man has got some longevity. [*Laughter*]

As Shirley mentioned, since the days of our founding, our Nation has been called to prayer. That's exactly what our first President did, George Washington. "It's the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and to humbly implore his protection and favor." It's interesting that the first President said those words.

For two centuries, Americans have answered this call to prayer. We're a prayerful nation. I believe that makes us a strong nation. Each day, millions of our citizens approach our Maker. We pray as congregations in churches and in synagogues and mosques and in temples. We welcome people of all faiths into the United States of America.

We pray as families, around the dinner table and before we go to sleep. We pray alone in silence and solitude, withdrawing from the world to focus on the eternal, spending time in personal recollection with our Creator.

We pray for many reasons. First, we pray to give thanks for the blessings the Almighty has bestowed upon us. We pray to give thanks. We give thanks for our freedom. We give thanks for the brave men and women who risk their lives to defend it. We give thanks for our families who love and support us. We give thanks for our plenty. We give thanks for our Nation.

Second, we pray for the strength to follow God's will in our lives and for forgiveness when we fail to do so. Through prayer, each of us is reminded that we are fallen creatures in need of mercy. And in seeking the mercy and compassion of a loving God, we grow in mercy and compassion ourselves.

We feel the tug at our souls to reach out to the poor, the elderly, the stranger in distress. And by answering this call to care for our brothers and sisters in need, our hearts grow larger and we enter into a deeper relationship with God.

Third, we pray to acknowledge God's sovereignty in our lives and our complete dependence on Him. This is probably the toughest prayer of all, particularly for those of us in politics. In the humility of prayer, we recognize the limits of human strength and human wisdom. We seek the strength and wisdom that comes from above. We ask for the grace to align our hearts with His, echoing the words of Scripture, "Not my will, but thine be done." We ask the Almighty to remain near to us and guide us in all we do, and when He is near, we are ready for all that may come to us.

Finally, we pray to offer petitions, because our Father in heaven knows our cares and our needs. We trust in the promise of a loving God: "Ask and it shall be given to you; seek and ye shall find." Inspired by this confidence, we pray that the Almighty will pour out His blessings on those we love. We ask His healing for those who suffer from illness, for those who struggle in life. We ask His comfort for the victims of tragedy and that the injured may be healed and the fallen may find comfort in the arms of their Creator. We implore His protection for those who protect us here at home and in far away lands. We pray for the day when His peace will reign in every nation and in every land until the ends of the Earth.

The greatest gift we can offer anyone is the gift of our prayers, because our prayers have power beyond our imagining. The English poet Tennyson wrote, "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." Prayer has the power to change lives and to change the course of history. So on this

National Day of Prayer, let us seek the Almighty with confidence and trust, because our Eternal Father inclines his ear to the voice of his children and answers our needs with love.

May God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:23 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Rabbi Michael Siegel, Anshe Emet Synagogue, Chicago, IL; Mike Fechner, minister of global outreach, Prestonwood Baptist Church, Dallas, TX; and Bishop Neavelle A. Coles, Sr., Washington, District of Columbia Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, Church of God in Christ. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Meeting on Immigration Reform

May 3, 2007

I want to thank my fellow Americans for joining me today to discuss a very important issue, and that is immigration.

In my discussions, I've talked to clergy that recognize that our country needs a comprehensive immigration reform. And part of that is to help people learn English. I've talked to people who've worked for corporate America—Andy works for Marriott International, a corporation that understands that it's very helpful, it's in their interest to help people assimilate.

I've talked to Emilio, who works for the Government. He's the head of the old INS, U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services. He has the opportunity often to swear in new citizens, and he sees the great hope that people have. I've talked to church workers who are reaching out in their communities to help people learn the benefits of the language—the English language. And thank you for tutoring and being kind.

I've talked to people that are raising families, that have come from other countries, that are now U.S. citizens and understand the benefit of what it means to have learned English. Francisco said, "When you learn English, doors open up for you." And I appreciate that beautiful sentiment because it's true.

I strongly support comprehensive immigration reform. One aspect of comprehensive immigration reform is to help people assimilate into America. And part of that is to have a comprehensive strategy to help people learn the English language and to learn the history and traditions of the United States.

Comprehensive immigration reform requires us to uphold law and enforce our borders in a humane way. Comprehensive immigration reform means that we need a temporary-worker program for workers who will be coming into our country. It's a program that treats people with respect, a program that helps meet the economic needs of our country. Comprehensive immigration reform means that employers have got to obey the law. Comprehensive immigration reform means that we've got to be humane about the nearly 11 or 12 million people who are already here. As I said in a speech down in Miami, we need to treat these people not with amnesty and not with animosity. So it's got to be a rational way forward.

And I'm looking forward to working with both Democrats and Republicans to get a comprehensive immigration bill done this year. We have a good chance to get it done. It's important for our fellow citizens to understand, comprehensive immigration reform is in the Nation's interest. And I'll continue working with Members of Congress to encourage them to do the hard work necessary to make sure a system that is not working is reformed in a way that meets our national needs and listens to our national heart. After all, America is a land of immigrants. Immigration helps renew our soul. It helps redefine our spirit in a positive way.

And I'm so proud to be with you, and I thank you for your time. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:26 a.m. at the Asamblea de Iglesias Cristianas, Centro Evangelistico. In his remarks, he referred to Andy Chaves, youth programs director and manager of workforce effectiveness and diversity, Marriott International, Inc.; and Francisco Lara, heavy equipment operator, Covanta Energy. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on World Press Freedom Day

May 3, 2007

On this day, we commemorate World Press Freedom Day. The United States values freedom of the press as one of the most fundamental political rights and as a necessary component of free societies. In undemocratic societies where governments suppress, manipulate, and control access to information, journalists are on the frontlines of the people's battle for freedom. The danger journalists face in such repressive states can be great—and even deadly.

On behalf of the American people, I salute those in the press who courageously do their work at great risk. No independent media are allowed in countries such as Cuba and North Korea, and those who attempt to report are often imprisoned. Repressive laws severely restrict journalists and freedom of speech in countries such as Belarus, Burma, Iran, Libya, Syria, Venezuela, and Zimbabwe. We condemn the harassment, physical intimidation, and persecution that journalists, including bloggers and Internet reporters, have faced in China, Egypt, Tunisia, and Vietnam and the unsolved murders of journalists in Lebanon, Russia, and Belarus.

Bringing unfiltered information, news, and facts to the people and accountability to their governments is the hallmark of the fourth estate. Today we salute the free press for its dedication to the people's right to know.

Statement on the Death of Walter M. "Wally" Schirra, Jr.

May 3, 2007

Laura and I are saddened by the death of Wally Schirra. Wally was a member of the original seven, our Nation's first class of astronauts. "Jolly Wally," as he was affectionately known, was the fifth American to go into space and holds the distinction as the only astronaut to fly in each of NASA's pioneering space flight programs: Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo. His ventures into space furthered our understanding of manned space flight and helped pave the way for mankind's first journey to the Moon. Laura and I join Wally's family and friends and the NASA community in mourning the loss of an American hero.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Singapore Treaty on the Law of Trademarks

May 3, 2007

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith for the Senate's advice and consent to ratification the Singapore Treaty on the Law of Trademarks (the "Treaty" or "Singapore Treaty") adopted and signed by the United States at Singapore on March 28, 2006. I also transmit for the information of the Senate a report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

If ratified by the United States, the Treaty would offer significant benefits to U.S. trademark owners and national trademark offices, including the United States Patent and Trademark Office. The beneficial features of the Trademark Law Treaty of 1994 (the "1994 TLT"), to which the United States is a party, are included in the Singapore Treaty, as well as the improvements to the 1994 TLT that the United States Government sought to achieve through the revision effort. Key improvements allow for national trademark offices to take advantage of electronic communication systems as an efficient and cost-saving alternative to paper communications, at such time as the office is ready to embrace the technology. The Treaty also includes trademark license recordation provisions that reduce the formalities that trademark owners face when doing business in a country that is a Contracting Party that requires trademark license recordation. The goal of these provisions is to reduce the damaging effects that can result from failure to record a license in those jurisdictions that require recordation. These and other improvements create a more attractive treaty for World Intellectual Property Organization Member States. Consequently, once the Treaty is in force, it is expected to increase the efficiency of national trademark offices, which in turn is

expected to create efficiencies and cost savings for U.S. trademark owners registering and maintaining trademarks abroad.

Ratification of the Treaty is in the best interests of the United States. I recommend, therefore, that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and give its advice and consent to ratification.

George W. Bush

The White House,
May 3, 2007.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 4. An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore

May 4, 2007

President Bush. Now, Mr. Prime Minister, thank you. Welcome back. Every time I visit with the Prime Minister of our friend Singapore, we have a strategic dialog.

And today I talked to Prime Minister Lee about America's desire to stay in close contact with not only Singapore but our partners in what we call the ASEAN nations—those would be Southeast Asian nations.

To this end, the Prime Minister has invited me and I've accepted an invitation to go back to Singapore to talk to our partners and friends about trade and security, and we'll do so on my way to the APEC meetings in Australia.

Prime Minister Lee. Yes, in September.

President Bush. So thanks for the invitation in September. That's right.

We talked about a lot of issues. We talked about our bilateral relations, which are very strong, and thank you for your leadership on that issue. We talked about Iraq and Afghanistan. I thank the Singaporean Government and the people of Singapore for supporting a Provincial Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan, which will help that—the people of that young democracy realize a brighter future. It's a strong commitment, Mr. Prime Minister. And I also thank you for the missions and the help you've provided to the people of Iraq.

We talked about the Iranian issue. We, of course, talked about North Korea. Now, there is no better person to talk about the Far East with than Prime Minister Lee. He's got a very clear vision about the issues, the complications, and the opportunities.

And so I welcome you back, and thanks so much for the amount of time that you're willing to give.

Prime Minister Lee. Well, thank you, President Bush. We had a very good discussion. Our bilateral ties between Singapore and America are in very good repair, so we spent very little time discussing that. But I thanked the President for the steadfastness and resolve with which he's tackling the very complicated problems in the Middle East and Iraq as well as the Israel-Palestinian issue.

It's critical for us in Southeast Asia that America does that and that the President continues to give strong leadership on that because it affects America's standing in Asia and the world and also the security environment in Asia, because extremists, the jihadists, watch carefully what's happening in the Middle East and take heart or lose heart depending on what's happening there.

We discussed America's relations in Asia, with China, with Japan, Korea. Those two are important to Southeast Asia because they set the context within which Southeast Asia can prosper. And good relations between America and the major countries, China and Japan, are critical because the Southeast Asian countries want to be friends with both and do not want to have to choose sides with either.

Within Southeast Asia, I encouraged the President to deepen and strengthen the already good ties with—between the Southeast Asian countries, ASEAN, and America, both as a group and also bilaterally, individually with single countries. The President is going to come to Singapore for the commemorative 30th anniversary meeting of the dialog between ASEAN and the United States. And I suggested to the President that we should consider suitable new initiatives which perhaps would be able to take our relations another step forward.

But overall, the relations are in good repair. More can and will be done. But I look forward to deepening and strengthening not just relations but also the friendship between our two countries.

President Bush. Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Lee. Thank you, Mr. President.

President Bush. Thank you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:03 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks at a Cinco de Mayo Celebration

May 4, 2007

The President. Thank you all. Please be seated. *Sientese*. [*Laughter*] *Bienvenidos*. Thank you for coming. Welcome to *El Jardin de las Rosas*. It's a great place to celebrate Cinco de Mayo. As a matter of fact, I've been looking forward to celebrating this so much that we decided to have our own *quatro de Mayo*. [*Laughter*]

Thanks for coming. Welcome. I'm honored to celebrate this important holiday with you all. On Cinco de Mayo, we remember our close friendship with Mexico and we honor and remember the many contributions Mexican Americans have made to our Nation.

I'm sorry Laura couldn't be here. She's coming back from having camped out in a national park with high school classmates. I'm honored to be here with the Attorney General of the United States, *mi amigo*, Alberto Gonzales, *y tambien* the Secretary of Commerce, Carlos Gutierrez, *y su esposa*, Edi. I'm glad to be here with Dr. Emilio Gonzalez, Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, and Gloria. I appreciate my friend Emilio Estefan for arranging this entertainment here in the Rose Garden. I welcome the Ambassador to—Mexico, Arturo. *Bienvenidos*. I'm glad you're here. Thanks for coming.

As you can see, I'm standing up here with a mariachi band, initially from Monterrey, Mexico—Los Hermanos Mora Arriaga. Welcome. Brothers and sisters—I think you told me you had 13 brothers and——

Audience member. Fifteen.

The President. ——15 brothers and sisters. [*Laughter*] We believe in family values. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank those who wear the uniform of the United States. Thank you for serving.

Cinco de Mayo celebrates a great Mexican victory at the Battle of Puebla. On May 5th, 1862, an outnumbered band of Mexican soldiers held their ground against a professional European army. They triumphed against overwhelming odds. The victory inspired Mexican patriots in their heroic fight for liberty and for democracy. Cinco de Mayo is a joyful day in Mexican history, and it's an important milestone in the history of freedom.

The people of the United States are proud to celebrate Cinco de Mayo with our Mexican neighbors. Our two countries continue to stand for the principles that the Mexican Army defended at Puebla. We believe that democracy represents the true will of people. We believe that freedom is God's gift to every man, woman, and child on the face of this Earth. And we believe that both our nations have a responsibility to share the blessings of liberty.

The United States and Mexico are bound by strong family ties. Mexican Americans have enriched our culture by sharing their musical and artistic talents. They've strengthened our economy by opening new businesses and expanding trade. And they have made our Nation more hopeful by leading lives of faith and family.

Mexican Americans have also defended the United States by wearing our Nation's uniform. Today, Mexican Americans in uniform answered the call to advance the cause of liberty, and this Nation is really grateful for your service and your sacrifice.

The patriotism of Mexican Americans reminds us that one of our greatest strengths is the character and diversity of our Nation's immigrants. Immigration has made our land a great melting pot of talent and ideas. It has made America a beacon of hope for people in search of a better life.

In Washington, we're now in the midst of an important discussion about immigration. Our current immigration system is in need of reform. It is not working. We need a system where our laws are respected. We need a system that meets the needs of our economy. And we need a system that treats people with dignity and helps newcomers assimilate into our society.

We must address all elements of this problem together or none of them will be solved at all. We must do it in a way that learns from the mistakes that caused previous reforms to fail. I support comprehensive immigration reform that will allow us to secure our borders and enforce our laws, to keep us competitive in the global economy, and to resolve the status of those already here, without amnesty and without animosity.

Comprehensive immigration reform is a vital goal for our Nation, and it is a matter of deep conviction for me. I will continue to work closely with lawmakers on both sides of the aisle to build a consensus for reform so Congress can pass and I can sign a comprehensive immigration bill into law *este ano*.

The United States and Mexico share a great border, and we share a hopeful future. Tomorrow people on both sides of that border will celebrate freedom and the courage of all who defend it. I wish you a happy Cinco de Mayo. *Que Dios los bendiga a los Estados Unidos y tambien Mexico*.

And now, Los Hermanos Mora Arriaga.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:54 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Emilio Estefan, Jr., chairman, Estefan Enterprises, Inc.; and Mexico's Ambassador to the U.S. Arturo Sarukhan Casamitjana. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on the Resignation of Jack D. Crouch II as Deputy National Security Adviser

May 4, 2007

Dr. J.D. Crouch II came to the White House in January 2005 to serve as my Deputy National Security Adviser. J.D. has served our country with great distinction during a critical period in our history, as we confront new challenges and pursue a global war on terror. In the past 2½ years, his accomplishments have been many. He was at the forefront in devising and implementing the new strategy to help build a peaceful, stable, and secure Iraq. He was instrumental in developing the new national security strategy that charts a course for advancing our interests abroad, enhancing global security and liberty, and protecting the American people. J.D. is leaving the White House, but Steve Hadley, all his colleagues, and I have benefited greatly from his wise counsel and tireless commitment to public service.

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.

April 28

In the morning, at Camp David, MD, the President had an intelligence briefing.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Miami, FL, where, upon arrival in the afternoon, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Josh Blyden. He then traveled to Key Biscayne, FL, where he attended a Republican National Committee luncheon at a private residence.

Later in the afternoon, the President returned to Miami, FL.

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

April 30

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with President Jose Manuel Durao Barroso of the European Commission and Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany, in her capacity as President of the European Council.

In the afternoon, the President had a lunch meeting with President Durao Barroso and President Merkel. Later, in Room 350 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office

Building, he met with members of the Trans-Atlantic Business Dialogue.

Later in the afternoon, on the State Floor, the President participated in a photo opportunity with winners of the FIRST Competition (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology).

The President announced his intention to nominate Maurice S. Parker to be Ambassador to Swaziland.

The President announced his intention to nominate June Carter Perry to be Ambassador to Sierra Leone.

The President announced his intention to nominate Kristine L. Svinicki to be a member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Andrew Saul (Chair), Alejandro Modesto Sanchez, and Gordon James Whiting to be members of the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities: Ricardo Barraza, Jr.; Sharman Ward Dennis; Carmela Vargas Gonzales; Harris N. Hollin; Casey Patrick O'Halloran; Thomas J. Reilly; Steven C. Rhatigan; and Neil Romano.

May 1

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, FL, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Daniel Middaugh.

Later in the morning, the President participated in a briefing at U.S. Central Command by Adm. William J. Fallon, USN, commander, U.S. Central Command; Gen. Bryan D. "Doug" Brown, USA, commander, U.S. Special Operations Command; and Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq.

In the afternoon, the President met with family members of military personnel killed in Iraq. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President declared a major disaster in West Virginia and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, flooding, landslides, and mudslides on April 14–18.

The President declared a major disaster in Texas and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and tornadoes on April 21–24.

May 2

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had a breakfast meeting with President Alvaro Uribe Velez of Colombia.

In the afternoon, the President had a lunch meeting with President Ali Abdallah Salih of Yemen.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Rene Garcia Preval of Haiti to the White House on May 9.

May 3

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

The President announced his intention to nominate Tevi David Troy to be Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services.

The President announced his intention to nominate Kerry N. Weems to be Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services at the Department of Health and Human Services.

The President announced his intention to nominate Cameron R. Hume to be Ambassador to Indonesia.

The President announced his intention to nominate Bradford P. Campbell to be Assistant Secretary of Labor (Pension and Welfare Benefits).

The President announced his intention to nominate Charles E. F. Millard to be Director of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.

The President announced his intention to nominate Bartholomew H. Chilton to be a Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jill E. Sommers to be a Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate James Palmer and Stan Z. Soloway to be members of the Board of Directors of

the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The President announced his intention to nominate Lorne W. Craner to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Millennium Challenge Corporation.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the Committee for Purchase from People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled: Kathleen A. James; Paul M. Laird; Patrick Leahy; James Omvig; Alan S. Thompson; and Edward W. Walters III.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the Cultural Property Advisory Committee: Joan Breton Connelly; Winton S. Holladay; Robert Bruce Korver; and Katharine Lee Reid.

May 4

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, on the Oval Office Patio, the President participated in an interview with the BBC.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Toomas Ilves of Estonia to the White House on June 25.

The President announced the designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to attend the Restoration for Devolved Government in Northern Ireland in Belfast, United Kingdom: Paula J. Dobriansky (head of delegation); Thomas C. Foley; Edward M. Kennedy; Howard Dean Pittman; and Richard F. Powers III.

The President announced his intention to nominate William G. Sutton to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce (Manufacturing and Services).

The President declared a major disaster in Vermont and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding on April 15–21.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted April 30

James Russell Dedrick,
of Tennessee, to be U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Tennessee for the term of 4 years, vice Harry Sandlin Mattice, Jr., resigned.

Maurice S. Parker,
of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Swaziland.

June Carter Perry,
of the District of Columbia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Sierra Leone.

Esteban Soto III,
of Maryland, to be U.S. Marshal for the District of Puerto Rico for the term of 4 years, vice Herman Wirshing Rodriquez, term expired.

Joe W. Stecher,
of Nebraska, to be U.S. Attorney for the District of Nebraska for the term of 4 years, vice Michael G. Heavican, term expired.

Kristine L. Svinicki,
of Virginia, to be a member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the term of 5 years expiring June 30, 2012, vice Jeffrey S. Merrifield, term expiring.

Submitted May 3

Bradford P. Campbell,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor, vice Ann Laine Combs, resigned.

Bartholomew H. Chilton,
of Delaware, to be a Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission for the remainder of the term expiring April 13, 2008, vice Frederick William Hatfield, resigned.

Cameron R. Hume,
of New York, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Career Minister, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Indonesia.

Charles E. F. Millard,
of New York, to be Director of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (new position).

James Palmer,
of California, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for a term expiring October 6, 2011, vice Donna N. Williams, term expired.

Alejandro Modesto Sanchez,
of Florida, to be a member of the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board for a term expiring October 11, 2010 (reappointment).

Andrew Saul,
of New York, to be a member of the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board for a term expiring September 25, 2008 (reappointment).

Andrew Saul,
of New York, to be a member of the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board for a term expiring September 25, 2012 (reappointment).

Stan Z. Soloway,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for a term expiring October 6, 2011, vice Carol Kinsley, term expired.

Jill E. Sommers,
of Kansas, to be a Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission for the remainder of the term expiring April 13, 2009, vice Sharon Brown-Hruska, resigned.

Tevi David Troy,
of New York, to be Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services, vice Alex Azar II.

Kerry N. Weems,
of New Mexico, to be Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, vice Mark B. McClellan.

Gordon James Whiting,
of New York, to be a member of the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board for a term expiring September 25, 2010 (reappointment).

Withdrawn May 3

Jane C. Luxton,
of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, vice James R. Mahoney, which was sent to the Senate on January 9, 2007.

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 April 28

Advance text of the President's commencement address at Miami Dade College

Released April 30

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Tony Snow

Transcript of a teleconference press briefing by senior administration officials on the U.S.-EU Summit

Text of U.S.-EU Summit

Text of U.S.-EU Declaration on Advancing Transatlantic Economic Integration Between the United States of America and the European Union

Text of U.S.-EU Declaration on Energy Security, Efficiency, and Climate Change

Text of U.S.-EU Declaration Promoting Peace, Human Rights, and Democracy Worldwide

Text of U.S.-EU Economic Progress Report

Text of U.S.-EU Political Progress Report

Released May 1

Transcript of a press gaggle by Deputy Press Secretary Dana Perino

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to West Virginia

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Texas

Fact sheet: America and Our Allies are Working Together To Keep Our Nations Safe

Released May 2

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Tony Snow

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit by President Rene Garcia Preval of Haiti

Released May 3

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Tony Snow

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that on May 2 the President signed H.R. 753 and H.R. 1003

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 137, H.R. 727, and H.R. 1130

Released May 4

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Press Secretary Dana Perino

Transcript of a teleconference press briefing by State Department Senior Climate Negotiator and Special Representative Harlan Watson, White House Council on Environmental Quality Chairman James L. Connaughton, and State Department Climate Change Technology Program Director Stephen Eule on the Third Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Report on Climate Change

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of President Toomas Ilves of Estonia

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Vermont

Fact sheet: Job Creation Continues—More Than 7.8 Million Jobs Created Since August 2003

Fact sheet: The State Visit by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II of Great Britain and His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh

Acts Approved by the President

Approved May 2

H.R. 753 / Public Law 110–20
To redesignate the Federal building located at 167 North Main Street in Memphis, Tennessee, as the "Clifford Davis and Odell Horton Federal Building"

H.R. 1003 / Public Law 110–21
To amend the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 to reauthorize the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy

Approved May 3

H.R. 137 / Public Law 110–22
Animal Fighting Prohibition Enforcement Act of 2007

H.R. 727 / Public Law 110–23
Trauma Care Systems Planning and Development Act of 2007

H.R. 1130 / Public Law 110–24
Judicial Disclosure Responsibility Act