

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



Monday, August 27, 2007
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Editor's Note: The President was at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, on August 24, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

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.

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Week Ending Friday, August 24, 2007

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

August 16, 2007

Presidential Determination No. 2007–28

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

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

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

The Secretary of State is authorized and directed to publish this determination in the *Federal Register* and to notify the Congress of this determination.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 17. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

August 18, 2007

Good morning. In recent months, American and Iraqi forces have struck powerful blows against Al Qaida terrorists and violent extremists in Anbar and other Provinces. In recent days, our troops and Iraqi allies launched a new offensive called Phantom Strike. In this offensive, we are carrying out targeted operations against terrorists and extremists fleeing Baghdad and other key cities to prevent them from returning or setting up new bases of operation. The terrorists remain dangerous and brutal, as we saw this week when they massacred more than 200 innocent Yazidis, a small religious minority in northwestern Iraq. Our hearts go out to the families of those killed, and our troops are going to go after the murderers behind this horrific attack.

As we surge combat operations to capture and kill the enemy, we are also surging Provincial Reconstruction Teams to promote political and economic progress. Since January, we have doubled the number of these teams, known as PRTs. They bring together military, civilian, and diplomatic personnel to help Iraqi communities rebuild infrastructure, create jobs, and encourage reconciliation from the ground up. These teams are now deployed throughout the country, and they are helping Iraqis make political gains, especially at the local level.

In Anbar Province at this time last year, the terrorists were in control of many areas and brutalizing the local population. Then local sheikhs joined with American forces to drive the terrorists out of Ramadi and other cities. Residents began to provide critical intelligence, and tribesmen joined the Iraqi police and security forces. Today, the Provincial council in Ramadi is back, and last month, Provincial officials reopened parts of the war-damaged government center with the help of one of our PRTs. Thirty-five local council

members were present as the chairman called the body to order for its inaugural session.

Similar scenes are taking place in other parts of Anbar. Virtually every city and town in the Province now has a mayor and a functioning municipal council. The rule of law is being restored. And last month, some 40 judges held a conference in Anbar to restart major criminal trials. In the far west town of Al Qaim, tribal leaders turned against the terrorists. Today, those tribal leaders head the regional mayor's office and the local police force. Our PRT leader on the ground reports that Al Qaim is seeing new construction, growing commercial activity, and an increasing number of young men volunteering for the Iraqi Army and police.

In other Provinces, there are also signs of progress from the bottom up. In Muthanna, an overwhelmingly Shi'a Province, the local council held a public meeting to hear from citizens on how to spend their budget and rebuild their neighborhoods. In Diyala Province, the city of Baqubah reopened six of its banks, providing residents with much-needed capital for the local economy. And in Ninawa Province, local officials have established a commission to investigate corruption, with a local judge empowered to pursue charges of fraud and racketeering.

Unfortunately, political progress at the national level has not matched the pace of progress at the local level. The Iraqi Government in Baghdad has many important measures left to address, such as reforming the de-Ba'athification laws, organizing Provincial elections, and passing a law to formalize the sharing of oil revenues. Yet the Iraqi Parliament has passed about 60 pieces of legislation.

And despite the lack of oil revenue law on the books, oil revenue sharing is taking place. The Iraqi Parliament has allocated more than \$2 billion in oil revenue for the Provinces. And the Shi'a-led Government in Baghdad is sharing a significant portion of these oil revenues with Sunni Provincial leaders in places like Anbar.

America will continue to urge Iraq's leaders to meet the benchmarks they have set. Yet Americans can be encouraged by the progress and reconciliation that are taking

place at the local level. An American politician once observed that "all politics is local." In a democracy, over time, national politics reflects local realities. And as reconciliation occurs in local communities across Iraq, it will help create the conditions for reconciliation in Baghdad as well.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 8:20 a.m. on August 17 at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 18. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 17 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Proclamation 8165—National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month, 2007

August 20, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month is an opportunity to underscore our commitment to fighting ovarian cancer and to finding a cure for this deadly disease.

Ovarian cancer is one of the leading causes of cancer-related deaths among women in our country, and the risk of developing it increases with age and a family history of this disease. Other risk factors include a history of endometrial, colon, or breast cancer, and obesity. Because early detection is crucial in treating ovarian cancer and its symptoms can be difficult to identify, women should consult their doctors about personal risk factors, early warning signs, and screening options.

Our Nation has made progress in the fight against ovarian cancer, yet much more work remains. I signed the "Gynecologic Cancer Education and Awareness Act of 2005," or "Johanna's Law," which supports a national campaign to raise awareness among women and health care providers regarding gynecologic cancers. In FY 2007, the National Institutes of Health will invest an estimated \$102 million into ovarian cancer research through the National Cancer Institute

and other institutes. In addition, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will dedicate nearly \$5 million. We will continue to commit our resources to seek better ways to prevent, detect, and ultimately cure ovarian cancer.

During National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month, Americans remember those who have lost their lives to ovarian cancer, and we honor the courage and strength of those who continue to fight this disease. We also recognize the dedicated medical professionals and researchers whose tireless efforts help provide a brighter, healthier future for women.

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 September 2007 as National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month. I call upon government officials, businesses, communities, health care professionals, educators, volunteers, and the people of the United States to continue our Nation's strong commitment to preventing and treating ovarian cancer.

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

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., August 22, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on August 23.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Stephen Harper of Canada and President Felipe de Jesus Calderon Hinojosa of Mexico in Montebello, Canada

August 21, 2007

Prime Minister Harper. Might I, first and foremost, thank all the people here and the citizens of Montebello for giving such a warm Quebec welcome. You are quite right to be proud of your beautiful Montebello manoir and the area.

As the leaders of the three countries, between—and our discussions between President Bush and myself were very cordial, constructive. Our three countries maintain peaceful, productive relations and give great contributions to our people. It is part and parcel of our commitment to democracy, free market, NAFTA, and the equality of chances to all citizens.

This is a unique moment to look at the individual aspects that we could look at and the challenges that we have to face. We agreed to discuss the protection of the consumer and looking at the nonsecure products entering the nations, in particular those going to our children.

We also recognize the fact that to find practical, pragmatic solutions to our mutual environmental challenges, our countries are working to find our own sustainable energy and to find national standards on energy efficiency.

Finally—and this is particularly important for Canada—we realize that border security must not threaten the friendly relations that we have. We undertook agreements on cooperation, standards, regulations, pandemics, intellectual property, and research in the energy field. In the framework of this summit, we met the North American Competitiveness Council. Their leaders provided us with valuable information on how we could exploit our partnership in the field of security and prosperity to strengthen our economies and to create good jobs here in North America.

Our discussions did not merely deal with North America. We also discussed a number of other international and hemispheric questions: climate change and to the next meeting of the Middle East discussions, where our countries are defending democracy and freedom and protecting the have-nots.

This summit enabled us to discuss our singular bilateral discussions. President Bush and myself met yesterday afternoon. We discussed a number of subjects, in particular our joint commitment to have a secure border that shall remain open to goods and services and to the interaction between our respective citizens.

President Calderon and myself also had a meeting yesterday evening, and I would like to thank President Calderon and his wife,

Margarita, and their children, Maria, Felipe, for having passed a wonderful time with us last weekend. We understand that you have had to shorten your stay due to the consequences of Hurricane Dean on your country. I sincerely regret the terrible aspect of this Hurricane Dean on Mexico, but I understand the concern, that the Mexican authorities have assisted in evacuating a Canadian citizen.

We have also been able to arrange our agenda yesterday to discuss important matters for our respective nations. We were able to discuss a number of different matters and the flourishing development of trade between our two countries and that we shall pursue in the future, Canada, United States, and Mexico, our good neighbors and good friends.

As sovereign nations in our modern world, we are not merely independent but also interdependent. And we are determined to cooperate for our mutual security, our continued economic growth, and the improvement of our North American relations are unique in the world.

[At this point, Prime Minister Harper continued in English.]

—the staff here and the people of Montebello for their warm Quebecois hospitality. You have every reason to be proud of this magnificent resort and this beautiful region.

As host of this year's North American leaders summit, it's my responsibility and pleasure to report that the discussions between Presidents Bush and Calderon and myself were as cordial as they were constructive. Our three countries share peaceful and productive relations that are of considerable benefit to the people of our respective nations. These relations are rooted in our common commitment to democracy, free and open markets through NAFTA, and equal opportunity for all of our citizens. This week's summit has provided an opportunity to share individual perspectives and to take stock of the challenges that we face together.

We agreed to work together on consumer protection. We have to identify and stop unsafe goods from entering our country, especially those designed for our children. We

also agreed on the need for practical solutions to our mutual environmental challenges. Our countries are already working together to develop clean and sustainable energy, and we're cooperating on national fuel efficiency standards.

Finally—and this is especially important for Canada—we agreed that border security measures, critical as they are, cannot threaten the bonds of friendship or commerce between us.

Over the past year, we've achieved agreements on regulatory cooperation, pandemics, intellectual property, and research in energy. As part of our summit, we also met with the North American Competitiveness Council. The Council's business leaders have provided us with good, practical advice on how we can build our Security and Prosperity Partnership to strengthen our economies and create good jobs right here in North America.

But our discussions were not focused exclusively on North America. We also discussed a range of international and hemispheric issues, from climate change to the upcoming APEC meetings, from the Middle East to Haiti, where all three of our countries are working to advance freedom, democracy, and development for the most impoverished people.

Moreover, the summit provided opportunities for one-on-one discussions about our unique bilateral relationships. President Bush and I met yesterday afternoon. We discussed several matters, including our joint commitment to a secure border that remains open to the exchange of goods and services and the interaction of our people.

President Calderon and I met last night. First, let me take the opportunity to thank the President, his wife, Margarita, and their children, Maria, Felipe, and Juan Pablo, for spending some time this past weekend with our family. I understand you're cutting your visit short, given the impact of Hurricane Dean on your country. I regret the cost of this terrible natural disaster. At the same time, we appreciate the efforts of the Mexican authorities to secure the evacuation of Canadian citizens.

I'm grateful we were able to arrange our schedules yesterday to meet and discuss matters formally before your departure. We had

the opportunity to discuss many issues related to the growing relationship between Canada and Mexico that we're going to lead forward together.

Canada, the United States, and Mexico are good neighbors and good friends. As sovereign countries in the modern world, we are both independent and interdependent. And we're committed to working together on mutual security, continued economic growth, and expanding our unique North American relationship.

President Bush.

President Bush. Thank you, Prime Minister. Thanks for having us here. I too want to thank the good folks of Montebello for their wonderful hospitality. The food was good; the hospitality was warm. You picked a great place to come.

I express my country's concerns for the citizens whose lives will be affected by Hurricane Dean. I respect the fact that President Calderon has decided to get back to Mexico as quickly as possible in a safe way. I want you to know that U.S. Agencies are in close touch with the proper Mexican authorities, and if you so desire help, we stand ready to help. The American people care a lot about the human condition in our neighborhood, and when we see human suffering, we want to do what we can to help alleviate that. So we wish you all the—[*inaudible*].

These meetings are—I'm not going to try to reiterate what Stephen said. He went through the list of the meetings. And he's a—he's right, that we talked about a lot of issues. I just want to give you the spirit of the discussions and why I think they're important.

It's in our people's interests that Canada and Mexico work closely together. In other words, there's a good reason why our leaders should come together on a regular basis. First reason why is to figure out ways to continue to enhance prosperity. It's in our interests that the Canadian lifestyle be as strong as it is, and it's in our interests that prosperity spread to Mexico. If you're a U.S. citizen, you want people that live close to you to be prosperous. The more prosperity there is in your neighborhood, the more hopeful your neighborhood is.

NAFTA, which has created a lot of political controversy in our respective countries, has yielded prosperity. Since NAFTA came to be, trade between our respective countries has grown from \$293 billion a year to \$883 billion a year. Now, for some, those are just numbers, but for many, it's improved wages and a better lifestyle and more hope. And the question that we're faced with is, how do we continue to enhance prosperity so the average citizen understands the benefits of three countries working together? And I think we made some good progress toward eliminating barriers and toward harmonizing regulations to a point where more prosperity will come to be.

And we discussed a lot of other issues. We discussed bilateral issues. Stephen and I talked about border issues. Of course, Felipe Calderon and I talked about border issues and migration. These are complicated issues, but they're issues that we can work out in good spirit as friends.

One reason one meets is to reconfirm friendships, is to make sure that not only at the leaders' level is there conversations taking place that are friendly but that that spirit translates throughout our governments. And I think we've accomplished that objective today.

We also talked, as Stephen mentioned, about international issues, issues of—concerning South America or the Middle East. These are meaningful discussions. I'm glad I came, and I'm looking forward to hosting them next year. Matter of fact, it's in the interests of our countries that we have these meetings on an annual basis and then have working groups follow through on the discussion items that—during our meetings with the business leaders or our own Cabinet Secretaries.

And so thanks for having me. It's been worthwhile. I appreciate it.

Prime Minister Harper. *Senor* Calderon.

President Calderon. *Gracias*. Thank you, Prime Minister Harper and President Bush. In the first place, I would like to thank very specifically—I would like to thank you for the solidarity, the understanding, and the support that I have received from you in order to, well, adjust my schedule to exhaust pending matters and allow me to return in

good time in order to personally tend to the emergency situation that we have to face in the Yucatan Peninsula.

Your understanding and support is also accompanied by the offers of help and solidarity to the victims of this national disaster. So far—well, it would be too early to assess the scope of the damages. So far there have been no fatal victims. We can't be sure yet, but we are monitoring the situation every minute, monitoring the hurricane. And as a matter of fact, I'm returning to Yucatan right away, as soon as my aircraft can land, and supervise the rescue missions.

I would also like to thank very sincerely—thank you for the hospitality and for the human warmth, for the very welcoming attitude of Mr. Harper's family. And I do value this. It was a marvelous weekend for my family, such a typically Canadian place—typically, Canadian places are amongst the most beautiful in the world. And I would like to thank your wife, Laureen, and your children for your offer to spend this time with my family, with my wife and with my children. And I hope I'll be able to return your very nice present in Mexico.

Now, this meeting allows me to reenforce the conviction that North America as a region still has not developed the enormous potential it has. And I'm more convinced about this today than ever before, that it has to be developed. There's no doubt that the globalization process that we are currently experiencing is definitely pressuring throughout competitiveness of our countries—and not only countries but the competitiveness of the countries that have joined into regions.

Now, Canada, U.S., and Mexico have to act together in order not only to improve the quality of life of our people but also to prevent the vast integration process that we've seen in other parts of the world—Asia, Europe, very specifically. We don't want this to displace our producers and displace opportunities for our consumers.

Now, through working groups that we've established through the opinions of the businessmen of all three countries and their recommendations to our respective governments, it's clear to me that there's an enormous agenda that has to be developed, carried out. So I believe that we must relaunch

in a stronger way the strength of the relationship between the three countries of North America. That is to say that each country, each government is facing within their own public opinion—now particularly in Mexico, maybe in the U.S.—they're encountering resistance in relation to one or another aspect—investments, immigration, border crossings, and regulatory aspects.

And all these matters, which most of them are covered by the recommendations of the businessmen that we met, they've come to stand still. And this is a result of the concerns in each country, obstacles to the economic integration of our region. I believe we should reassess, or we should have our people reassess what all this means to the common citizen, the region; what it means to the consumers to have better prices and better quality in the products they consume; also, in what it represents for companies to have access to commodities that are more efficient, more productive, better quality, and better priced; also, what it represents to our workers to have available work, thanks to the fact that North America can be a fully integrated region.

Now, at the same time, there are complementary characteristics between the three countries. And this has got to be very specifically addressed in order to leverage the situation in this new century of globalization.

And we agreed also to prioritize certain issues that have been followed up on. For example, when it comes to regional competitiveness, it's quite clear that this is a very important priority. Also, the border area issue—we all want secure and also efficient borders, borders that will allow the border crossing of those who build, who contribute, and of course, prevent border crossings to those that damage our societies: organized crime; drug trafficking; all the trade in illegal goods.

Also, we talked about sustainable development and the challenges faced by countries, by our region, and by humanity as a whole. And so we talked about our common purpose to find reliable alternatives that will allow us, on the one hand, to preserve the environment, and at the same time, they will not force us to detain or stop our development

and thereby have an impact on the prosperity of our people.

We also talked about security. This is a topic that concerns us all, but as President Bush said, we talked about prosperity. And I believe that this meeting—in my case, it's my first meeting, the first meeting I'm participating in—I think this meeting could be the beginning of a new age in the framework of the relationship of the three countries, and—particularly if we relaunch the trade exchange and also if we are able to take advantage of our potential.

I also thank President Bush for his invitation to come to Texas next year in order to continue with these talks. And also, Mexico is interested in hosting the meeting in 2009 in my beloved, dear, beautiful country.

Therefore, the issues were multifarious, and we took advantage of the time we had, although it was reduced because of this emergency situation that we're facing. I'm very happy that the environment within which we worked was very positive, very constructive on the part of everyone in attendance. And we hope that we'll be able to follow up on all the commitments, on the priorities that we've established, and on the recommendations that we've received from the business sector.

Thank you very much, Prime Minister Harper, for your hospitality. Thank you to the Canadian people and the people of Quebec for your hospitality and to the staff of this wonderful place in Montebello that treated us so generously. And well, we will be at your disposal when you come to us.

Moderator. [*Inaudible*—the press, good afternoon. We'll begin with the press conference. And just a reminder, it's one question per reporter. We will start with Ben Feller, Associated Press.

Progress in Iraq/Hurricane Dean

Q. Thank you all. Mr. President, yesterday, Senator Levin, chairman of the Armed Services Committee, said that the Iraqi Parliament ought to oust Prime Minister Maliki and his Government for being politically unable to deliver political unity there, for utterly failing on that point. I'm wondering what your reaction is to Senator Levin's com-

ment and whether you think Maliki has lost credibility.

And if I may, President Calderon—

Moderator. I just ask that you limit yourself to one question, please.

Q. I'm just wondering the assessment of the damage in your country, the hurricane damage.

President Bush. The way I view Iraq is from the security perspective and a political perspective. I made a decision to send more troops into Iraq to provide enough security for reconciliation to have a time to take place. It appears to me—and I certainly don't want to prejudge General David Petraeus's report back home—but there is some progress being made. In other words, one aspect of my decision is working.

There are two types of political reconciliation that can take place in a new democracy. One is from the top down, and one is from the bottom up. Clearly, the Iraqi Government has got to do more through its Parliament to help heal the wounds of years of—having lived years under a tyrant, see. It's not easy to go from a tyrannical society where the tyrant brutalized his people and created deep suspicions into one in which people are willing to work more closely together.

The Iraqi people made a great step toward reconciliation when they passed the most modern Constitution in the Middle East, and now their Government has got to perform. And I think there's a certain level of frustration with the leadership in general, inability to work—to come together to get, for example, an oil revenue law passed or Provincial elections.

On the other hand, I do want to point out that the Iraqi Parliament has met and passed 60 different pieces of legislation. They do have a budgeting process that is in the process of distributing a significant amount of money from the central Government to the Provincial governments, and the money they're distributing is oil revenues. So there may not be an oil revenue distribution law, but there's oil revenues being distributed.

There's a bottom-up reconciliation taking place. It's noticeable and tangible and real, where people at the grassroots level are sick and tired of the violence, sick and tired of the radicalism, and they want a better life.

And they're beginning to reject the extremists that have the desire to have a safe haven, for example, from which to launch further attacks on America. In other words, there's a process taking place. And the fundamental question is, will the Government respond to the demands of the people? And if the Government doesn't demand—respond to the demands of the people, they will replace the Government. That's up to the Iraqis to make that decision, not American politicians. The Iraqis will decide. They have decided they want a constitution; they have elected members to their Parliament; and they will make the decisions, just like democracies do.

And the question that we have to face in America is, is it worth it? Does it matter whether or not this young democracy survives? Is it in our national interests that this difficult experiment with democracy in the Middle East work? And I've come to the conclusion that it is. It's in our interests because a failed Iraq could easily yield a safe haven from which the extremists and radicals who once attacked us could attack us again. A failed Iraq would become a recruiting tool for the very same people that still want to attack America. And so it's in our interests.

I told you the other day at a press conference—I don't know if you were there or not—but if you don't believe it's in American interests to be there, you won't find any political reconciliation that is worth defending. If you do think it's in our interests, our security interests, then you'll be able to see political reconciliation taking place, some at the top and some at the bottom.

Now, Ambassador Crocker and General Petraeus will be coming back to brief the Congress in about a month's time, and I'm looking forward to hearing their briefing. And I would hope that Members of Congress from both political parties listen very carefully to the report they bring back, as we all make decisions about what's best for our national security in regards to this one theater in the war against the extremists and radicals.

President Calderon. What I can tell you, as you are well aware, Hurricane Dean touched down in Mexico north of Chetumal, which is the State of Quintana Roo, which is on the borders with Belize, with winds of 250 and gusts of winds beyond 350 k. It was

a category 5 hurricane; that is the most dangerous. And the initial reports I have, the most important is, until today, but I've not discarded it, but there has been no loss of human life. We still have to know what happened in the more isolated communities in that area.

Our authorities are all over that area, the civil protection area. People are there who are experts in dealing with hurricane matters. There was a power outage to Chetumal, but we have checked with the energy authorities of the Federal level, that power outage will be repaired in the coming hours, and possibly it is.

The hurricane, fortunately, did not go through the main tourist areas—Cancun, Riviera Maya. And the daily routine activities in those cities are being reestablished. And they had major flooding or incoming tidal waves, shall we say. But everything has recovered.

I went over the more poor Mayan areas, and I have a great deal of concern for the housing and the lack of services in that general area for the indigenous people there. And that will be the main area of concern for us and activities.

It is now going to Campeche, and we have other concerns, insofar as that is concerned. We have logistical support of the resistance or the maintenance of electrical lines that provide energy throughout the Yucatan Peninsula. We have—in Merida, we have hydroelectric plants that can come in on an emergency.

The layout of the Campeche State, which is a very low level—it is almost at sea level. And there could be a wave increase in height in the tide that may bring about some flooding and might create more difficulties that will be more difficult to resolve.

We are then awaiting that Hurricane Dean will enter the Campeche area, where the main oil production occurs in Mexico. We have ordered the suspension of oil production. Almost 20,000 workers have been taken away from the platforms, and there's about two and a half million oil barrels have been lost until now. But we have been able to save lives. And later again, the Hurricane Dean

will go into Veracruz, and this will create different problems to those of the Yucatan Peninsula, that is, the increase of the tidal bore up the rivers and other aspects to the north of Veracruz. Fortunately, Hurricane Dean was a category 5 but is now a category 3 and is about to drop into category 2. Our fear is that it will regain strength once it enters the Gulf of Mexico after Campeche.

But we are ready. The teams are ready. The hydroelectric power is being restored. And there has not been major material damage in the major touristic areas that have been hit by other hurricanes. That is what I know today.

Moderator. I'd like to remind you one more time that it's one question per reporter.

Northwest Passage

Q. President Bush and Mr. Harper, we know the differences between the two countries insofar as the Northwest Passage is concerned. We heard the former Ambassador, Paul Cellucci, that it would be in the best interests of security for the United States to recognize this passage as a Canadian waterway. So I would like to hear your comments, from both of you. Failing which, there is if not a way—could we consider to hear to what extent you would be willing to consider the Northwest Passage to become an international waterway.

Prime Minister Harper. I shall reply, to start off with. I did hear the comments of the former Ambassador Paul Cellucci. We also know that there are certain differences of opinion vis-a-vis this passage between our two nations. But quite honestly, Canada's position is that we intend to strengthen our sovereignty in the Arctic area, not only military but economic, social, environmental, and others.

The former agreements of President Reagan and Prime Minister Mulroney in the eighties—Canada and the United States did resolve their differences in this area.

[Prime Minister Harper continued in English.]

—the statement by former Ambassador Cellucci. Canada, as you know, is fully committed to strengthening its Arctic sovereignty on every level, not just military but economic,

social, environmental, any other method, any other means.

Canada and the U.S. do have differences on certain aspects of the Northwest Passage. At the same time, since the agreements of Prime Minister Mulroney and former President Reagan in the late 1980s, Canada and the United States have been able to manage these differences, and we think we'll be able to continue to do that.

President Bush. Yes, we'll manage the differences—because there are differences on the Northwest Passage. We believe it's an international passageway. Having said that, the United States does not question Canadian sovereignty over its Arctic islands, and the United States supports Canadian investments that have been made to exercise its sovereignty.

Moderator. We will continue with Roberto Gonzalez, *diario Uno Mas Uno*.

Stock Markets/National Economies

Q. Good afternoon. This question is to the three leaders. The stock exchange markets—the stock markets have gone through a severe crisis in recent weeks. How close are we to a stock exchange crash, and what measures have you taken so that it does not affect the real economy?

So when you will be presenting your first report, there's an opposition party that wants to prevent this—what is the outlook in your view? What's the outlook? And do you trust—do you believe that the opposition will accept your invitation for a dialog?

President Calderon. Well, to answer the first question, there's the financial problem, which is quite delicate in several markets. What I can tell you in relation to the case of Mexico, fortunately, our financial system has been solid enough to resist these critical times. I know that many central banks in several parts of the world, the European Union, the Federal Reserve in the U.S., and other central banks, have applied considerable resources in order to bring liquidity to their financial and banking systems.

Now, fortunately, in the case of Mexico, this has not been necessary. The financial system and the banking system is very solid. It took a lot of work, a lot of money to have

such a solid system that would resist situations like this, but fortunately, it has not required the support of liquidity from the Central Bank of Mexico.

Currently, the Mexican stock exchange has adjusted fixed income values. This is the case throughout the world. However, the Mexican stock exchange was one of the five that actually had an increase in its value throughout the world last year, over 50 percent. And obviously, the reduction that we're seeing is somehow or another a form of a correction which will actually improve the health of the financial markets in Mexico.

Could it have an impact in the real economy? Well, that depends on the scope of the situation, how it affects the markets, particularly the North American markets, which affects us most. My belief is that the situation is beginning to stabilize. And it will depend on the impact that it might have on the growth of the U.S., which, as you know, Mexico depends on this growth, on the U.S. growth.

Now, in relation to the second subject, the second issue, I have invited legislators. I'm a democrat that believes in the basic ideas and that believes in constructing dialog, and this is what I'm seeking in Congress, constructive dialog. Unfortunately, I still haven't received a positive answer from this—in relation to this invitation, but I believe, I trust that in the future, there will be greater willingness to talk about issues of concern for all Mexicans.

I know it's another system, Canada is, but Prime Minister Harper has to talk to his Parliament just about every day, every week. And I think—I would say that we would—I would very much like to have an institutional way in Mexico so that we're able to work and to talk about what we agree with and what we don't agree with in our country. I'll be willing to talk to anybody that wants to talk to me, particularly within Congress.

Now, in relation to the attitude of the PRD or other members of that party, I respect them, and of course, I appeal to the sense of responsibility towards the country. And I hope that maturity will prevail and common sense too. So the only thing that will be lost with this is that anybody that breaks the basic laws of our institutional life—let's say that

citizens know very well and recognize the maturity and the responsibility of political parties, and the people of our country are able to punish these attitudes too.

Prime Minister Harper. Our monetary and financial systems that monitor it are following it closely. But naturally, there are certain differences in their assets and liabilities, and some of the major corporations will have drops in their stocks. That is the normal course. But I can assure you that the capital situation of our major corporations, our financial institutions, of our individual persons are very strong.

[Prime Minister Harper continued in English.]

Our economic and financial institutions that are responsible for watching these markets are monitoring them closely. At the same time, just to remind people, it's normal for the price of assets of various securities or companies or whatever to go up and down in the marketplace. It's not unusual. I can assure you that the position of Canadian financial sector, in particular our banks, Canadian companies in general, and the household sector, our capital positions are very strong.

President Bush. The fundamentals of the U.S. economy are strong. Inflation is down; interest rates are low; the employment picture is strong; exports are up. We grew at over 3 percent in the second quarter. The fundamental question is, is there enough liquidity in our system as people readjust risk? And the answer is, yes, there is.

Moderator. Bret Baier, FOX News.

Canada-Mexico-U.S. Trade Relations

Q. Thank you. As you three leaders meet here, there are a growing number of people in each of your countries who have expressed concern about the Security and Prosperity Partnership. This is addressed to all three of you. Can you say today that this is not a prelude to a North American union, similar to a European Union? Are there plans to build some kind of superhighway connecting all three countries? And do you believe all of these theories about a possible erosion of national identity stem from a lack of transparency from this partnership?

Prime Minister Harper. Thank you for—well, let me begin. And I guess I've read some things from my opposition in Canada—I'm not sure these are generally expressed concerns, but a couple of my opposition leaders have speculated on massive water diversions and superhighways to the continent—maybe interplanetary, I'm not sure, as well. [Laughter] I even—there were reports of a former Prime Minister lurking in the hallways. I have yet to see him.

Look, we have an enormous trading commercial relationship. It's important that the leaders of that trading relationship get together periodically, have discussions, just as it's important at every level—ministerial level, official level—that they're getting together and talking and making sure they're working out problems.

You know, we had some business leaders in front of us today. One in particular said, you know, the rules for jelly beans—he manufactures jelly beans—the rules for jelly bean contents are different in Canada and the United States. They have to maintain two separate inventories. Is the sovereignty of Canada going to fall apart if we standardize the jelly bean? I don't think so. Maybe Mr. Dion thinks so, but I don't think so.

So these are pragmatic, practical discussions. In fact, it was my predecessor in the Liberal Party who initiated them. And ultimately, of course, for the decisions, we're responsible to our respective populations. We're a democratic system and, as President Calderon mentioned, I have to listen to that practical input every single day in Parliament.

President Calderon. Well, in fact, I'll be happy with one step in Mexicali and one in Tijuana. In actual fact, there are several myths about this meeting, some more jovial, funnier than others. But what we are trying to do is simply to meet, talk about our common problems, and see what we can do in practical terms in order to improve the lives of our people. Whether it's to standardize the parameters for chocolates or medicines, I think these are commonsense things. And moreover, I think—and I'll tell you this very clearly—I think that as a region, we are losing competitiveness in comparison with other regions in the world.

And it's not a question of customs unions, let alone having an integration that would actually encroach on the sovereignty and culture and resources of each country. We simply have to take advantage of this opportunity of being neighbors and allies in order to generate prosperity and security for our people. And that is the purpose of these meetings.

Now let me tell you that, at times, I would even like to work faster, review more issues, but we have to be very patient. And something that we did talk about also, which is part of my responsibility or our responsibilities as leaders, is to talk to the people and tell them why it's important to have better trading rules; why it's important not to have so many barriers between ourselves; why is it important to resolve issues such as immigration, investment, because that could actually improve the quality of life for our people. It could mean the Mexican consumers could have better products, Canadian products, U.S. products and—well, Mexican products also—because there would be more investment in our country, which requires thousands and thousands of jobs in order to resolve the problems of the people. And that happens when there's investment, and there's only investment when there is competitiveness. And we do have a way to go in that regard.

President Bush. We represent three great nations. We each respect each other's sovereignty. You know, there are some who would like to frighten our fellow citizens into believing that relations between us are harmful for our respective peoples. I just believe they're wrong. I believe it's in our interest to trade; I believe it's in our interest to dialog; I believe it's in our interest to work out common problems for the good of our people.

And I'm amused by some of the speculation, some of the old—you can call them political scare tactics. If you've been in politics as long as I have, you get used to that kind of technique, where you lay out a conspiracy and then force people to try to prove it doesn't exist. And that's just the way some people operate. I'm here representing my nation. I feel strongly that the United States is a force for good, and that I feel strongly that by working with our neighbors, we can be a stronger force for good.

And so I appreciate that question. I'm amused by the difference between what actually takes place in the meetings and what some are trying to say takes place. It's quite comical, actually, when you realize the difference between reality and what some people are talking on TV about.

Prime Minister Harper. Might I add, in French, I did not know that there were these major plots that were mentioned by the head of the opposition, Mr. Martin, a Liberal Prime Minister, who initiated these discussions, I believe, for Mr. Dion. It is a rather regressive step backwards to this whole question of our NAFTA discussions and SPP.

Canada's Role in Afghanistan

Q. My question is for President Bush. Mr. President, it's become increasingly likely that Canada will withdraw from its current combat role in southern Afghanistan in February of 2009. Many Canadians, including politicians of different political stripes, have suggested that Canada's military has done its job in the country, that it's played its part, and it would be time to go home then. I'd like to ask you if you believe that Canada has done its job and has fulfilled its duties.

President Bush. I believe Canada has done a fabulous job in Afghanistan. And I thank the people of Canada, but more importantly, the people of Afghanistan thank the people of Canada.

Canadian—the Canadian people sent some of your finest into harm's way to enable a young democracy to not only survive but thrive. And it's been an important contribution in this global struggle against extremists. We're in an ideological struggle against people who use murder and death to achieve political objectives, and the fundamental question is, will free nations help young democracies survive in the face of this threat? And Canada has performed brilliantly. And I thank the mothers and fathers or sons and daughters of those who lost their life in this—for the sake of freedom and peace for the ultimate sacrifice they paid.

Secondly, the Canadian contribution is more than just combat. The Canadian contribution is to help build institutions for a democracy to survive. So the contribution has been vast, and it's been robust. And this Gov-

ernment, along with its Parliament, will make decisions what's best for the Canadian people and the people of Afghanistan.

The United States is firmly committed to Afghanistan. We view this as a part of the war against the extremists and radicals. We view this as a significant portion of the ideological struggle, and we believe that when democracy prevails in Afghanistan, it will be a major blow toward those who want to impose a totalitarian view on others.

We believe, for example, it's important for Afghan girls to get a good education. I know the Canadian people feel the same way. We believe that it's important for women to have rights and to serve in the Parliament. We believe peace is achieved when forms of government give people an opportunity to express themselves in a peaceful way in society. That's what we believe. And one reason we have that strong belief is, we believe in the universality of liberty. We don't believe freedom is just confined to our neighborhood; we believe freedom is universal in its application. That's what we believe. We believe people want to be free, and if given a chance, they will exercise what is necessary to be free, and that freedom yields peace.

I'm giving a speech tomorrow where I'm going to talk about our engagement in Asia and how Asia has been transformed because of liberty. A place where Canadians and U.S. soldiers died in large numbers is now a place of peace and prosperity, where governments evolve in their own—representing their own traditions and history, but nevertheless evolved in a way with liberty as its basis.

And the question we're all confronted with—who live in comfortable societies—is it worth it for our own security to help others realize the blessings of freedom? And my decision is, absolutely, it is. I think it's the calling of the 21st century. I think it's the calling of history. And I appreciate the strong commitment that this Government and the Canadian people have made toward writing the first chapter of what will be laying the foundation of peace throughout the 21st century.

Prime Minister Harper. Might I say that our troops are there. Parliament will make its own decision on the extension of this mission. But at the same time, you the Canadians can be extremely proud of the work

done by our troops, our soldiers, our diplomats, our agents that are there working to develop the country, working for one of the peoples that are the poorest in the world. In Kandahar, we have given the possibility to men, women, and children to have some freedom and some safety and security that we have here in Canada.

I note the passing away—the dying of the soldier Longtin. And his brethren, his comrades are there to uphold those same values and carry on—[inaudible]—life to help their brothers and sisters in countries abroad.

[Prime Minister Harper continued in English.]

To repeat that, I think we can all be very proud of the work that Canadian troops are doing in Afghanistan. Parliament will make its decision in due course whether it wants to prolong the mission. But I think our difference there—our position there, our presence there has made a real difference in giving just a tiny bit of the freedom, the opportunity, and the security that we have as Canadians, that we take for granted as Canadians.

I note the death of, obviously, of a Canadian soldier—Longtin I think was the name. We are very fortunate we have a volunteer army, very fortunate to have men and women who put on the uniform willing to defend our values and also improve the lives of their fellow human beings and do so at tremendous personal risk for themselves. And I think we should all appreciate that.

Moderator. We have time for one last question—[inaudible].

Narcotics and Drug Trafficking

Q. Good afternoon, President Bush and Prime Minister. And I thought that this summit would be the—would—actually Plan Mexico would come out of this, the combination of three governments to combat the effects of drug trafficking. What is the obstacle? What is causing the delay? Why don't the societies of each country know what this plan is about? And can you actually confirm the support of the United States to Mexico? Apparently it will increase tenfold, and the levels will be similar to Colombia. We hear very often that the United States wants to take part in this situation against drugs, this

war on drugs, and we see it very clearly in Mexico. Now, what is it all about? Could you tell us?

President Bush. Man! [Laughter] *Hom-bre!* [Laughter] We discussed a common strategy to deal with a common problem, and that is narcotrafficking and violence on our border. First, let me say that in order to develop an effective, common strategy, there needs to be serious consultations between our respective governments. It's one thing to say, we're interested in working together; it's another thing to develop a package on both sides of the border that will be effective in dealing with the problem. That's what our people expect us to do. They expect us to see a problem and to develop an effective strategy to deal with that problem.

President Calderon and I met in Mexico, and we had a serious discussion to get this initiative on the table. This is an interim meeting, a meeting for us to make sure that the strategy that's being developed is—will be effective. And so we reviewed where we are in the process.

The United States is committed to this joint strategy to deal with a joint problem. I would not be committed to dealing with this if I wasn't convinced that President Calderon had the will and the desire to protect his people from narcotraffickers. He has shown great leadership and great strength of character, which gives me good confidence that the plan we'll develop will be effective. And the fundamental question is, what can we do together to make sure that the common strategy works? And that's where we are in the discussions right now.

There's all kinds of speculation about the size of the package, this, that, and the other. All I can tell you is, the package, when it's developed, will be robust enough to achieve a common objective, which is less violence on both sides of the border and to deal with narcotrafficking. And we both have responsibilities. And that's what the package is entitled to develop. It's to develop how do we share our joint responsibilities.

It's in our interests that this program go forward. You mentioned Plan Colombia; this is not like Plan Colombia. This is different from Plan Colombia. This is a plan that says, we've got an issue on our own border. We

share a border, and therefore, it's a joint program that will mean—that won't mean U.S. armed presence in your country. Mexico is plenty capable of handling the problem. And the question is, is there any way for us to help strengthen the effort? And so that's what we're studying.

And I can't give you a definitive moment when the plan will be ready, but we're working hard to get a plan ready. And it's a plan that, once it's proposed and out there, I strongly urge the United States Congress to support. It's in our interests, it's in the U.S. interests that we get this issue solved.

President Calderon. Thank you, President Bush, for your comments and also for the question, because this allows us to emphasize the fact that—well, the President has already said it's a common strategy to combat, in a coordinated way, a common problem. Drug trafficking and violence that's associated to drug trafficking, which is particularly evidenced on the border between the U.S. and Mexico, cannot be dealt with in an isolated way. It has to be confronted by, dealt with by the people and by the governments that are directly affected by this scourge. And it requires a variety, multiplicity of actions carried out by society, by governments, in other words, enforcement activities against criminals, preventive activities, protective activities, prevention and treatment of addictions with the young.

Now, I agree with President Bush; it's very important to reduce—well, to have clear policies to reduce the consumption patterns in terms of drugs, including Mexico, because this is a main cause of the problem that we're facing.

Now, last week, for example, last week, three Federal policemen were murdered in Mexico—Mexican policemen, that is—and they were tortured in a very cowardly way. And those Mexican policemen are fully committed towards the Government to free the young Mexicans from drugs and to free Mexican society from slavery on the part of organized crime based on money and technology. And I don't want any—not one single Mexican policeman to have a logistical disadvantage when facing these criminals. I don't want my Government to be responsible for any omission, any legal omission within a

legal framework that would have been directed towards defeating these criminals.

So this is a common strategy because it means that the U.S. will do its part and Mexico will do its part. Now, what do we want the U.S. to do—to carry out—have greater surveillance along the border. We are seeing high-powered weapons into Mexico, and we know that we can do much more than we're doing at this point in time. I know that drugs go from Mexico to the U.S. Both of us have to agree so that there is surveillance, efficient surveillance, that is, on both sides of the border. We are facing mafias that are working on both sides of the border. That is quite clear to us. And I think that we will not be acting in an efficient way as long as they have a coordinated strategy and we don't. In other words, they're coordinated on both sides of the border; we are not.

So I would like to introduce into the—well, we have to be respectful of our legislation, our respective legislations. I would want to create a strategy in order to defeat this scourge. And that requires a variety of instruments, strategies, exchange of intelligence, exchange of technology. It also means that we have to keep in mind issues of sovereignty. I told President Bush, though, we did not want to have U.S. soldiers working in our country, as has happened in other countries. I know that that's typical, of course. But we've said this very clearly, we put forth this very clearly, and in the framework of our own legislations, we will find a way out.

And I would also wonder what the men and women are thinking, now those who are suffering from crime, how scared are they, what's the degree of their fear that has led these groups to be so powerful, to grow so much. And they've essentially taken power in their area of operation. We have developed an aggressive policy to combat organized crime, and I haven't hesitated to use our forces to recover the areas. We've taken about 10,000 drug traffickers to jail, many weapons, 50-millimeter cannons, grenades capable of bringing down aircraft.

And I think—so I cannot send the Mexican policemen to combat this situation with their hands tied. So I have to answer to the Mexican people in order to preserve their security,

and I will do so without abusing human rights and without distorting Mexican legislation. I will respect Mexican legislation fully. But I am calling upon my neighbor in order to act in a coordinated way, because it's a situation we both have to face. It's a problem that affects two countries, and only together will we be able to solve it.

There are several causes. It involves several joint responsibilities. And the action, therefore, has to be shared, within the legal framework. What's the scope of this strategy? I cannot tell you now; we cannot tell you now. We're just exchanging assessments, needs, assessing the situation and making it clear what the rules are for each country.

We will have a strategy—I think it's possible, but we will not be able to come up with it until we finish our discussions and negotiations, which, by nature, are very complex. But in the end, that is what we're trying to combat. And it's a problem that's affecting Mexican citizens as well as U.S. nationals.

Prime Minister Harper. This is an example. We are all sovereign nations, that is quite true, but we are not isolated problems according to our own sovereignty. We have shared problems—for example, drug trafficking. This is a good example. It begins in a country in the Americas or in the Caribbean, but the consequences are seen in the streets in Canada. And we have to discuss these problems. We have to compare our strategies, and sometimes we have to work hand in hand.

[Prime Minister Harper continued in English.]

Once again, this is a perfect example of why we meet. We're sovereign countries, but problems are not—problems don't limit themselves to the boundaries of our countries. Drug trafficking is a perfect example. These problems may originate in some of the countries of Latin America or the Caribbean, but the problems are felt on the streets and the communities of Canada. And that's why we meet to discuss; that's why we meet to compare strategies; that's why we, from time to time, have to engage in shared action.

Let me just say one other thing, if I can, about the drug trade, because indirect reference was made to Colombia. Canada has

undertaken negotiations of a trade agreement with Colombia. We have a Government in Colombia that wants to share in the benefits of free and open markets. We don't need to have a trade agreement to have a drug trade with Colombia. The drug traffickers aren't going to wait for our Parliaments or our Congresses to pass a trade agreement in order to have a drug trade. But if we want to have other opportunities for the people of Colombia and mutual development and shared prosperity, we've got to move forward on these kinds of initiatives. And that's why the Government of Canada is committed to working with Colombia and getting a trade deal.

Moderator. Thank you very much. This brings an end to the press conference.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:57 a.m. at the Fairmont Le Chateau Montebello. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq. Prime Minister Harper referred to former Prime Ministers M. Brian Mulroney and Paul Martin of Canada; Stephane Dion, leader, Liberal Party of Canada; and Pvt. Simon Longtin, Canadian Forces, who was killed in Afghanistan on August 19. A reporter referred to Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq. Portions of Prime Minister Harper's remarks were in French, and an English translation was provided. President Calderon spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. Some reporters spoke in French and Spanish, and their remarks were translated by interpreters.

Joint Statement by President George W. Bush, Prime Minister Stephen Harper of Canada, and President Felipe de Jesus Calderon Hinojosa of Mexico: The Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America

August 21, 2007

Montebello, Quebec, Canada

We, the leaders of Canada, Mexico and the United States, have met in Montebello to discuss the opportunities and challenges facing North America and to establish priorities for our further collaboration. As neighbours, we share a commitment to ensure North America remains a safe, secure and

economically dynamic region, and a competitive player in global markets. We also discussed opportunities to cooperate globally and within our own hemisphere. The values and principles we share, in particular democracy, the rule of law and respect for individual rights and freedoms, underpin our efforts in building a more prosperous and secure region.

The Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America (SPP), launched in 2005, is aimed at jointly achieving tangible results across a spectrum of areas, while respecting each nation's sovereignty. On February 23, 2007, our ministers responsible for the SPP met in Ottawa to review progress and discuss our further cooperation. Our ministers of industry and commerce, foreign affairs, security, environment, energy, health, transportation and trade have also met in recent months, reflecting our deepening dialogue within North America. They have made progress in advancing the priorities we identified at our 2006 meeting in Cancun. In particular, our three countries have completed:

- a *North American Plan for Avian and Pandemic Influenza*;
- a *Regulatory Cooperation Framework*;
- an *Intellectual Property Action Strategy*; and
- a *Trilateral Agreement for Cooperation in Energy Science and Technology*.

In Montebello, we have discussed how we can build on our progress to date to further improve North America's position in the world. The North American Competitiveness Council (NACC), announced last year in Cancun, has provided us with thoughtful recommendations on how we could strengthen the competitive platform for businesses. We welcome the NACC's recommendations, including its readiness to be part of the solution, and we look forward to continuing our dialogue with the NACC in furthering North America's competitiveness. We ask that our ministers continue to seek input from interested parties in determining future priorities for increasing the security, prosperity and quality of life in North America. In this, the third year of the SPP, we direct our ministers to review the SPP process, focus on priorities and deliver results.

We ask our ministers to focus their collaboration in five priority areas for the next year:

Enhancing the Global Competitiveness of North America

The North American Free Trade Agreement has been a tremendous mutual success in strengthening our economies and in enhancing the competitiveness of North America. In a rapidly changing global economy, we must build on NAFTA's success and reduce unnecessary trade barriers to ensure North America remains a competitive and a dynamic place to do business. To this end, the Regulatory Cooperation Framework will enable us to develop regulatory approaches that are compatible across our borders, while maintaining high standards of health, safety and environmental protection. In the coming year, we ask our ministers to consider work in areas, such as the chemicals, automotive, transportation, and information and communications technology sectors. The Intellectual Property Action Strategy also gives us an invaluable tool for combating counterfeiting and piracy, which undermine innovation, harm economic development and can have negative public-health and safety implications. We also ask our ministers to implement the Strategy and take concrete steps to strengthen our ability to combat counterfeiting and piracy in North America.

We are strongly committed to advancing multilateral trade liberalization through a successful, comprehensive and ambitious conclusion to the WTO Doha Round of negotiations. We endorse the work of our trade ministers in Vancouver on June 13–14, 2007, to build on NAFTA's success and advance our shared interests in the Doha Round. We ask them to renew their efforts, working with their WTO colleagues, to achieve a balanced outcome that results in meaningful increases in trade in goods and services and improvements in global trading conditions.

Safe Food and Products

We will seek to strengthen the existing cooperation and mechanisms within the region, build on current standards and practices, and work with our trading partners outside North

America using a scientific risk-based approach to identify and stop unsafe food and products before they enter our countries. These efforts could include: working with authorities to strengthen inspection and certification in exporting countries; identifying best practices by importers in selecting foreign manufacturers and inspecting goods either before export or before distribution; and reviewing our own existing authorities and practices to enhance national, regional and local coordination. Our governments will continue to address the safety of food and products imported into North America, while facilitating the significant trade in these products that our countries already have and without imposing unnecessary barriers to trade.

Sustainable Energy and the Environment

The further development of clean and sustainable energy is critical to reduce the effects of climate change and air pollution, while fuelling the North American economy. We support an integrated approach to climate change, energy security and economic development, and support the development and deployment of clean energy technologies. Cooperation among our major economies on a range of policy tools and sectoral approaches will advance these objectives. In particular, we ask our ministers to explore ways to cooperate on national auto fuel efficiency standards. We also ask our ministers to develop projects under the newly signed energy science and technology agreement, cooperate on moving new technologies to the marketplace and collaborate on energy efficiency.

Smart and Secure Borders

Our borders must be both efficient and secure if we are to continue to enhance prosperity, security and quality of life in North America. Effective border strategies minimize security risks, while facilitating the efficient and safe movement of goods, services and people, as trade and cross-border travel increase in North America. These strategies will draw on risk-based border management, innovative use of new technologies, coordinated border infrastructure development, and by moving, where possible, inspection

and screening away from the land border. It is sometimes best to screen goods and travellers prior to entry into North America. We ask our ministers to develop mutually acceptable inspection protocols to detect threats to our security, such as from incoming travellers during a pandemic and from radiological devices on general aviation. We also ask our ministers to further cooperate in law enforcement, screening and facilitation of legitimate trade and travellers across our borders.

Emergency Management and Preparedness

The consequences of catastrophic events often transcend national borders. Preparation and planning can mitigate the impact of such events on people and our economies. Much work has been undertaken between our countries at national, sub-national and local levels to develop common approaches for responding to major incidents. We ask our ministers to continue this work and to address any obstacles preventing critical equipment, supplies and personnel from being deployed expeditiously to those parts of North America where they are needed. We also ask them to develop procedures for managing the movement of goods and people across our shared borders during and following an emergency.

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The SPP is focussed on the well-being of North America, but we also share a desire to work together to advance prosperity, security and stability globally. In Montebello, therefore, we also discussed opportunities to cooperate globally and within our own hemisphere. We ask foreign ministers to enhance dialogue and cooperation in North America, as well as in the hemisphere in such areas as emergency management and preparedness, and disaster risk reduction. Our shared values will continue to guide our collaboration as continental neighbours and global allies in the future.

Prime Minister Harper and President Calderon were pleased to accept the proposal of President Bush for the United States to host the next meeting of North American leaders in 2008.

SECURITY AND PROSPERITY PARTNERSHIP OF NORTH AMERICA: NEXT STEPS

We, the leaders of North America, have asked our ministers to pursue the following priority activities and ask them to report to us on their progress in one year:

Enhancing the Global Competitiveness of North America

Global markets are changing, with dynamic new players becoming more competitive and innovative. More and more firms are relying on inputs from a wide range of international sources for their manufacturing and production processes. In this highly competitive environment, compatible regulations and standards enable us to protect health, safety and the environment, as well as to facilitate trade in goods and services across our borders. Strong copyright and piracy protection also encourage entrepreneurship and protect our citizens. Over the coming year, we ask our ministers to strengthen North America as a platform for global success and to achieve progress on regulatory cooperation and the protection of intellectual property. In particular, we ask our ministers to implement:

The Regulatory Cooperation Framework announced today by:

- strengthening regulatory cooperation, streamlining regulations and processes, encouraging compatibility of regulations and eliminating redundant testing and certification requirements while maintaining high standards of health, safety and environmental protection;
- considering measures and initiatives in areas such as the chemical, automotive, transportation, and information and communication technology sectors; and
- undertaking trilateral cooperation to accelerate and strengthen our national and regional risk-based chemical assessment and management efforts.

The Intellectual Property Action Strategy released today by:

- developing collaborative measures to improve the detection and deterrence of counterfeiting and piracy, expanding public awareness of the importance of intellectual property to our economies

and for consumer health and safety, and better measuring the scope and magnitude of counterfeiting and piracy in North America; and

- taking steps such as developing best practices for enforcement and sharing information and intelligence on border enforcement techniques.

We also endorse our ministers' plans to

- develop an economic work plan to respond to the ever increasing pressures on North American competitiveness and to facilitate trade in specific sectors to foster stronger North American value chains; and
- conduct an analysis of the free trade agreements that each country has negotiated subsequent to the NAFTA, beginning with those in the western hemisphere, including opportunities for innovative provisions on rules of origin.

Safe Food and Products

In order to promote the safety of imported products that enter North America and to facilitate trade, we ask ministers to:

- strengthen existing mechanisms within the region and the exchange information on import-safety issues, with the objective of enhancing the safety of food and products before they enter our countries; and
- identify and share with their SPP counterparts the best practices used by importing companies in each country to secure their supply chains and ensure that quality and safety are built into products before they are exported.

Sustainable Energy and the Environment

Balancing our energy requirements with the stewardship of our environment is one of the greatest challenges of our time. We need to enhance our research into new and clean technologies, facilitate the deployment of these technologies to the market, and improve our energy efficiency. We ask our ministers to advance work over the next year to:

- identify and pursue cooperative energy science and technology activities under the newly signed Trilateral Agreement for Cooperation in Energy and Science Technology;

- reduce barriers to the deployment of new and clean technologies;
- continue with efforts to align energy efficiency standards in key products and standby power consumption;
- cooperate for our mutual benefit in the development of biofuels, vehicle fuel efficiency technologies and technologies to reduce emissions; and
- share information and experience and cooperate in efforts to achieve comparable emission measurement, reporting and verification, in order to develop publicly available national emissions inventories. This exchange would include sharing of emissions information on, for example, NO_x, SO_x, CO₂, VOCs, NH₃, Hg and particulates.
- develop mutually acceptable approaches to screening people during a pandemic;
- pursue, according to our respective laws, new, innovative and interoperable law enforcement models that promote seamless operations at the border, such as the Canada-US International Maritime Security Operations, to better protect our citizens from criminal and terrorist threats;
- improve and expand existing radio communications available to law enforcement agencies working on border security and cross-border law enforcement;
- work with stakeholders to identify ways to further enhance benefits of trusted traveller programs (NEXUS, FAST and SENTRI), including through expanding and streamlining application processing, further program integration and coordinated infrastructure investments;
- alleviate bottlenecks at the US-Mexico border, facilitate the legitimate flow of trade and people, and increase border security to address specific border issues related to congestion, current and future infrastructure needs, customs cooperation, stakeholder outreach and technology; and
- Canada and the US will maintain a high priority on the development of enhanced capacity of the border crossing infrastructure in the Detroit-Windsor region, the world's busiest land crossing.

Smart and Secure Borders

Our three countries have a long history of cooperative border management, predicated on the understanding that our prosperity and security depend on borders that operate efficiently and effectively under all circumstances. In some cases, the best time to screen travellers and commerce is before they enter North America. Coordinated, mutually acceptable procedures for detecting threats far from our borders are a means to do this. Recognizing differences in legal frameworks and policies, and noting the positive effect on our common security of current information sharing initiatives, we will seek to enhance our cooperation in this respect.

We ask ministers to continue to pursue measures to facilitate the safe and secure movement of trade and travellers across our borders and, in particular, to:

- expedite air transportation through the development of comparable protocols and procedures to eliminate duplicate screening for baggage placed on a connecting flight in North America, and for inbound and outbound air cargo shipments;
- develop mutually acceptable approaches to screening for radiological and other similar threats, to include general aviation pathways, and to continue to undertake cooperative or joint research to manage such threats;

Emergency Management and Preparedness

Neighbours help each other in times of distress. Our governments have worked together to address how we might better prevent, prepare for, and respond to disasters—either natural or man-made—by developing a common approach to all aspects of emergency management. We ask our ministers to continue this work and specifically to:

- define, develop and coordinate appropriate responses to catastrophic incidents in North America; and
- develop bilateral and trilateral protocols and procedures through the Canada-

Mexico-United States Emergency Management Council to manage the movement of goods and people, including emergency responders, across our shared borders during and following an emergency, and to improve communications among governments and between governments and industry, particularly during times of increased threat.

THE SECURITY AND PROSPERITY PARTNERSHIP OF NORTH AMERICA: KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE MARCH 2006

Strengthening the Competitiveness of North America

- To lower costs for business, maximize trade and protect health, safety and the environment, our governments completed a trilateral **Regulatory Cooperation Framework**. The framework promotes information sharing among regulators and greater compatibility of regulations and regulatory processes.
- To enhance our common efforts to protect intellectual property rights, the three governments finalized an **Action Strategy to combat trademark counterfeiting and copyright piracy**.
- To strengthen our energy security, environmental protection and economic sustainability, our governments finalized a **Trilateral Agreement for Cooperation in Energy Science and Technology**.
- To increase trade among our three countries, our governments implemented changes to the **NAFTA rules of origin** by mid-2006 that covered approximately \$30 billion in annual trilateral trade. An additional set of changes, agreed to in 2007, will reduce export-related transaction costs for approximately \$100 billion in annual trilateral trade.
- To promote safety and the seamless flow of goods across our border, Canada and the United States have agreed to the **reciprocal recognition of containers** used for the transportation of dangerous goods.
- To enhance the introduction of new wireless services and technologies, Canada and the United States have **implemented a new process to expedite radio spectrum sharing arrangements for the border regions**. This ensures citizens have timely access to the latest wireless services, and public safety and national security authorities have the spectrum they need, when they need it.
- To **improve the compatibility and reliability of critically important wireless communications for public safety/first responders**, Mexico and the United States signed a protocol in August facilitating cross border communications.
- To **facilitate the trade of telecommunications equipment**, Canada and the United States recognized each other's testing and certification for telecommunications equipment. Mexico will have a process in place by the end of 2007 to mutually accept test reports from the US and Canada. This reduces production costs and shortens the time to bring new products to market.
- To modernize aviation relations and provide airlines with added flexibility to offer better choices and services, the United States and Canada signed and implemented the text of a **comprehensive Open-Skies air transport agreement** on March 12, 2007.
- To **increase border crossing efficiency** at the port of entry, the United States and Mexico announced synchronized, extended hours of operation at the Santa Teresa/San Jeronimo Port of Entry starting September 2007.
- As part of the North American Steel Strategy, North American governments launched a trilateral, publicly-available **North American Steel Trade Monitor website** presenting North American steel trade data on a consolidated basis.
- Mexico and the United States established a **bilateral Border Facilitation**

Working Group to advance in the areas of infrastructure, technology, coordination, and stakeholder outreach and engagement while ensuring high levels of security at our points of entry.

Improving the Safety and Security of our Citizens

- To better detect nuclear and radiological material at ports, the Mexican government has agreed to install **advanced radiological detection technology** at the ports of Lazaro Cardenas, Altamira, Manzanillo and Veracruz. About 92 percent of Mexico's maritime cargo passes through these ports.
- To improve surveillance at ports, Canada has completed the **installation of radiation detection equipment** in Montreal, Halifax and Deltaport in Vancouver which, when fully operational, will screen 100 percent of inbound containers.
- To **improve the security and predictability of travel documents**, Canada and the United States approved the *Recommended Standards for Secure Proof of Status and Nationality*.
- To **enhance and strengthen cargo security programs**, Canada and the United States [States] * initiated a five-year program to harmonize automated commercial information systems.

Protecting our Environment, Health and Quality of Life

- To detect, contain and control an avian influenza outbreak, and to mitigate the impacts of a possible human influenza pandemic in North America, our governments have finalized a **North American Plan for Avian and Pandemic Influenza**.
- To promote energy efficiency, our governments have **harmonized energy performance standards for key household appliances and consumer products**, such as freezers, refrigerators and room air conditioners.
- To **raise the health status of indigenous people**, Canada, Mexico and the

United States exchanged information and research on various indigenous health issues, including suicide prevention, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, diabetes and indigenous health systems.

- To benefit our environment and quality of life, Canada and the United States signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) aimed at **improving motor vehicle fuel efficiency**. The MoC will allow the two countries to benefit from each others knowledge and experience in the area of fuel efficiency.
- To protect the environment, enhance health of people and promote the competitiveness of the automotive industry, Mexico started a program to gradually increase, from 2006 to 2009, the **supply of low sulphur fuels** in all the country.
- To improve the **ecological health of our shared marine resources**, our governments continued to expand the North American Marine Protected Areas (MPA) Network. The Network will use our countries' marine protected areas in the development of a tri-national MPA-based monitoring program stretching from Baja to the Bering Strait.
- To **assure the safety of consumers and the security of our food and agriculture systems**, Canada, Mexico and the United States agreed to share current threat and vulnerability assessment methodology and information for the food and agriculture systems, including imported and exported foods of higher concern, then undertake joint threat and vulnerability assessments.
- To better inform our citizens and civil society and receive input on our collaborative efforts under the SPP framework, the governments of Mexico and Canada **hosted seminars with academics and specialists** on the three countries as part of an ongoing public policy consultation process regarding the future of North America.

* White House correction.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks Following a Briefing on the Interstate 35W Bridge Damage and Minnesota Floods in Minneapolis, Minnesota

August 21, 2007

I want to thank the Senators, the Congresspersons, the Governor, and the mayor for joining me and Secretary Peters and others in my administration. We're here to talk about two disasters. First we talked about the bridge that collapsed. I was here earlier, saw the collapse firsthand. I was impressed by the magnitude of the problem. It was—my heart was touched by the fact that people lost their lives.

Coming back here, I'm impressed by the spirit of cooperation that is taking place to solve the problem. The Federal Government, the State government, and the local government have worked very closely, on the one hand, to rescue the remains in a compassionate way. I appreciate our military divers who are so skilled—skilled at not only finding the bodies but skilled at helping a loved one deal with grief.

The question now is, how fast can we get the bridge built? Members of the Minnesota senatorial and congressional delegation did really good work at the end of the session, passed authorization for a significant chunk of money that would go to get this bridge up and running.

And so our job now is to cut through the bureaucracy, as best as possible, and get the people down here a new bridge. And that's what we've been discussing. The recovery is not complete, but pretty close to complete. The investigation as to why is ongoing. What the people of Minneapolis want to know is how fast can we get them a new bridge, and can it be modern, and can it accommodate future forms of transportation. I believe the answer to that question is yes. The spirit that caused the recovery to be well coordinated is the very same spirit that's going to cause this bridge to get rebuilt.

The Governor and others have briefed me on the floods in Congressman Walz's district.

These floods come suddenly. People wake up and find their lives turned upside down. Water comes charging through their communities and really kind of wrecks the infrastructure. But what I have found, and the Congressmen and Senators have found the same thing, you can't wreck the spirit of people.

The job of the Federal Government is to get help moving as quickly as possible. I just talked to the Governor, who has processed the final and the necessary paperwork so that a flood of help can come down—Tim—to get these people realizing somebody cares about them.

I understand rural America pretty well. Sometimes people in rural America wonder whether or not the people in the cities think about them. I appreciate you coming to brief me, because I want those folks to understand, the President thinks about it; the senators and the Governor have heard about it, and they care about it. There's help that's available. We'd love to get the small businesses up and running, maybe help to get some shelter down there for people. I'm looking forward to making sure that the right people show up here on the ground. Secretary Peters has been the right person to coordinate this effort for the bridge, and we'll get somebody down here in charge to give the people in your district some hope.

There's no doubt in my mind that when I come back to see the bridge open that these communities will be up and running too, and that State football championship team you were talking about—[laughter]—will be winning games again.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:53 p.m. in the Base Operations—Blue Room at the Minneapolis/St. Paul Air Reserve Station. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Tim Pawlenty of Minnesota; and Mayor R.T. Rybak of Minneapolis, MN. He also referred to Public Law 110–56, approved August 6. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Proclamation 8166—National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month, 2007

August 21, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

During National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month, we underscore our commitment to winning the battle against prostate cancer and raising awareness of the risk factors, prevention, and treatment of this disease.

All men can develop prostate cancer, yet studies have shown that risk increases with age. Although the exact cause of the disease is not yet known, factors that may affect the likelihood of developing prostate cancer include race, diet, general health, and family history. Because the chances of surviving prostate cancer may be higher when it is diagnosed and treated in its early stages, men should speak with their doctors about their risk and screening options.

America leads the world in medical research, and we are committed to continuing our progress in the search for a cure for prostate cancer. Through work at the National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Department of Defense, we are exploring the genetic, biochemical, environmental, and lifestyle factors that increase prostate cancer risk and lead to its development and progression. These and other efforts are helping improve our knowledge of the causes of this disease.

As we observe National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month, we recognize the strength and courage of the men battling prostate cancer and of those who love and support them. We also pay tribute to the medical professionals, the researchers, and all those whose tireless efforts are making a positive difference in the lives of those living with prostate cancer. All Americans can raise awareness and help fight this disease by talking with their friends and families about the risk of prostate cancer and the ways to prevent, detect, and treat it.

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 September 2007 as National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month. I call upon government officials, businesses, communities, health care professionals, educators, and the people of the United States to reaffirm our Nation's strong and ongoing commitment to the fight against prostate cancer.

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

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:50 a.m., August 22, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on August 23.

Proclamation 8167—National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month, 2007

August 21, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month provides an opportunity to underscore our commitment to stopping alcohol and drug abuse before it starts and to helping citizens in need overcome addiction and rebuild their lives.

Alcohol and drug addiction can ruin lives and devastate families. We must continue working toward a society in which our citizens can lead lives free from the influence of alcohol and drugs. Friends and family members can play a vital role in the fight and prevention of abuse by discussing the dangers and consequences with loved ones.

My Administration is dedicated to the battle against drug and alcohol addiction. We are expanding access to treatment and recovery support services through the Access to Recovery program. The Drug Enforcement Agency is helping stem the flow of illegal

drugs into the United States by targeting the production, distribution, and sale of methamphetamines and other precursor drugs. The Drug Free Communities Program helps our neighborhoods develop strategies to prevent substance abuse. First Lady Laura Bush also leads the Helping America's Youth program to help our Nation's young people make healthy choices throughout their lives and to encourage community and family-based approaches to the challenges and risks facing today's youth.

During National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month and throughout the year, we seek to raise awareness about the destructive cycle of addiction and work to provide assistance to those who suffer from substance abuse. This year's theme, "Join the Voices for Recovery: Saving Lives, Saving Dollars," encourages Americans to recognize the costs of substance use disorders and understand the benefits that treatment can bring to those individuals, their families, and communities. To find out more about how to help save lives from substance abuse, contribute to a culture of compassion, and create a healthy future for our country, citizens may visit recoverymonth.gov.

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 September 2007 as National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this month with the appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

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

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:52 a.m., August 23, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 22, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on August 24.

Proclamation 8168—Constitution Day and Citizenship Day, Constitution Week, 2007

August 21, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

On Constitution Day and Citizenship Day and during Constitution Week, we celebrate the anniversary of our Nation's Constitution and honor the Framers who created the landmark document that continues to guide our Nation.

In the summer of 1787, delegates convened in Philadelphia to create "a more perfect Union" and craft the document that is the foundation of our country. With great diligence, they worked to develop a framework that would balance authority and inherent freedoms, Federal interests and State powers, individual rights and national unity. On September 17th of the same year, the delegates signed the Constitution of the United States.

Today, every American shares in this legacy of liberty, and we are grateful for the courage, conviction, and sacrifice of all those who have helped preserve and uphold the principles of a free society. As we remember the enduring importance of the Constitution, we also recognize our responsibility as citizens to respect and defend the values of our founding and participate in the unfolding story of freedom.

In celebration of the signing of the Constitution and in recognition of the Americans who strive to uphold the duties and responsibilities of citizenship, the Congress, by joint resolution of February 29, 1952 (36 U.S.C. 106, as amended), designated September 17 as "Constitution Day and Citizenship Day," and by joint resolution of August 2, 1956 (36 U.S.C. 108, as amended), requested that the President proclaim the week beginning September 17 and ending September 23 of each year as "Constitution Week."

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim September 17, 2007, as Constitution Day and Citizenship Day, and September 17 through September 23, 2007,

as Constitution Week. I encourage Federal, State, and local officials, as well as leaders of civic, social, and educational organizations, to conduct ceremonies and programs that celebrate our Constitution and reaffirm our rights and responsibilities as citizens of our great Nation.

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

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:52 a.m., August 23, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 22, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on August 24.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Community Leaders in Riverside, Missouri

August 22, 2007

How is everybody doing? Thank you for joining me. I'm visiting with some of the area's finest citizens. We talked about businesses and opportunities and sports and culture. It's good to be with you. Thank you. I hope you leave here with the sense that I'm upbeat about the future of this country. I believe strongly we can do anything we put our minds to do.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:06 a.m. at the Corner Cafe.

Remarks at the Veterans of Foreign Wars National Convention in Kansas City, Missouri

August 22, 2007

Thank you all. Please be seated. It's good to be with you again. I understand you haven't had much of a problem attracting speakers. [*Laughter*]

I thank you for inviting me. I can understand why people want to come here. See, it's an honor to stand with the men and women of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The VFW is one of our Nation's finest organizations. You belong to an elite group of Americans. You belong to a group of people who have defended America overseas. You have fought in places from Normandy to Iwo Jima to Pusan to Khe Sahn to Kuwait to Somalia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq. You brought security to the American people. You brought hope to millions across the world.

As members of this proud organization, you are advocates for the rights of our military veterans, a model of community service, and a strong and important voice for a strong national defense. I thank you for your service. I thank you for what you've done for the United States of America.

I stand before you as a wartime President. I wish I didn't have to say that, but an enemy that attacked us on September the 11th, 2001, declared war on the United States of America. And war is what we're engaged in. The struggle has been called a clash of civilizations. In truth, it's a struggle for civilization. We fight for a free way of life against a new barbarism, an ideology whose followers have killed thousands on American soil and seek to kill again on even a greater scale.

We fight for the possibility that decent men and women across the broader Middle East can realize their destiny and raise up societies based on freedom and justice and personal dignity. And as long as I'm Commander in Chief, we will fight to win. I'm confident that we will prevail. I'm confident we'll prevail because we have the greatest force for human liberation the world has ever known, the men and women of the United States Armed Forces.

For those of you who wear the uniform, nothing makes me more proud to say that I am your Commander in Chief. Thank you for volunteering in the service of the United States of America.

Now I know some people doubt the universal appeal of liberty or worry that the Middle East isn't ready for it. Others believe that America's presence is destabilizing and that if the United States would just leave a place

like Iraq, those who kill our troops or target civilians would no longer threaten us. Today I'm going to address these arguments. I'm going to describe why helping the young democracies of the Middle East stand up to violent Islamic extremists is the only realistic path to a safer world for the American people. I'm going to try to provide some historical perspective to show there is a precedent for the hard and necessary work we're doing and why I have such confidence in the fact that we'll be successful.

Before I do so, I want to thank the national commander-in-chief of the VFW and his wife, Nancy. It's been a joy to work with Gary and the staff. As Gary said, "We don't necessarily agree a hundred percent of the time." I remember the old Lieutenant Governor of Texas, a Democrat, and I was a Republican Governor. He said, "Governor, if we agreed 100 percent of the time, one of us wouldn't be necessary." [Laughter]

But here's what we do agree on: We agree our veterans deserve the full support of the United States Government. We agree that those who—[applause]. That's why in this budget I submitted there's \$87 billion for the veterans. It's the highest level of support ever for the veterans in American history. We agree that health care for our veterans is a top priority, and that's why we've increased health care spending for our veterans by 83 percent since I was sworn in as your President. We agree that a troop coming out of Iraq or Afghanistan deserves the best health care, not only as an active duty citizen but as a military guy, but as—also as a veteran—and you're going to get the best health care we can possibly provide. We agree our homeless vets ought to have shelter, and that's what we're providing. In other words, we agree the veterans deserve the full support of our Government, and that's what you're going to get as George W. Bush as your President.

I want to thank Bob Wallace, the executive director. He spends a lot of time in the Oval Office. I'm always checking the silverware drawer. [Laughter] He's going to be bringing in George Lisicki here soon. He's going to be the national commander-in-chief for my next year in office. And I'm looking forward to working with George, and I'm looking forward

to working with Wallace, and I'm looking forward to hearing from you. They're going to find an openminded President dedicated to doing what's right.

I appreciate the fact—[applause]. I appreciate Linda Meader, the national president of the Ladies Auxiliary—she brought old Dave with her—Virginia Carman, the incoming president.

I want to thank Deputy Secretary of the Veterans Affairs Gordon Mansfield for joining us today. I appreciate the United States Senator from the State of Missouri, strong supporter of the military and strong supporter of the veterans, Kit Bond. Two Members of the Congress have kindly showed up today. I'm proud they're both here: Congressman Emanuel Cleaver—no finer man, no more decent a fellow than Emanuel Cleaver—is with us and a great Congressman from right around the corner here, Congressman Sam Graves. Thank you all for coming.

Lieutenant General Jack Stultz, commanding general, U.S. Army Reserve Command, is with us today. General, thanks for coming. Lieutenant General Bill Caldwell, commanding general, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, is with us today as well. General Caldwell, thank you for your service.

Thank you all for letting me come by. I want to open today's speech with a story that begins on a sunny morning, when thousands of Americans were murdered in a surprise attack and our Nation was propelled into a conflict that would take us to every corner of the globe.

The enemy who attacked us despises freedom and harbors resentment at the slights he believes America and the Western nations have inflicted on his people. He fights to establish his rule over an entire region. And over time, he turns to a strategy of suicide attacks destined to create so much carnage that the American people will tire of the violence and give up the fight.

If this story sounds familiar, it is, except for one thing. The enemy I have just described is not Al Qaida, and the attack is not 9/11, and the empire is not the radical caliphate envisioned by Usama bin Laden. Instead, what I've described is the war machine of

Imperial Japan in the 1940s, its surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, and its attempt to impose its empire throughout East Asia.

Ultimately, the United States prevailed in World War II, and we have fought two more land wars in Asia. And many in this hall were veterans of those campaigns. Yet even the most optimistic among you probably would not have foreseen that the Japanese would transform themselves into one of America's strongest and most steadfast allies, or that the South Koreans would recover from enemy invasion to raise up one of the world's most powerful economies, or that Asia would pull itself out of poverty and hopelessness as it embraced markets and freedom.

The lesson from Asia's development is that the heart's desire for liberty will not be denied. Once people even get a small taste of liberty, they're not going to rest until they're free. Today's dynamic and hopeful Asia—a region that brings us countless benefits—would not have been possible without America's presence and perseverance. And it would not have been possible without the veterans in this hall today, and I thank you for your service.

There are many differences between the wars we fought in the Far East and the war on terror we're fighting today. But one important similarity is, at their core, they're ideological struggles. The militarists of Japan and the Communists in Korea and Vietnam were driven by a merciless vision for the proper ordering of humanity. They killed Americans because we stood in the way of their attempt to force their ideology on others.

Today, the names and places have changed, but the fundamental character of the struggle has not changed. Like our enemies in the past, the terrorists who wage war in Iraq and Afghanistan and other places seek to spread a political vision of their own, a harsh plan for life that crushes freedom, tolerance, and dissent. Like our enemies in the past, they kill Americans because we stand in their way of imposing this ideology across a vital region of the world. This enemy is dangerous; this enemy is determined; and this enemy will be defeated.

We're still in the early hours of the current ideological struggle, but we do know how the

others ended, and that knowledge helps guide our efforts today. The ideals and interests that led America to help the Japanese turn defeat into democracy are the same that lead us to remain engaged in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The defense strategy that refused to hand the South Koreans over to a totalitarian neighbor helped raise up a Asian Tiger that is the model for developing countries across the world, including the Middle East. The result of American sacrifice and perseverance in Asia is a freer, more prosperous, and stable continent, whose people want to live in peace with America, not attack America.

At the outset of World War II, there were only two democracies in the Far East, Australia and New Zealand. Today, most of the nations in Asia are free, and its democracies reflect the diversity of the region. Some of these nations have constitutional monarchies, some have parliaments, and some have presidents. Some are Christian, some are Muslim, some are Hindu, and some are Buddhist. Yet for all the differences, the free nations of Asia all share one thing in common: Their governments derive their authority from the consent of the governed, and they desire to live in peace with their neighbors.

Along the way to this freer and more hopeful Asia, there were a lot of doubters. Many times in the decades that followed World War II, American policy in Asia was dismissed as hopeless and naive. And when we listen to the criticism of the difficult work that our generation is undertaking in the Middle East today, we can hear the echoes of the same arguments made about the Far East years ago.

In the aftermath of Japan's surrender, many thought it naive to help the Japanese transform themselves into a democracy. Then as now, the critics argued that some people were simply not fit for freedom.

Some said Japanese culture was inherently incompatible with democracy. Joseph Grew, a former United States Ambassador to Japan who served as Harry Truman's Under Secretary of State, told the President flatly that—and I quote—"democracy in Japan would never work." He wasn't alone in that belief. A lot of Americans believed that, and

so did the Japanese—a lot of Japanese believed the same thing: Democracy simply wouldn't work.

Other critics said that Americans were imposing their ideals on the Japanese. For example, Japan's Vice Prime Minister asserted that allowing Japanese women to vote would "retard the progress of Japanese politics." It's interesting what General MacArthur wrote in his memoirs. He wrote, "There was much criticism of my support for the enfranchisement of women. Many Americans, as well as many other so-called experts, expressed the view that Japanese women were too steeped in the tradition of subservience to their husbands to act with any degree of political independence." That's what General MacArthur observed. In the end, Japanese women were given the vote; 39 women won parliamentary seats in Japan's first free election. Today, Japan's Minister of Defense is a woman, and just last month, a record number of women were elected to Japan's Upper House. Other critics argued that democracy—[applause].

There are other critics, believe it or not, that argue that democracy could not succeed in Japan because the national religion, Shinto, was too fanatical and rooted in the Emperor. Senator Richard Russell denounced the Japanese faith and said that if we did not put the Emperor on trial, "any steps we may take to create democracy are doomed to failure." The State Department's man in Tokyo put it bluntly: "The Emperor system must disappear if Japan is ever really to be democratic."

Those who said Shinto was incompatible with democracy were mistaken. And fortunately, Americans and Japanese leaders recognized it at the time, because instead of suppressing the Shinto faith, American authorities worked with the Japanese to institute religious freedom for all faiths. Instead of abolishing the imperial throne, Americans and Japanese worked together to find a place for the Emperor in the democratic political system.

And the result of all these steps was that every Japanese citizen gained freedom of religion, and the Emperor remained on his throne, and Japanese democracy grew stronger because it embraced a cherished

part of Japanese culture. And today, in defiance of the critics and the doubters and the skeptics, Japan retains its religions and cultural traditions and stands as one of the world's greatest free societies.

You know, the experts sometimes get it wrong. An interesting observation, one historian put it—he said, "Had these erstwhile experts"—he was talking about people criticizing the efforts to help Japan realize the blessings of a free society—he said, "Had these erstwhile experts had their way, the very notion of inducing a democratic revolution would have died of ridicule at an early stage."

Instead, I think it's important to look at what happened. A democratic Japan has brought peace and prosperity to its people. Its foreign trade and investment have helped jump-start the economies of others in the region. The alliance between our two nations is the linchpin for freedom and stability throughout the Pacific. And I want you to listen carefully to this final point: Japan has transformed from America's enemy in the ideological struggle of the 20th century to one of America's strongest allies in the ideological struggle of the 21st century.

Critics also complained when America intervened to save South Korea from Communist invasion. Then as now, the critics argued that the war was futile, that we should never have sent our troops in, or they argued that America's intervention was divisive here at home.

After the North Koreans crossed the 38th Parallel in 1950, President Harry Truman came to the defense of the South, and he found himself attacked from all sides. From the left, I.F. Stone wrote a book suggesting that the South Koreans were the real aggressors and that we had entered the war on a false pretext. From the right, Republicans vacillated. Initially, the leader of the Republican Party in the Senate endorsed Harry Truman's action, saying, "I welcome the indication of a more definite policy." He went on to say, "I strongly hope that having adopted it, the President may maintain it intact," then later said, "It was a mistake originally to go into Korea because it meant a land war."

Throughout the war, the Republicans really never had a clear position. They never could decide whether they wanted the United States to withdraw from the war in Korea or expand the war to the Chinese mainland. Others complained that our troops weren't getting the support from the Government. One Republican Senator said the effort was just "bluff and bluster." He rejected calls to come together in a time of war on the grounds that, "We will not allow the cloak of national unity to be wrapped around horrible blunders."

Many in the press agreed. One columnist in the *Washington Post* said, "The fact is that the conduct of the Korean war has been shot through with errors great and small." A colleague wrote that, "Korea is an open wound. It's bleeding, and there's no cure for it in sight." He said that the American people could not understand "why Americans are doing about 95 percent of the fighting in Korea."

Many of these criticisms were offered as reasons for abandoning our commitments in Korea. And while it's true the Korean war had its share of challenges, the United States never broke its word.

Today, we see the result of a sacrifice of people in this room in the stark contrast of life on the Korean Peninsula. Without Americans' intervention during the war and our willingness to stick with the South Koreans after the war, millions of South Koreans would now be living under a brutal and repressive regime. The Soviets and Chinese Communists would have learned the lesson that aggression pays. The world would be facing a more dangerous situation. The world would be less peaceful.

Instead, South Korea is a strong, democratic ally of the United States of America. South Korean troops are serving side by side with American forces in Afghanistan and in Iraq. And America can count on the free people of South Korea to be lasting partners in the ideological struggle we're facing in the beginning of the 21st century.

For those of you who served in Korea, thank you for your sacrifice, and thank you for your service.

Finally, there's Vietnam. This is a complex and painful subject for many Americans. The

tragedy of Vietnam is too large to be contained in one speech. So I'm going to limit myself to one argument that has particular significance today. Then as now, people argued the real problem was America's presence and that if we would just withdraw, the killing would end.

The argument that America's presence in Indochina was dangerous had a long pedigree. In 1955, long before the United States had entered the war, Graham Greene wrote a novel called "The Quiet American." It was set in Saigon, and the main character was a young Government agent named Alden Pyle. He was a symbol of American purpose and patriotism and dangerous naivete. Another character describes Alden this way: "I never knew a man who had better motives for all the trouble he caused."

After America entered the Vietnam war, the Graham Greene argument gathered some steam. As a matter of fact, many argued that if we pulled out, there would be no consequences for the Vietnamese people.

In 1972, one antiwar Senator put it this way: "What earthly difference does it make to nomadic tribes or uneducated subsistence farmers in Vietnam or Cambodia or Laos whether they have a military dictator, a royal prince, or a socialist commissar in some distant capital that they've never seen and may never heard of?" A columnist for the *New York Times* wrote in a similar vein in 1975, just as Cambodia and Vietnam were falling to the Communists: "It's difficult to imagine," he said, "how their lives could be anything but better with the Americans gone." A headline on that story, dated Phnom Penh, summed up the argument: "Indochina Without Americans: For Most a Better Life."

The world would learn just how costly these misimpressions would be. In Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge began a murderous rule in which hundreds of thousands of Cambodians died by starvation and torture and execution. In Vietnam, former allies of the United States and government workers and intellectuals and businessmen were sent off to prison camps, where tens of thousands perished. Hundreds of thousands more fled the country on rickety boats, many of them going to their graves in the South China Sea.

Three decades later, there is a legitimate debate about how we got into the Vietnam war and how we left. There's no debate in my mind that the veterans from Vietnam deserve the high praise of the United States of America. Whatever your position is on that debate, one unmistakable legacy of Vietnam is that the price of America's withdrawal was paid by millions of innocent citizens whose agonies would add to our vocabulary new terms like "boat people," "reeducation camps," and "killing fields."

There was another price to our withdrawal from Vietnam, and we can hear it in the words of the enemy we face in today's struggle—those who came to our soil and killed thousands of citizens on September the 11th, 2001. In an interview with a Pakistani newspaper after the 9/11 attacks, Usama bin Laden declared that "the American people had risen against their Government's war in Vietnam, and they must do the same today."

His number-two man, Zawahiri, has also invoked Vietnam. In a letter to Al Qaida's chief of operations in Iraq, Zawahiri pointed to "the aftermath of the collapse of the American power in Vietnam and how they ran and left their agents."

Zawahiri later returned to this theme, declaring that the Americans "know better than others that there is no hope in victory. The Vietnam specter is closing every outlet." Here at home, some can argue our withdrawal from Vietnam carried no price to American credibility, but the terrorists see it differently.

We must remember the words of the enemy. We must listen to what they say. Bin Laden has declared that "the war [in Iraq] is for you or us to win. If we win it, it means your disgrace and defeat forever." Iraq is one of several fronts in the war on terror, but it's the central front. It's the central front for the enemy that attacked us and wants to attack us again, and it's the central front for the United States. And to withdraw without getting the job done would be devastating.

If we were to abandon the Iraqi people, the terrorists would be emboldened and use their victory to gain new recruits. As we saw on September the 11th, a terrorist safe haven on the other side of the world can bring death and destruction to the streets of our

own cities. Unlike in Vietnam, if we withdraw before the job is done, this enemy will follow us home. And that is why, for the security of the United States of America, we must defeat them overseas so we do not face them in the United States of America.

Recently, two men who were on the opposite sides of the debate over the Vietnam war came together to write an article. One was a member of President Nixon's foreign policy team and the other was a fierce critic of the Nixon administration's policies. Together they wrote that the consequences of an American defeat in Iraq would be disastrous.

Here's what they said: "Defeat would produce an explosion of euphoria among all the forces of Islamic extremism, throwing the entire Middle East into even greater upheaval. The likely human and strategic costs are appalling to contemplate. Perhaps that is why so much of the current debate seeks to ignore these consequences." I believe these men are right.

In Iraq, our moral obligations and our strategic interests are one. So we pursue the extremists wherever we find them, and we stand with the Iraqis at this difficult hour, because the shadow of terror will never be lifted from our world and the American people will never be safe until the people of the Middle East know the freedom that our Creator meant for all.

I recognize that history cannot predict the future with absolute certainty. I understand that. But history does remind us that there are lessons applicable to our time. And we can learn something from history. In Asia, we saw freedom triumph over violent ideologies after the sacrifice of tens of thousands of American lives—and that freedom has yielded peace for generations.

The American military graveyards across Europe attest to the terrible human cost in the fight against nazism. They also attest to the triumph of a continent that today is whole, free, and at peace. The advance of freedom in these lands should give us confidence that the hard work we are doing in the Middle East can have the same results we've seen in Asia and elsewhere—if we show the same perseverance and the same sense of purpose.

In a world where the terrorists are willing to act on their twisted beliefs with sickening acts of barbarism, we must put faith in the timeless truths about human nature that have made us free.

Across the Middle East, millions of ordinary citizens are tired of war; they're tired of dictatorship and corruption; they're tired of despair. They want societies where they're treated with dignity and respect, where their children have the hope for a better life. They want nations where their faiths are honored and they can worship in freedom.

And that is why millions of Iraqis and Afghans turned out to the polls—millions turned out to the polls. And that's why their leaders have stepped forward at the risk of assassination. And that's why tens of thousands are joining the security forces of their nations. These men and women are taking great risks to build a free and peaceful Middle East, and for the sake of our own security, we must not abandon them.

There is one group of people who understand the stakes, understand as well as any expert, anybody in America—those are the men and women who wear the uniform. Through nearly 6 years of war, they have performed magnificently. Day after day, hour after hour, they keep the pressure on the enemy that would do our citizens harm. They've overthrown two of the most brutal tyrannies of the world and liberated more than 50 million citizens.

In Iraq, our troops are taking the fight to the extremists and radicals and murderers all throughout the country. Our troops have killed or captured an average of more than 1,500 Al Qaida terrorists and other extremists every month since January of this year. We're in the fight. Today, our troops are carrying out a surge that is helping bring former Sunni insurgents into the fight against the extremists and radicals, into the fight against Al Qaida, into the fight against the enemy that would do us harm. They're clearing out the terrorists out of population centers; they're giving families in liberated Iraqi cities a look at a decent and hopeful life.

Our troops are seeing this progress that is being made on the ground. And as they take the initiative from the enemy, they have a question: Will their elected leaders in

Washington pull the rug out from under them just as they're gaining momentum and changing the dynamic on the ground in Iraq? Here's—my answer is clear: We'll support our troops; we'll support our commanders; and we will give them everything they need to succeed.

Despite the mistakes that have been made, despite the problems we have encountered, seeing the Iraqis through as they build their democracy is critical to keeping the American people safe from the terrorists who want to attack us. It is critical work to lay the foundation for peace that veterans have done before you all.

A free Iraq is not going to be perfect. A free Iraq will not make decisions as quickly as the country did under the dictatorship. Many are frustrated by the pace of progress in Baghdad, and I can understand this. As I noted yesterday, the Iraqi Government is distributing oil revenues across its Provinces despite not having an oil revenue law on its books, that the Parliament has passed about 60 pieces of legislation.

Prime Minister Maliki is a good guy, a good man with a difficult job, and I support him. And it's not up to the politicians in Washington, DC, to say whether he will remain in his position—that is up to the Iraqi people, who now live in a democracy and not a dictatorship. A free Iraq is not going to transform the Middle East overnight. But a free Iraq will be a massive defeat for Al Qaida; it will be an example that provides hope for millions throughout the Middle East; it will be a friend of the United States; and it's going to be an important ally in the ideological struggle of the 21st century.

Prevailing in this struggle is essential to our future as a nation. And the question now that comes before us is this: Will today's generation of Americans resist the allure of retreat, and will we do in the Middle East what the veterans in this room did in Asia?

The journey is not going to be easy, as the veterans fully understand. At the outset of the war in the Pacific, there were those who argued that freedom had seen its day and that the future belonged to the hard men in Tokyo. A year and a half before the attack on Pearl Harbor, Japan's Foreign Minister

gave a hint of things to come during an interview with a New York newspaper. He said, "In the battle between democracy and totalitarianism, the latter adversary will without question win and will control the world. The era of democracy is finished, the democratic system bankrupt."

In fact, the war machines of Imperial Japan would be brought down—brought down by good folks who only months before had been students and farmers and bank clerks and factory hands. Some are in the room today. Others here have been inspired by their fathers and grandfathers and uncles and cousins.

That generation of Americans taught the tyrants a telling lesson: There is no power like the power of freedom and no soldier as strong as a soldier who fights for a free future for his children. And when America's work on the battlefield was done, the victorious children of democracy would help our defeated enemies rebuild and bring the taste of freedom to millions.

We can do the same for the Middle East. Today, the violent Islamic extremists who fight us in Iraq are as certain of their cause as the Nazis or the Imperial Japanese or the Soviet Communists were of theirs. They are destined for the same fate.

The greatest weapon in the arsenal of democracy is the desire for liberty written into the human heart by our Creator. So long as we remain true to our ideals, we will defeat the extremists in Iraq and Afghanistan. We will help those countries' people stand up functioning democracies in the heart of the broader Middle East. And when that hard work is done and the critics of today recede from memory, the cause of freedom will be stronger, a vital region will be brighter, and the American people will be safer.

Thank you, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:46 a.m. at the Kansas City Convention and Entertainment Center. In his remarks, he referred to Gary Kurpius, outgoing commander-in-chief, and George J. Lisicki, incoming commander-in-chief, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Robert E. Wallace, executive director, Veterans of Foreign Wars Washington Office; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; Minister of Defense Yuriko

Koike of Japan; and Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq.

Statement on the Federal Budget

August 23, 2007

Today's deficit estimate release by the Congressional Budget Office is good news for American taxpayers. Like the estimates put forward by the Office of Management and Budget, it shows that our Government is on a path to meeting the goal I set forth of putting the budget into surplus by 2012. Balancing the budget requires keeping the economy strong, keeping tax rates low, and keeping spending in check.

Through tax relief, we cut taxes for American families and reduced tax rates on dividends and capital gains, energizing small businesses to invest and expand. And since we lowered these important tax rates, the economy has created more than 8 million jobs, increased wages, and grew tax revenues that will lead to a surplus.

Continued spending restraint is a critical element for accomplishing a balanced budget. I again urge Congress to pass spending bills by the end of the fiscal year without wasteful earmarks, without raising taxes, and in regular order—one at a time and on time. Congress has an opportunity to rise to the occasion and work with my administration to accomplish a balanced budget without raising taxes, and I hope they will do so upon their return to Washington in September.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this statement.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

August 18

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

The President declared an emergency in Texas and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local response efforts due to the emergency conditions resulting from Hurricane Dean beginning on August 17 and continuing.

August 20

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. He then had a briefing on the National Intelligence Estimate. Later, he had briefings on Hurricane Dean and Tropical Storm Erin.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Ottawa, Canada. Prior to his departure from Texas State Technical College Airport in Waco, TX, he awarded the Office of the Secretary of Defense Medal for Exceptional Public Service to Harry McKillop.

In the afternoon, at the Ottawa International Airport, the President participated in a greeting with Governor General Michaëlle Jean of Canada and her husband, Jean-Daniel Lafond. Later, he traveled to Montebello, Canada. Upon arrival at the Fairmont Le Chateau Montebello, he participated in a greeting with Prime Minister Stephen Harper of Canada.

Later in the afternoon, in the Ontario Room of the Fairmont Le Chateau Montebello, the President met with Prime Minister Harper. He then met with President Felipe de Jesus Calderon Hinojosa of Mexico.

In the evening, in the Manoir Papineau—Salon Amedee of the Fairmont Le Chateau Montebello, the President attended a North American leaders' dinner.

August 21

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Then, on the porch of the Fairmont Le Chateau Montebello, he had a working breakfast with Prime Minister Stephen Harper of Canada and President Felipe de Jesus Calderon Hinojosa of Mexico. Later, in the Canada Room of the Fairmont Le Chateau Montebello, he met with the North American Competitiveness Council.

Later in the morning, in the Curling Rink—Heritage Room, the President participated in a photo opportunity with Prime Minister Harper and President Calderon. He then participated in a North American leaders' meeting.

In the afternoon, at the Ottawa International Airport, the President met with U.S. Embassy staff and their families. He then traveled to Minneapolis, MN, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Jim Daly. Later, he traveled to Eden Prairie, MN.

In the evening, at a private residence, the President attended a Norm Coleman for U.S. Senate and Minnesota Republican Party reception. Later, he traveled to Kansas City, MO, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Janet Parks.

The President declared an emergency in Minnesota and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local response efforts in the area impacted by the bridge collapse in Minneapolis on August 1.

August 22

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. He then traveled to Riverside, MO. Later, he returned to Kansas City, MO.

Later in the morning, the President met with family members of military personnel killed in the war on terror.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX.

August 23

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

The President declared a major disaster in Minnesota and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding beginning on August 18 and continuing.

August 24

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had a telephone conversation with Rev. Billy Graham.

The President announced his designation of the following individuals as members of the Presidential delegation to attend the dedication ceremony of the Afghanistan-

Tajikistan Bridge on August 26; Carlos M. Gutierrez (head of delegation); William B. Wood; and Tracey Ann Jacobson.

The President announced his designation of the following individuals as members of the Presidential delegation to the 50th anniversary celebration of Malaysia's independence in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on August 31: Jeffrey Clay Sell (head of delegation); Christopher J. LaFleur; Karan K. Bhatia; and Talal Eid.

The President declared a major disaster in Oklahoma and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding beginning on August 18 and continuing.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

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

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released August 18

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Texas

Released August 20

Transcript of a press gaggle by National Security Council Press Secretary Gordon Johndroe

Transcript of a press gaggle by National Security Council Senior Director for Western Hemisphere Affairs Daniel W. Fisk on the President's bilateral meetings with Mexico and Canada

Released August 21

Statement by Counselor to the President Edward W. Gillespie on the upcoming assessments of military and political progress in Iraq by Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq and U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Ryan C. Crocker

Excerpts: President's Remarks to the Veterans of Foreign Wars National Convention in Kansas City, Missouri *

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Minnesota

Released August 22

Fact sheet: Promoting Democracy To Help Make America Safer

Released August 23

Transcript of a press gaggle by National Security Council Press Secretary Gordon Johndroe

Statement by National Security Council Press Secretary Gordon Johndroe on the National Intelligence Estimate

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Minnesota

Released August 24

Transcript of a press gaggle by National Security Council Press Secretary Gordon Johndroe

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Oklahoma

Acts Approved by the President

NOTE: No acts approved by the President were received by the Office of the Federal Register during the period covered by this issue.

* These excerpts were included in the statement by the Counselor to the President.