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Weekly Compilation of

Presidential Documents

Monday, November 12, 2007
Volume 43—Number 45
Pages 1453–1484

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Editor's Note: The President was at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, on November 9, 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.

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

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

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Washington DC 20402

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Week Ending Friday, November 9, 2007

The President's Radio Address

November 3, 2007

Good morning. On Tuesday, the Senate Judiciary Committee is expected to vote on Judge Michael Mukasey's nomination to be our next Attorney General. I thank the committee for scheduling this vote. I urge them to approve this fine man's nomination and send it to the full Senate as quickly as possible.

In a time of war, it is vital for the President to have a full national security team in place, and the Attorney General is a key member of that team. The Attorney General is America's top law enforcement officer, with critical responsibilities for preventing terrorist attacks and protecting our Nation.

Judge Mukasey is uniquely qualified to fill this vital role. He served nearly two decades on the Federal bench, and some of his most important legal experience is in the area of national security. He presided over the trial of the terrorist known as "the Blind Sheikh" and his codefendants in the conspiracy to destroy prominent New York City landmarks, including the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center.

And when the World Trade Center was attacked again on September the 11th, 2001, Judge Mukasey quickly reopened his court, even though it was just blocks from Ground Zero. He and other judges in his district worked day and night to ensure that applications for warrants were processed, investigations could proceed, and the rule of law was upheld.

This is the kind of leader America needs to head the Department of Justice at this important moment in our history. Judge Mukasey is a man of achievement. He is a man of character. And he has been praised by Republicans and Democrats alike for his honesty, intellect, fairness, and independence.

Since I sent his nomination to the Senate, Judge Mukasey has provided nearly 6 hours of testimony. He patiently answered more than 200 questions during his hearings, and he responded promptly to nearly 500 written questions. Yet some Senators are working against his nomination because they want him to take a position on the legality of specific techniques allegedly used to question captured terrorists.

As Judge Mukasey explained in a letter to Judiciary Committee members, he cannot give such a legal opinion for several reasons. First, he does not know whether certain methods of questioning are in fact used because the program is classified; he's not been given access to that information, and therefore, he is in no position to provide an informed opinion.

Second, he does not want our professional interrogators in the field to take an uninformed opinion he has given in the course of a confirmation hearing as meaning that any conduct of theirs has put them in legal jeopardy.

Finally, he does not want an uninformed legal opinion to give terrorists a window into which techniques we may use and which we may not. That could help them train their operatives to resist questioning and withhold vital information we need to stop attacks and save lives.

Congressional leaders should not make Judge Mukasey's confirmation dependent on his willingness to make a public judgment about a classified program he has not been briefed on. If the Senate Judiciary Committee were to block Judge Mukasey on these grounds, it would set a new standard for confirmation that could not be met by any responsible nominee for Attorney General. And that would guarantee that America would have no confirmed Attorney General during this time of war.

Senate leaders should move Judge Mukasey's nomination out of committee and

bring it to the Senate floor for an up-or-down vote. In this time of war, America needs the best people leading our efforts to protect the American people. With Judge Mukasey serving as Attorney General, our national security team will be stronger—and the Senate should confirm this good man as quickly as possible.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7 a.m. on November 2 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 3. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 2 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Medal of Freedom

November 5, 2007

The President. Good morning. Laura and I are thrilled to welcome you to the White House. We welcome the Members of Congress, the members of the Cabinet, and other distinguished guests. It's an honor to be with the Medal of Freedom recipients as well as their family members and friends. We're sure glad you're here.

The Medal of Freedom is the highest civil honor that a President can bestow. By an Executive order of John F. Kennedy, the medal is designed to recognize great contributions to national security, the cause of peace and freedom, science, the arts, literature, and many other fields. The eight men and women came to this distinction by very different paths. Each of them, by effort and by character, has earned the respect of the American people and holds a unique place in the story of our time.

Our first honoree, Dr. Gary Becker, once said, "Many intellectuals, many economists use obscure language when they write. Sometimes it's a way of disguising that they are not saying a heck of a lot." This economist, however, is different. Gary Becker's many books and articles and his 19 years as a weekly columnist have provided—proved him to be a thinker of originality and clarity.

Dr. Becker has shown that economic principles do not just exist in theory. Instead, they help to explain human behavior in fields well beyond economics. He has shown that by applying these principles to public policy, we can make great strides in promoting enterprise and public safety, protecting the environment, improving public schools, and strengthening the family. Dr. Becker has explained, as well, the real value of investing in human capital. He knows full well that an educated and well-trained workforce adds to the vigors of our economy and helps raise the standard of living for all of us.

This longtime professor at the University of Chicago has helped train hundreds of talented economists. He has been a wise and challenging presence in the lives of his students, and they remain devoted to him. One close friend said, "A 15-minute conversation with Gary Becker can change your thinking forever." He is without question one of the most influential economists of the last hundred years. With today's honor, he is one of only two persons to have received both the Nobel Prize in Economics and the Medal of Freedom. The other was the late Milton Friedman. And I know that today Dr. Friedman would be very proud of his friend and student and colleague, Dr. Gary Becker. Congratulations.

The Medal of Freedom for Oscar Elias Biscet will be accepted this morning by his son, Yan Valdes. His daughter, Winnie, is also present. Dr. Biscet is not with us today because he is a political prisoner of the regime in Havana. This ceremony at the White House is being broadcast live into Cuba. To the citizens of that land, I send the respect and good wishes of the United States.

Oscar Biscet is a healer known to 11 million Cubans as a physician, a community organizer, and an advocate for human rights. For two decades, he has told the world what he has seen in Cuba: the arrogance of a one-party state; the suppression of political dissent; the coercion of expectant mothers. For speaking the truth, Dr. Biscet has endured repeated harassment, beatings, and detentions. The international community agrees that Dr. Biscet's imprisonment is unjust, yet the regime has refused every call for his release.

To the Cuban dictatorship, Dr. Biscet is a dangerous man. He is dangerous in the same way that Martin Luther King, Jr., and Gandhi were dangerous. He is a man of peace, a man of truth, and a man of faith. In captivity for most of the last 8 years, he has continued to embody courage and dignity. His example is a rebuke to the tyrants and secret police of a regime whose day is passing.

Dr. Biscet is also a young man. God willing, he'll soon regain his freedom, as justice demands. He deserves to be reunited with his wife, Elsa, and all their family. And the land they call home deserves to be free. When that day arrives, the peoples of Cuba and the United States will stand together as free men and women, and the liberated country will honor a great man with a mighty heart, Oscar Elias Biscet.

When tyrannies fall, it's often the prisoners and exiles who are called forth to lead their people. We've seen this in our own time, in the lives of President Havel and President Mandela and Prime Minister Maliki and, in the Republic of Liberia, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.

All of her life, President Sirleaf has been a pioneer. The daughter of a school teacher in Monrovia, she crossed the ocean as a young woman and earned three degrees in the United States. She has been a business executive, a development expert, a public official, and always a patriot. She loves Liberia, and she loves all its people. After a cabal seized power and plunged that country into years of upheaval and corruption and civil war, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf stood up for the democratic rights of her fellow citizens. She never wavered, even though the consequences were house arrest, foreign exile, death threats, and imprisonment.

When free elections returned to Liberia, the voters made history. They chose her to be the first woman ever elected to lead a nation on the continent of Africa. She was inaugurated last year, with Laura and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice as proud witnesses. I remember asking Laura and Condi what kind of person I'd be dealing with. They said to expect a woman of depth and ability who know how to get things done. They were right. See, when the President comes to the Oval Office, she walks in with a to-do list. [*Laughter*]

The President has the tough mind of a natural-born executive and the gentle instincts of a mother. Not surprisingly, the Liberian people have given her two affectionate nicknames. They call her the "Iron Lady," and they call her "Ma." She's begun an age of reform in a country with deep historic ties to the United States. As she said to a joint meeting of our Congress, "Liberia will become a brilliant beacon, an example to Africa and to the world of what the love of liberty can achieve."

Madam President, America is proud to stand with Liberia. And today America honors you as a woman of courage and a giver of hope. Welcome back to the White House, my friend, and congratulations.

Seventeen years ago, the Federal Government established a research project with the ambitious goal of mapping the entire human genome. The genome is best described as the code of life, the "3.1 billion-letter instruction book that conveys all kinds of information and all kinds of mystery about humankind." Those were the words of Dr. Francis Collins, Director of the National Human Genome Research Institute and the man who led the Federal project to full and thrilling success.

Many discoveries yet to be made and many scientific triumphs yet to be achieved will be directly traceable to the work of the human genome project. With genetic mapping, researchers know more than ever before about the hereditary influences behind cancer and heart disease and diabetes and many other conditions. And that understanding holds the key to earlier detection of illness, individualized treatments, and even lifesaving cures.

In scope and long-term potential, the human genome project has been compared to the Apollo project. And its leader, Dr. Collins, is a well-rounded man. Though he routinely works a 90-hour week, he is an accomplished singer and guitarist. [*Laughter*] I know this because I once heard him at the National Prayer Breakfast. You see, when a man can get up and sing in front of 3,000 people at 8 in the morning, there's something special in his DNA. [*Laughter*]

From his days being home-schooled by his mom on a farm in Virginia, Francis Collins has been relentless in the pursuit of knowledge. He said, "One of the strongest motivations of humankind is to seek answers to profound questions and [to understand] what is both seen and unseen." He has brought his extraordinary gifts to bear on the technical questions of genetics and on the ethical questions as well. Deep scientific understanding can be used for good or ill, and a lot turns on knowing the difference. Francis Collins is unafraid of the eternal questions, unswayed by fashion, and unwilling to overlook the distinction between right and wrong.

Dr. Collins has often noted that "at the DNA level, we're all 99.9 percent the same. All of us." It's a reminder that the human genome project, with all the promise it holds for tomorrow, also confirms scientifically the timeless wisdom of the brotherhood of man. Americans are rightly proud this project succeeded in our own country, and we are proud of the wise and humane American scientist behind it, Francis Collins.

Brotherhood is perhaps the greatest theme in the life and character of Dr. Benjamin Hooks. The man has always had what his friend Dr. King called the strength to love. As a civil rights activist, public servant, and minister of the Gospel, Dr. Hooks has extended the hand of fellowship throughout his years. It was not an always thing—easy thing to do, but it was always the right thing to do.

Benjamin Hooks grew up in a segregated South, where economic advantages and even common courtesies were often denied to African Americans. In the Army during World War II, he guarded European prisoners of war held in the United States. When it was time to get something to eat, whites-only restaurants would serve the prisoners, but not Sergeant Hooks. After the war, he wanted to study law, but not a single law school in Tennessee would admit a black man. So he went to DePaul University in Chicago, then came back home, determined to "break down that segregation, to end those days."

He became a lawyer and, in time, was also an ordained Baptist minister. He joined the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and was an early crusader in that great movement. He also rose in the legal profession, becoming the first African American ever to serve as a judge of the Tennessee Criminal Court. He was named to the Federal Communications Commission by President Nixon.

The Nation best remembers Benjamin Hooks as the leader of the NAACP. For 15 years, Dr. Hooks was a calm yet forceful voice for fairness, opportunity, and personal responsibility. He never tired or faltered in demanding that our Nation live up to its founding ideals of liberty and equality. His testimony had special power—for the words that he spoke and for the example that he set as a man of decency and rectitude.

It's been a great journey, and he's traveled with a good and gracious woman at his side, Frances Hooks. They're a wonderful team. They've been married for 56 years.

Dr. Hooks once said, "You've got to believe that tomorrow somehow can be and will be better than today." Because he had that belief, because he held on to it, because he acted upon it, an old order has passed away. And all Americans can be grateful for the good works and the good life of Benjamin L. Hooks.

The story of an old order and the glimmers of humanity that would one day overtake it was unforgettably told in a book by Miss Harper Lee. Soon after its publication, a reviewer said this: "A hundred pounds of sermons on tolerance or an equal measure of invective deploring the lack of it will weigh far less in the scale of enlightenment than a mere 18 ounces of a new fiction bearing the title 'To Kill a Mockingbird.' "

Given her legendary stature as a novelist, you may be surprised to learn that Harper Lee, early in her career, was an airline reservation clerk. Fortunately for all of us, she didn't stick to writing itineraries. [*Laughter*] Her beautiful book, with its grateful prose and memorable characters, became one of the biggest selling novels of the 20th century.

Forty-six years after winning the Pulitzer Prize, "To Kill a Mockingbird" still touches and inspires every reader. We're moved by the story of a man falsely accused—with old prejudice massed against him and an old sense of honor that rises to his defense. We learn that courage can be a solitary business.

As the lawyer Atticus Finch tells his daughter, "Before I can live with other folks, I've got to live with myself. The one thing that doesn't abide by majority rule is a person's conscience."

Years after "To Kill a Mockingbird" was put to film, the character of Atticus Finch was voted the greatest movie hero of all time. It won Gregory Peck the Oscar. He was said to believe the role "brought him closest to being the kind of man he aspired to be." The great actor counted Harper Lee among his good friends, and we're so pleased that Gregory Peck's wife, Veronique, is with us today. Thank you for coming.

One reason "To Kill a Mockingbird" succeeded is the wise and kind heart of the author, which comes through on every page. This daughter of Monroeville, Alabama, had something to say about honor and tolerance and, most of all, love—and it still resonates. Last year, Harper Lee received an honorary doctorate at Notre Dame. As the degree was presented, the graduating class rose as one, held up copies of her book, and cheered for the author they love.

"To Kill a Mockingbird" has influenced the character of our country for the better. It's been a gift to the entire world. As a model of good writing and humane sensibility, this book will be read and studied forever. And so all of us are filled with admiration for a great American and a lovely lady named Harper Lee.

Bob Hyde is here on behalf of his dad, the Honorable Henry J. Hyde, who was not able to be with us today. Congressman Hyde spent more than three decades as a towering figure on Capitol Hill. But he first made his name in Washington more than 60 years ago. He was on the Georgetown basketball team and played in the NCAA eastern championship game in 1943. After college and Navy service in World War II, he returned home to Illinois and earned a law degree and made his way into politics. This erudite, scholarly man has walked with kings and kept the common touch. He won 20 elections and gave steady service to the people of Illinois for 40 years.

In the House, Congressman Hyde rose to the chairmanship of two committees: Judiciary and International Relations. And from the first day, he was a commanding presence, and he was a man of consequence. Colleagues were struck by his extraordinary intellect, his deep convictions, and eloquent voice. In committee and in the House Chamber, the background noise would stop when Henry Hyde had the floor.

He used his persuasive powers for noble causes. He stood for a strong and purposeful America—confident in freedom's advance and firm in freedom's defense. He stood for limited, accountable Government and the equality of every person before the law. He was a gallant champion of the weak and forgotten and a fearless defender of life in all its seasons.

Henry Hyde spoke of controversial matters with intellectual honesty and without rancor. He proved that a man can have firm convictions and be a favorite of Democrats and Republicans alike.

Henry likes quoting the adage, "Make new friends, but keep the old; one is silver, but the other is gold." To so many on Capitol Hill, Henry Hyde's friendship is gold. They're quick to say it's not the same Congress without him, but that we're a better country because he was there. And colleagues will always admire and look up to the gentleman from Illinois, Henry J. Hyde. And, Bob, please tell your dad a lot of us in Washington love him.

For nearly 30 years, the proceedings of the House of Representatives have been televised—unfiltered, uninterrupted, unedited, and live. For this, we can thank the Cable-Satellite Public Affairs Network, or C–SPAN. And for C–SPAN, we can thank a visionary American named Brian Lamb.

C–SPAN is not what you'd call exciting TV; though some of the call-in shows do have their moments. [*Laughter*] It is, however, a tool that enlivens democracy and informs and educates citizens of all ages, at all hours.

C–SPAN channels fill 17,000 broadcast hours a year. But you can watch for years and never hear anyone say the name Brian Lamb. Even Brian never says it.

With his low-key manner, this native of Lafayette, Indiana, likes to stick with substance. He's not there to provide commentary or give much reaction either way. Yet vast numbers of Americans consider themselves fans

of Brian Lamb. A writer from the Washington Post called it a "cult of nonpersonality." [*Laughter*] The truth is, we've all seen him, and he's conducted some of the most fascinating interviews we have ever heard. As one C–SPAN watcher said, when you listen to Brian "you feel like he's just like you, only smarter." [*Laughter*]

Brian Lamb has spent most of his life in broadcasting, in a career that has taken many turns. The first program he ever hosted, back in the Midwest, was called "Dance Date"—a side we haven't seen much of. [*Laughter*] Brian Lamb is a Navy veteran, a former social aide here at the White House. In fact, when Brian was here a few months ago to interview a historian in the Lincoln Bedroom, the maitre d' of the residential staff of the White House remembered him from those days.

The network Brian Lamb created has been called "scrupulously nonpartisan" and "inherently patient." Committee hearings and campaign events and conferences and rallies are shown from beginning to end, without editorial comment or interpretation. C–SPAN has no agenda and only one assumption: that interested viewers are intelligent and can make up their own minds about what they see and what they hear.

An informed citizenry has been the strength of America since the days of the New England townhall. C–SPAN has revived the townhall spirit for a modern, continental nation. For his enormous achievement and his personal modesty, for his high standards and his contribution to our democracy, America is grateful to Mr. Brian Lamb.

Now I call on the military aide to read the citations for the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

[*Lt. Cmdr. Robert A. Roncska, USN, Navy Aide to the President, read the citations, and the President presented the medals.*]

The President. Thank you all for coming. Laura and I now invite you to a reception here in the State Dining Room. I hope you've enjoyed this ceremony as much as I have. May God bless you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:01 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Fidel Castro Ruz of Cuba; former President Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic; former President Nelson Mandela of South Africa; and Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey and an Exchange With Reporters

November 5, 2007

President Bush. Mr. Prime Minister, welcome back to the Oval Office. As usual, we had a very constructive conversation. Turkey is a strategic partner and strong ally of America. I value our friendship at the state level, at the personal level.

We had a long discussion about a common concern, and that concern is the PKK. PKK is a terrorist organization. They're an enemy of Turkey; they're an enemy of Iraq; and they're an enemy of the United States. We have talked about how we can work together to protect ourselves from the PKK.

We talked about the need to have better intelligence sharing. In order to chase down people who murder people, you need good intelligence. And we talked about the need for our military to stay in constant contact. To this end, the Prime Minister and I have set up a tripartite arrangement, for his number-two man in the military to stay in touch with our number-two man and General Petraeus.

The Prime Minister strongly urged that the United States work with leaders in Iraq to cut off money flows to the PKK. The point is, is that I made it very clear to the Prime Minister we want to work in a close way to deal with this problem.

We discussed a lot of other issues. I do want to thank Prime Minister Erdogan of Turkey for hosting the Neighbors Conference. It was a very important conference to help the people of Iraq realize the blessings of liberty. Thank you, sir.

And finally, I briefed the Prime Minister on Secretary Rice's recent phone call with President Musharraf. I asked the Secretary to call him to convey this message: that we expect there to be elections as soon as possible, and that the President should remove his military uniform. Previous to his decision,

we made it clear that these emergency measures were—would undermine democracy. Having said that, I did remind the Prime Minister that President Musharraf has been a strong fighter against extremists and radicals, that he understands the dangers posed by radicals and extremists. After all, they tried to kill him three or four times. And our hope is that he will restore democracy as quickly as possible.

And I thank you for your leadership and the strong example your country has set. And I've had a chance to personally congratulate you on your party's rather significant victory.

Welcome.

Prime Minister Erdogan. First of all, I'd like to thank the President. I would like to express that I'm very pleased to have this opportunity to meet after our brief discussions during the U.N. General Assembly.

The focus of our discussions today was mostly on terrorism, international terrorism, and also the PKK and the activities of the PKK terrorist organization in northern Iraq. As strategic partners, we are fighting jointly against international terrorism in the world. As part of our joint efforts to combat terrorism, we spoke about what we can do against the separatist terrorist organization, which has deployed itself in northern Iraq.

As you know, on the 17th of October, the Turkish Parliament overwhelmingly—almost every single member of the Turkish Parliament—gave an authority to our Government—the authority, the mandate, in other words, to do a military cross-border incursion, if necessary. This is a mandate for a cross-border operation that solely aims the PKK. It cannot and it does not cover civilians.

On this point, of course, we place priority on intelligence sharing. It is important to work jointly and in solidarity with our strategic partner, the United States, because they have declared the PKK as a terrorist organization. And it is important that we fight jointly against the leaders, the murderers of this organization.

We are working not just to fight against terrorism; we're working together to establish peace in the world in general. For this, we worked together in Somalia and Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. We are currently engaged in a similar effort in Afghanistan. And we are of the opinion that it is necessary to continue to work to fight against international terrorism. I believe that this is what we must do to achieve peace and order in the region. And we have had an opportunity to extensively discuss these issues.

We have had an opportunity to discuss various issues, such as dissolving of the terrorist camps, the capture of leaders of the terrorist organization, or other steps that may be necessary—cutting off logistical support, et cetera. And we believe that it is very important for us to work jointly on a diplomatic, political, and military level and cooperate.

It is my wish that this work that we do take up jointly will yield results in the shortest time possible because this is also important for stability of Iraq itself and stability of northern Iraq, because their stability is our stability. And any kind of disorder or difficulty, there is also a difficulty, a disorder for us, a problem for us.

There is a lot of difficulty in the region in general. And I believe that it falls to us—it's a responsibility for us as strategic partners to work to ensure that we overcome these difficulties and solve them. I have also seen that the President and I agree on these points, and I'm very happy to see that.

With respect to Pakistan, it is also our desire to see a return to democracy in the shortest time possible. We as Turkey have always been against extremism, and we will continue to be against it, because the way out never is through extremism. The middle of the road is the correct way to go. And therefore, I believe it will be important to make sure people follow that path, as opposed to others. And we will share our views and opinion in our discussions with our Pakistani colleagues.

It will also be proper to have the elections take place in Pakistan as planned. And I believe that there lies the bright future for the country of Pakistan.

President Bush. Thanks.

We'll take two questions a side. Jennifer [Jennifer Loven, Associated Press]. Hold on a second.

Pakistani Election

Q. Thank you, sir. It was just last week that you said again that your administration stands with people who yearn for liberty.

How does that square with continuing to partner with Pakistan, given what's going on now and given that President Musharraf has gone back on promises before?

President Bush. As I said earlier in my statement, that we made it clear to the President that we would hope he wouldn't have declared the emergency powers he declared. Now that he's made that decision, I hope now that he hurry back to elections. And at the same time, we want to continue working with him to fight these terrorists and extremists who not only have tried to kill him, but have used parts of his country from which to launch attacks into Afghanistan and/or are plotting attacks on America.

You call on who you want. Yes.

Turkey and Iraq

Q. Mr. President, what would be your reaction if there would be a Turkish operation into northern Iraq?

President Bush. First of all, I don't like to answer hypothetical questions. But I can tell you that we—he asked what would my reaction be if there was an attack. Well, that's a hypothetical question. But what we did talk about is to make sure that there is good enough intelligence so that we can help deal with a common problem, and that problem is a terrorist organization called PKK. And we need to know, in any of these actions, who they are and where they are in order to make any strategy effective.

And therefore, step one is to make sure that our intelligence sharing is good. The problem oftentimes is that faulty intelligence means that we can't solve the problem. Good, sound intelligence delivered on a real-time basis, using modern technology will make it much easier to deal effectively with people who are using murder as a weapon to achieve political objectives.

As I said in my opening statement, the PKK is an enemy of Turkey, a free Iraq, and the United States of America. And it's in our joint interest to work effectively to deal with the problem.

Caren [Caren Bohan, Reuters].

Democracy in Pakistan

Q. Mr. President, you've called on President Musharraf to restore democracy as quickly as possible. What will be the consequences if he doesn't take your advice, and how seriously are you weighing a cut in U.S. aid?

President Bush. Once again, it's a hypothetical question. I certainly hope he does take my advice and the advice of the Prime Minister of Turkey and the advice of a lot of other figures. And so that's—all we can do is continue to work with the President, as well as others in the Pak Government, to make it abundantly clear the position of the United States. And then obviously, we'll deal with it if something other than that happens.

Q. Do you have any leverage, though?

Situation in Northern Iraq

Q. Mr. President, do we expect any concrete steps from U.S. against PKK in northern Iraq, especially in military way?

President Bush. Well, the first thing that happened was, as a result of the Prime Minister's good leadership, Turkish soldiers were released. I know this was very much on his mind. I know that because he has constantly talked to my Government about seeing if we can't work together to get these people released. And the point I bring up is that there is at least one effective measure for people in Turkey to see that when we work together, we can accomplish important objectives.

And so it's—again, I repeat to you, it's fine to speculate about what may not—what may or may not happen, but nothing can happen until you have good intelligence. We need to know where people are hiding; we need to know what they're doing. We believe we can work closely with our Turkish allies as well as concerned citizens in Iraq to find that kind of intelligence.

I've assured the Prime Minister that we're working very carefully and closely with people in the Kurdish part of Iraq to help deal with the movement of these people, to help locate and find and stop the leadership of the PKK from continuing doing what they're doing. The first step in that direction was the release of the soldiers.

We understand there's transit issues in airports; we understand that there is issues with money. What the Turkish people need to come away with from this meeting is that, one, the Prime Minister has impressed upon

me the seriousness of the problem—I understand it—two, he expects there to be action, and I agree. And we've taken some steps along those lines.

Thank you very much.

Q. Mr. President, did you misjudge President Musharraf?

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:43 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to General David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; and President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan. Prime Minister Erdogan spoke in Turkish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks at the White House Forum on International Trade and Investment

November 6, 2007

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks for coming. Good morning. Thank you for coming by the White House. I'm proud to be with you. I'm impressed by the fact that the men and women in this room lead some of our finest companies and trade organizations. I appreciate your engagement and interest in public policy. I appreciate your creativity in making sure our Nation remains the leading economic force in the world.

And I want to share with you some thoughts about an important debate that we're engaged in here, and I believe the outcome of this debate will determine whether we embrace new opportunities for free and fair trade or whether or not we'll become protectionists. My position is clear: We will work with Congress to open up new markets for American goods and services and farm products to make sure this economy continues to grow and our people have a high standard of living.

I appreciate the members of my Cabinet and team who are here. Secretary of the Treasury Hank Paulson has joined us—strong believer in free trade and open markets. Mr. Secretary, thank you. Ambassador Sue Schwab, who is responsible for opening up markets for U.S. goods and services—appreciate you coming, Ambassador. I want to thank Acting Secretary of the Agriculture Chuck Conner. If you're an American farmer or an American rancher, you ought to be supporting administrations and people in Congress who understand that your livelihood depends upon your capacity to sell overseas. We want people eating product grown here in the United States of America. That's what we want. I want to thank other administrative officials, and thank you all.

As I understand it, you understand how trade benefits this Nation. Free and fair trade allows your companies to sell more goods and more services. You understand what I understand: Free and fair trade means higher paying jobs for American workers. If you're a worker in a company that's selling overseas, you're more likely to be paid more than a counterpart.

Free trade helps provide American consumers with better choices at better prices. That's what we want for an American consumer. We want people to go in the marketplace and have a variety of choices. We want people competing for their dollar, and when people compete for the dollar, it means somebody is going to get a better price.

Trade is also one of the driving forces behind the strength of our economy. Last week, we learned our economy created 166,000 new jobs in October—that's the 50th straight month of job growth. That's the longest period of uninterrupted job growth on record. Interestingly enough, we also learned that our economy grew at 3.9 percent in the third quarter. Much of the growth was the result of record exports. Our exports now account for a larger percentage of GDP than at any other time in our history. We need to keep the economy growing. We need to continue to open up markets.

When I took office, the United States had free trade agreements in force with just 3 countries, and now we have agreements in force with 14 countries. These agreements are expanding opportunities for businesses like yours. Take Caterpillar—since we implemented our free trade agreement with Chile in 2004, Cat's exports to that country have more than doubled. And that's good if you're a worker at a Caterpillar plant. If that plant is selling more product overseas, it means you're more likely to get a pay raise and have stability in your job. Consumers around the world have a choice. The products they often

choose say "Made in the United States of America."

Congress needs to open up new markets for trade and investment by improving free trade agreements with Peru, Colombia, Panama, and South Korea. The first three of these agreements are with vital trade partners in our own hemisphere, in our own neighborhood. Together Peru, Colombia, and Panama represent 75 million potential customers with a combined GDP of $245 billion. Over the last 5 years, American exports to these countries have nearly doubled, yet our products still face significant tariffs when they enter these markets. By passing free trade agreements, we can eliminate many of the tariffs, we can level the playing field for our products, we can provide new legal—new opportunities and legal protections for our investors, and we can strengthen our friendship with fellow democracies.

Over the last three decades, most of Latin America has embraced democracy. That's positive. Now these young democracies are trying to build a better life for their citizens. Leaders like President Uribe of Colombia have taken brave steps to fight terrorists and drug traffickers, to strengthen the rule of law, and to open up their economies.

These friends of America are waiting to see what Congress will do with the trade agreements we have concluded with our neighbors in the region. People are watching the actions of the U.S. Congress very carefully. Champions of false populism in the region are watching Congress. They will use any failure to approve these trade agreements as evidence that America will never treat democracies in the region as full partners.

The time has come for Congress to act. We've negotiated fair agreements, and now it's up to the Congress. It's time for the Congress to pass these trade agreements to help build a hemisphere that lives in liberty and trades in freedom and grows in prosperity. These trade bills are important economic measures, and they are important national security measures as well.

Last week, the House Ways and Means took a positive step by voting 39 to 0 in favor of our agreement with Peru. Now the full House and Senate needs to follow suit. I urge the Members to pass our agreement with Peru quickly, by a large bipartisan majority, and then bring our agreements with Colombia and Panama up for votes as soon as possible. It's not acceptable to pass one trade agreement and let the others languish. It's not fair to pick out one country and not support the trade agreement with the other two in our hemisphere.

As we expand trade in Latin America, we also need to pass a free trade agreement with a vital democratic ally in the Far East, and that's South Korea. South Korea is the seventh largest trading partner. Congress needs to approve this historic deal and make it easier for American companies to sell and invest in one of the world's most important markets. Opening up the markets in South Korea will be good for American workers. It will mean somebody is more likely to have a higher paying job.

As we work to complete these new free trade agreements, we will also work to liberalize policies around the world. We welcome foreign investment in our country, and we want to ensure fair treatment for American investments abroad. All we ask is to be treated fairly. So we are pursuing investment treaty discussions with key emerging markets to protect private property rights, to require transparent and nondiscriminatory government regulations, to ensure that disputes are settled under the protections of international law.

The best way to advance new opportunities for trade and investment is through the Doha round of trade talks. Doha gives us the opportunity to lower trade barriers across the world for America's goods and services. It also represents an historic opportunity to help millions of people climb out of poverty and despair. My administration will continue working to bring the Doha round of trade negotiations to a successful conclusion, and I appreciate the hard work of Ambassador Schwab. It's not an easy task to convince others to realize the benefits of free and fair trade, but we believe it's in the Nation's interests to conclude a positive agreement. And we will work tirelessly to do so. All we ask is that people treat us fairly.

In the long run, we know that more trade and investment expands opportunity. It raises

the standard of living, but for the worker who has to change careers, it can be a painful experience. We have a responsibility to help workers. When a job goes overseas, somebody—some family hurts in America, and I understand that. And we can help, and that's why I believe in trade adjustment assistance. I think it's in the Nation's interest that we help somebody gain the skills to be able to work on an existing job if they happen to lose a job because of trade. I'm going to work with the Congress to reauthorize and improve this important program. I want the program to focus on workers who have lost jobs as a result of trade.

I also will continue to work to improve Federal job training programs. I'm a big believer in community colleges. Community colleges are market-driven, economic opportunities. Community colleges enable a local community to design a curriculum to meet the needs of local businesses. And I know that when somebody gets additional education, their productivity goes up. When their productivity goes up, it means they're more likely to be able to find a good job at higher pay.

Some in our country are fearful about our capacities to compete in the global economy. I'm not. I believe that so long as the playing field is level, we can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere. But we need to do a better job of educating our people about the benefits of free and fair trade, and your companies and associations can lead the way. For example, at General Electric, employees and plant managers receive information packets explaining how pending trade deals with other countries will expand business and job opportunities here at home. Efforts like this program help build support for free trade policies that help us remain prosperous and competitive. And I strongly urge you to take up the cause of free trade with your employees.

I also ask you to take on another important assignment: Help educate the Members of the United States Congress. Help them understand that free trade is a vital national interest. Help them make the right decisions when these votes come up.

Thanks for letting me come by to say hello and to share with you some thoughts about free trade. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:45 a.m. in Room 350 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building.

Remarks Following a Meeting With the Import Safety Working Group

November 6, 2007

Good afternoon. I just had an important briefing from Secretary Leavitt and other members of the Interagency Working Group on Import Safety. The United States is one of the most open markets in the world, and our consumers are better off because they have a wide variety of products from across the world to choose from. And while we have strong food and product safety standards, we need to do more to ensure that American families have confidence in what they find on our store shelves. They have the right to expect the food they eat or the medicines they take or the toys they buy for their children to be safe.

Last year, the United States imported nearly $2 trillion of goods through more than 825,000 importers, and the vast majority of these imports are safe. Unfortunately, in recent months, Americans have seen imports from toys to toothpaste to pet food recalled because of safety concerns. My administration takes this problem seriously. So in July, I issued an Executive order establishing the Interagency Working Group on Import Safety. I asked this group to review the problem and to make recommendations for actions that we can take to address it.

In September, this working group issued a report recommending that we change our strategy to ensure the safety of our imports. For many years, we have relied on a strategy based on identifying unsafe products at the border. The problem is that the growing volume of products coming into our country makes this approach increasingly unreliable. The working group recommended that we adopt a smarter and more effective approach that focuses on prevention, building safety into products from the very beginning of the supply chain. Under this approach, we will

focus on stopping dangerous products from reaching our border in the first place—for example, by ensuring that food and consumer products meet our standards for safety before they leave their home countries.

Today the working group presented me with 14 recommendations for areas where we can begin implementing such an approach. And I appreciate your hard work. For example, we will establish new incentives for importers that follow strong safety practices and demonstrate a good track record. We will increase our training of inspectors in foreign countries, so they can stop dangerous goods at their borders instead of ours. We will work for higher and more uniform standards for high-risk foods and consumer goods. And we will work to increase penalties for those who violate U.S. import laws and regulations. Secretary Leavitt will provide you with a more detailed briefing on these recommendations in a few moments.

In conjunction with these import safety measures, the Food and Drug Administration is today unveiling a Food Protection Plan. This plan addresses both imported and domestically produced food and will strengthen the FDA's ability to coordinate with other Federal Agencies to protect our food supply. By identifying risks all along the food supply chain, this plan will help prevent the problems from arising, respond effectively if they do, and improve communication with industry and our public.

A key feature of both our Import Safety Plan and our Food Protection Plan is a recommendation that the FDA be granted new authority to recall the unsafe food products. Specifically, the FDA would be empowered to order a recall when a company refuses to recall their product voluntarily or moves too slowly in removing the unsafe product from the market. With this authority, the FDA will be in a better position to act quickly if any problem occurs.

The steps I have announced today will require wide-ranging cooperation between Federal Agencies, foreign governments, the private sector, and consumer safety organizations. Some steps can be implemented by the executive branch, and we will move forward with these measures. Others will require legislation, and we will work with Congress to enact the appropriate laws. And all these steps will require a commitment by all involved to make the safety of our children and our families the highest priority.

I thank the members of the working group for their continued efforts on this important issue. The American people expect our system of import safety to be strong and effective, and we will continue to work to make sure it is.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:40 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Executive Order 13439.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting Budget Amendments for the Departments of Homeland Security and Justice

November 6, 2007

Dear Madam Speaker:

I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed amendments to my FY 2008 requests for the Departments of Homeland Security and Justice. These amendments, when combined with funding enacted earlier this year for the FBI (Public Law 110–28), would provide $436 million to take important steps to enhance ongoing efforts for protecting the homeland. The amendments will enhance the security of the Government's civilian cyber networks and will further address emerging threats.

Overall, the discretionary budget authority proposed in my FY 2008 Budget would not be increased. The details of these amendments proposal are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

Remarks at a State Dinner Honoring President Nicolas Sarkozy of France

November 6, 2007

Mr. President, distinguished guests: Laura and I offer you a warm welcome to the White

House—or should I say, "*Bienvenue a la Maison Blanche*." [*Laughter*]

In 1777, another George W. welcomed to America another Frenchman. His name was Lafayette. The two leaders built a strong friendship based on common values and common virtues. They both recognized the power of human freedom. They both served with courage in freedom's cause, and they both anticipated that freedom would advance in other lands following its victory here in America.

Two centuries later, our two nations are honoring the legacy of Lafayette by helping others resist tyranny and terror. French and American troops are helping to defend a young democracy in Afghanistan. Our two nations support the democratic Government of Lebanon. We agree that reconciliation and democracy in Iraq are vital to the future of the Middle East. And our two nations condemn violations of human rights in Darfur, in Burma, and around the world.

France and the United States can meet great challenges when we work together, Mr. President. You and I share a commitment to deepen the cooperation of our two republics, and through this cooperation, we can make the world a better place.

I look forward to our discussions at Mount Vernon, where George Washington welcomed his friend Lafayette. And in the spirit of our friendship, I offer a toast to you and to some of America's oldest friends, the free people of France.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:35 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Sarkozy.

Interview With TF1 Television of France

November 6, 2007

France-U.S. Relations

Patrick Poivre d'Arvor. Mr. President, good evening.

The relations between France and the United States for a long time had cooled down for quite some time, for about 3 years, since the intervention in Iraq and since the opposition of three major countries—Russia, Germany, and France. And this quote was lent to your administration, whereby we should forgive Russia, forget Germany, and punish France—and France was punished for its rebelliousness. And number two, is the punishment over?

The President. First of all, I never really felt that a disagreement over Iraq should yield a rupture in relations. I fully understand why people disagree with my decision, and so I never really subscribed to that theory. So there's no punishment, really, in my—from my perspective.

Secondly, I value the relationship a lot. And the United States and France have had a long history. After all, much of our independence was achieved as a result of the aid of the French. And we have been through wars together; we've had our agreements and our disagreements. So I've really worked hard to make sure the relationship was bigger than the individuals.

Having said that, you've got a new President who brings an energy level that is exciting——

President Nicolas Sarkozy of France

Mr. d'Arvor. Has that changed the situation somewhat, given the fact that Mr. Sarkozy has replaced Mr. Chirac?

The President. Of course, in the sense that every individual matters. In other words, I've dealt with a lot of foreign leaders, and some—and each person brings their own set of personalities and values. And President Sarkozy is a man of deep values. He's got a lot of energy. He's a lot of fun to be around. Plus, he's a serious man, and he wants to—so he's like me; he wants to solve problems—"Here is a problem; let's go solve it."

And so I'm looking forward to visiting with him. The relationship is good, and I intend to work to keep it that way.

Iraq

Mr. d'Arvor. With distance, do you think that the French arguments at the time—whereby there were no weapons of mass destruction, which was proven; there's no direct relationship with the September 11th attacks. So do you think that these arguments were justified? So don't you regret it after all?

The President. No, I don't at all. Absolutely, getting rid of Saddam Hussein was the

right thing to do. Now, first of all, nobody ever said that the September 11th attacks were ordered by Saddam. That's myth. That was never part of my argument.

And secondly, I did go to the United Nations Security Council—and 1441 was supported by the French—which said, disclose, disarm, or face serious consequences. You wouldn't say that if you didn't believe he had weapons of mass destruction.

Now, in hindsight, he didn't. Do I think the world is better off without him? Absolutely. I know Iraq is as well. And so my decision was the right decision.

Again, I understand why people don't like the use of armed force. That's natural. On the other hand, the liberation of 25 million people is noble. And now the question is, will we work together to help this young democracy survive in the face of extremists and radicals who kill the innocent in order to achieve their political objectives?

And I can't thank President Sarkozy enough for sending the Foreign Minister to Baghdad, which basically said, we want to help you survive. We think democracy is a great alternative to the ideology of mass murderers. And that's the question we're faced with, those of us who live in the free world: Are we willing to help others realize the blessings of freedom for the sake of peace?

Iraq/War on Terror/Spread of Democracy

Mr. d'Arvor. But your father, during the first gulf war, had stopped at the doors of Baghdad. He left Saddam in sight, weakened, in power. So why didn't you do the same thing as him? Did you speak with him? Did he tell you, son, you can do what I did not do 10 years ago? So ultimately, don't you wonder as to that may not be what actually destabilized the region ultimately?

The President. No. I think there is—what we're witnessing is a great clash between radicals and extremists who murder and people who want to live in peace. And the situation was different in 1991 than it was in 2003. After all, the United States has been attacked, and I said that we're going to deal with threats before they fully materialize. It's one of the lessons of September the 11th.

Saddam Hussein was given a chance to disclose or disarm. He chose not to. He was the one who, once again, defied the world. He's the one who basically said, I don't care what the United Nations said and what France and the United States and everybody else on the Security Council said. And so I'm very comfortable with the decision I made.

But you say, does this cause there to be radicalism that causes the murder of the—causes people to lose their life? Absolutely not. What causes people to become radicals is when they become hopeless and frustrated and fall prey to the whims and desires of a bunch of ideologues who murder innocent people—whether it be in Iraq today or in Afghanistan today or whether it be in Lebanon or whether it be in the Palestinian Territories—all trying to stop the advent of democracy because they can't stand the thought of free societies in their midst.

And the challenge for those of us who live in free societies, like I said, and the challenge for President Sarkozy and George W. Bush and other leaders is, are we going to sit back and not care whether people live in freedom, or are we going to help them realize the blessings of liberty? Because liberty will yield the peace we want.

Iran

Mr. d'Arvor. So to a certain extent, you did contribute to giving greater power to Iran, because it no longer is facing its hated enemy on the other side. So now is there a true threat in Iran, and are you ready now to invade Iran as you did with Afghanistan and Iraq? So it is indeed true that Vice President—is it true that Vice President Cheney has a plan for that?

The President. Gosh, I don't know where you're getting all these rumors—there must be some weird things going on in Europe these days—because I have made it abundantly clear, now is the time to deal with a true threat to world peace, that's Iran, and to do it diplomatically and peacefully. And that's what I'm going to spend a lot of time on with President Sarkozy. But of course, we want to solve these problems peacefully.

Mr. d'Arvor. But if it doesn't work, if the sanctions and the threats do not work, what happens?

The President. Well, we are going to—as I said, all options are on the table. But the objective is to make them work. I mean, I'm not so sure I agree with your hypothesis that "if they don't work." I'm the kind of guy that says, let's make sure they do work. And that's what I intend to talk to President Sarkozy about and Angela Merkel about, and that is to keep the international pressure and to keep the focus on the ambitions of an Iranian regime that has publicly declared its intention to destroy Israel, for example, and have defied the demands of the IAEA. And so they're not trusted—to be trusted with a enrichment program. We made that abundantly clear to them. And I believe we can solve this problem diplomatically.

But to say that to enhance a free society on Iran's border strengthens the Iranians is just not true. I simply don't buy into that logic—or illogic, in this case. I think a free society on Iran's border is going to be—make their life more difficult. I think that, ultimately, they're going to feel pressure about the type of government they have when their people look across the border and see a flourishing, free society.

And so our policy is to work with friends and allies to say to the people, here is a problem; let's work collaboratively to address it, and now, early.

America's Image Abroad

Mr. d'Arvor. But in spite of all your efforts, the United States today have a worse image today than they had 7 years ago. People find Americans less likeable pretty much everywhere in the world. Do you have your own share of responsibility, or is this inevitable because the United States is the most powerful country in the world?

The President. Look, first of all, I think most people respect America, and they like Americans. They may not necessarily like the President. And so—but I've always been the kind of person, Patrick, to make decisions based upon what's right, as opposed to trying to be the popular guy. I've always found the person who strives for popularity——

U.S. Foreign Policy/Freedom Agenda

Mr. d'Arvor. In the past, we used to say that the American Dream was freedom, but today it seems to be repression, more self-focused society.

The President. Oh, no, that's absurd. That's absurd to say the American Dream is repression. Freedom is the absolute we're helping people achieve. That's—think about what's happening with 25 million people in Iraq or 25 million people in Afghanistan or the fact that the United States is freeing people from the scourge of HIV/AIDS. We're spending $30 billion, when Congress passes my budget, to help people on HIV/AIDS—or the fact that we've got a $1.6 billion program to help people who are—families who are suffering as a result of a child dying from malaria. In other words, we've got a very aggressive freedom agenda. And if you come to the United States, you'll find that you can practice your religion any way you see fit, that this is an open society and a free society.

And so, yes, I understand people's—the image may not be as good as one would like, but people respect what America stands for. They may not like the decisions I have made, but I don't see how you can be a leader if you worry about public opinion polls all the time, particularly in a world in which there's a lot of problems that require strong leadership.

President's Legacy

Mr. d'Arvor. And what legacy, what record would you like to leave in history? You've spent 7 years in the White House. You'll be leaving in a year. What would you like the memory, the souvenir of you to remain?

The President. Well, certainly the fact that 50 million people have been liberated; that we've got a very strong relationship in the Far East; that we're friends with China, Japan, and South Korea—something that's been hard for other Presidents to do. I think we can help stand up a Palestinian state. I'm the first President ever to have articulated a two-party state, two states side by side in peace. Our HIV/AIDS initiative is very strong. I mean, we're leading the world when it comes to helping feed the hungry or take care of those who are ill. I think our malaria initiative will go down in history as a great initiative.

And at home, some of my education initiatives and the fact that our economy has

grown, in spite of recession, corporate scandals, and war and the attack on America. See, I'm a tax cutter. I believe when people have more money in their pockets, they do better.

And so I'm—you know, it's an interesting thing about history. You're really not going to know the history of the Bush administration until long after you and I are dead. There's no such thing as accurate, short-term history. It takes awhile for people to see the results of decisions having been made.

And so I'm very comfortable, Patrick. I feel comfortable that the decisions I have made have been in the best interests of the country. I've been comfortable that I've had to deal with some tough problems, and I didn't shy away from the problems; I tackled them head on. And I love my country, and I love what we stand for.

2008 Presidential Election

Mr. d'Arvor. And last question—who would you like to see as your replacement in 1 year? A Republican? A Democrat?

The President. Of course a Republican. But I'm not—you're trying to get me to take sides.

Mr. d'Arvor. You prefer Republican.

The President. Absolutely a Republican.

Mr. d'Arvor. A woman? An African American? A veteran? Do you have a choice? Are there any people that you like more than others?

The President. Now see, you're trying to cleverly—cleverly draw me into the race for the Presidency. And one of the things that I have told the American people is, I'm going to watch the Republican primaries unfold and not take positions and then go out and help my party's nominee win. And I think we will win the White House. I think whoever will get nominated from our party will win, because the big issues in America are who's going to be tough in this war on terror and who's going to protect our homeland and will they keep taxes low. And our candidates will be willing to take those positions in a way that appeals to the American people.

But, anyway, nice try trying to get me to endorse a candidate.

President's Vacation/France-U.S. Relations

Mr. d'Arvor. We saw a French President spend his summer vacations this year in the United States. So when will George W. Bush spend his vacations in France?

The President. Thank you very much. As you know, I'm a—I've got a piece of property I love in Texas——

Mr. d'Arvor. It's large.

The President. ——very much, and when I do, I like to go down there. But I would love to come back to France. It's a beautiful country. I've had some really good experiences there, and I've found the people to be very friendly.

And, look, I understand there's disagreements. But from my perspective, the people of France really do respect what America has stood for and respect our alliance. And I was greeted with great respect when I went there. And so I'd like to come back sometimes.

And I'm looking forward to my meeting with President Sarkozy. It's going to be a constructive meeting.

Mr. d'Arvor. Once again, thank you very much, Mr. President. Thank you very much for hosting us.

The President. Yes, sir. Thank you very much.

Mr. d'Arvor. Thank you very much.

The President. You bet.

Mr. d'Arvor. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 2:12 p.m. in the Map Room at the White House for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Bernard Kouchner of France; and Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany. Mr. d'Arvor referred to former President Jacques Chirac of France. Portions of the Mr. d'Arvor's remarks were in French, and no translation was provided. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 7. A portion of this interview could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Interview With RTL Television and N–TV of Germany

November 6, 2007

Chancellor Angela Merkel's Visit to the Bush Ranch

Q. Mr. President, in a couple of days, the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, will come to your ranch, which I think is a special privilege. What will you do with her on the ranch on a weekend like that?

The President. Well, we will—if she wants—we'll do anything she wants. If she wants to go for a hike, I'll go for a hike. If she—I look forward to showing a piece of property I dearly love. But we'll have plenty of time to visit in a different setting. It's not very formal, but it will be conducive to a conversation amongst friends. I can't thank her enough for coming down there.

Germany/United Nations Security Council

Q. She had said some weeks ago at the United Nations that Germany wants to contribute more to the world and take on more responsibility by perhaps getting a permanent seat in the Security Council. Will you support her in that?

The President. Well, I made my clear statement there at the U.N. that I'm for overall reform, and I do believe we ought to look at reforming the Security Council in a way that, you know, accomplishes some missions. And Germany clearly is an important country. I have not taken a stand on any specific country, except for Japan, and won't. But clearly, Germany is a very important country for a lot of reasons.

Q. Not a permanent member in the Security Council, you don't see her like that? You don't see Germany as——

The President. Well, I haven't made that endorsement one way or the other. And I pretty well kept my counsel. I just want to make sure the U.N. is functioning well, that it does—it needs a big-time reform and so does the Security Council. And so we're open to ideas. It's not easy to get done. And the only one country that I've endorsed has been Japan. And it's been a longstanding policy of the Government of the United States, and I continue that policy.

Germany-U.S. Relations

Q. What are the topics that you will be talking to her where you might need Germany to help you, the United States?

The President. Oh, me personally?

Q. No, not personally. I mean—personally, as well, but——

The President. No, but we definitely need Germany's help on issues like Iran so that we can, you know, solve this issue diplomatically. We need Germany's help on issues like Darfur. Germany is a crucial country in terms of, you know, building coalitions to deal with the threats we face. We need Germany's participation in Afghanistan. I know Angela went over there; I'm looking forward to hearing her report. And I'm pleased with our relationship.

Germany's Role in Afghanistan

Q. Germany doesn't want to contribute any forces to the south of Afghanistan, where it's really getting a little bit hotter than up in the north, where the Germans are right now. Are you having a problem with that?

The President. No, I understand. I mean, you know, people—everybody's Parliaments or legislative bodies reacts to the challenges differently. I'm just so pleased that Germany is contributing forces there to help this Afghan democracy. These contributions are meaningful, and some countries are able to take on different assignments. And I fully understand that. And I'm not going to try to put Angela Merkel in a position that she nor her Bundestag is comfortable with.

Iran/Iraq

Q. You just mentioned Iran. Do you think that the nuclear threat that Iran poses right now is larger than the threat Iraq posed about 5 or 6 years ago?

The President. I think they were both dangerous. I think both of them could have been solved diplomatically. Saddam Hussein chose to ignore the demands of the free world and Security Council 1441—which, by the way, Germany voted for initially. And I think they're both dangerous. And I think therefore, the lesson of Iraq is that we can work together and solve questions peacefully now.

And hopefully we can—and hopefully we can keep pressure on the Iranians to say, one, we respect your people; two, we respect your history; but your Government is making decisions that are isolating your country. And all they've got to do is suspend their enrichment program, and then there will be a dialog and a way forward. But it's up to the Government to make their choice.

Iran

Q. But you still have as a last option the military option. Do you think that that could be an option in the future? You even mentioned the possibility, the chance of third world war. You were serious about that?

The President. Oh, absolutely serious. I said, if you want to avoid world war III; I didn't say, I'm for world war III.

Q. Oh, no, I didn't say that. But you mentioned it in that respect, yes.

The President. But I said, if you—the reason I said that is because this is a country that has defied the IAEA—in other words, didn't disclose all their program—have said they want to destroy Israel. If you want to see world war III, you know, a way to do that is to attack Israel with a nuclear weapon. And so I said, now is the time to move. It wasn't a prediction nor a desire.

And do I think we can solve it? I do. Should all options be on the table? You bet. But I firmly believe we can solve this problem diplomatically and will continue to work to do so. And that's going to be an important topic with the Chancellor.

Q. Do you think there's a point where you'd say, only a military option is a possibility for us?

The President. I would never say that. I would say that we would always try to try diplomacy first. In other words, I—I've committed our troops into harm's way twice, and it's not a pleasant experience because I understand the consequences firsthand. And so I owe it to the American people to say that I've tried to solve this problem diplomatically. And that's exactly what I intend to do. And I believe we can do it, so long as the world works in concert. And Chancellor Merkel understands the dangers, and she wants to solve this issue peacefully.

Russia-U.S. Relations

Q. The U.S. has imposed some harsh sanctions on some parts of the Iranian Government.

The President. Yes.

Q. The Russians were pretty much against that. Do we see a new rift growing between Russia, on the one hand, and the United States, on the other hand?

The President. No, I don't think so. I mean, look, there's going to be—there's places where we disagree. No, it's a complicated relationship with Russia.

Q. Why that?

The President. Why is it? Just because we've got a history. It's not easy to eradicate history overnight. You might remember, we were quite antagonistic to each other for years. And so I've tried to work hard with Vladimir Putin to put the cold war behind us and focus on a positive future. There are still suspicions about U.S. intentions inside the Russian system.

You know, for example, as you know, I'm a big advocate of democracy. I believe democracies enhance peace, and I think that some view the democracy movement as a way to surround Russia. I try to work hard with Vladimir Putin and make it clear to him that this is nothing more than spreading peace. They didn't particularly care for the expansion of NATO, which I'm a strong believer in.

And so we've had our friction, but, no, I wouldn't——

Q. And when you see him now testing new missiles or testing new bombs, is that flexing muscle, or is that just showing off? Or do you think it's serious?

The President. I don't view that as a threat. I really don't view Russia as a threat, a military threat. I don't think—I'm pretty confident President Putin does not want to have any military conflict. I think the bigger threat is the use of energy, which is really a direct problem for the EU.

As I say, I try not to have antagonistic relations with President Putin. We've got a good personal relationship. We don't always agree eye to eye. Kosovo is an area where we don't agree eye to eye. But that doesn't—just because you don't have a—just because you

have a disagreement doesn't mean that you can't work together.

President Vladimir Putin of Russia/ Democracy in Russia

Q. You will probably see him longer as a, whatever, strong force in Russia—[*inaudible*]—right now.

The President. Yes. [*Laughter*]

Q. Isn't that fascinating? Is that something you would have expected, that he would stay in there as a Prime Minister, then? But he is not voted in yet, but it might happen.

The President. I know. I haven't had a really good chance to sit down and talk with him about his ambitions and plans. He did tell me that he wasn't going to run for President again. But clearly, he likes to be influential inside the Russian system, and I don't know what he's going to do.

My hope, of course, is, I've tried to work with him as best as I can to understand the checks and balances. And democracy requires a certain balance in society. And I would hope that he would make decisions that enhanced institutional reform, enhanced the institutions necessary for a free society. As I say, sometimes he listens; sometimes he doesn't.

President's Agenda

Q. Almost a day to the date, in 1 year, we will have Presidential elections again in the United States. What are your three—let's say, main tasks—goals that you have set for yourself for the last 12 months of your Presidency?

The President. Oh, I appreciate that. One is to continue to protect our country from harm. I absolutely know for certain there is a group of extremists who would like to attack us again. Second—this is all on foreign policy initially—work with our friends and allies on Darfur, Burma—I'm afraid I'm going to leave something out—Iran. Continue to make sure our foreign policy in the Far East focuses not only on North Korea—and working, by the way, collaboratively with Japan and China and South Korea to deal with North Korea—but also to maintain good, constructive relations throughout the region.

Continue on the HIV/AIDS initiative. One of the really interesting initiatives that my wife and I are working on is a malaria initiative. There's just too many babies dying on the continent of Africa, for example, because of mosquito bites.

Q. Yes, I've talked to your wife about that.

The President. Oh, did you? Good. And then at home, keep taxes low and keep the economy growing.

The two big issues, by the way, for this Presidential campaign are who can best protect America from attack. Now, I don't know if——

2008 Presidential Election

Q. That's what I wanted to ask you next. What will be the three tasks for the next President?

The President. Well, who can keep people—same thing, and who can keep taxes low. See, we've got a bunch of people here in America that want to raise taxes. I'm, as you know, a tax cutter. I believe the private sector is—needs to be enhanced by keeping the size of government reasonably in balance and keep taxes low; same thing for the next President.

You know, the biggest issue facing a President going forward will be whether or not we can deal with our, you know, our Social Security and Medicare, our health care and pension plans for the elderly, because like other parts of the world—I presume Germany as well—baby boomers relative to people contributing to the system—so you have baby boomers like me retiring and not enough young workers. And we need to get the systems in balance. And it's very hard to get done because a lot of the politicians here in America really don't want to confront the problem until it becomes immediate. So I tried for 7 years to get Congress to do the hard work. They didn't want to, and so the next President is going to have to try to do it.

Q. Who do you think it's going to be?

The President. Well, I can't tell you that because—I think it will be a Republican; I truly do. I think someone from my party will win, but, you know, I'm not going to speculate because the American press, of course, would take my speculation, you know, "Bush is"——

Q. Of course. But you think it's going to be a Republican?

The President. I really do, yes. The economy is in pretty good shape, and we've got some issues, but the economy is pretty strong, which—and the other side does want to raise taxes. And I do believe taxes are a big issue in America.

And then the foreign policy—and if you will listen to the debate, our candidates have got a strong, firm view of how to conduct foreign policy. And the American people innately understand that there's still threats out there. And our biggest job is to protect our—see, that's an interesting difference between, say, Germany and America. We've been attacked. We feel like another attack is coming, and therefore, you know, our actions ought to be to protect our country. And, you know, I'm not so sure that it's that same sense of anxiety in other parts of Europe or in Germany.

Russia-U.S. Relations

Q. Well, we have some old fears. I mean, we were on the border of the cold war. I mean, we had this Iron Curtain in our country, in that respect. We know a little bit about that too. But I can understand your position as well, sure.

The President. You know, look, there's—and one of the things I would like to assure the German public about is that I really don't want to have increased tensions with Russia. As a matter of fact, I've worked hard to create an environment that is not hostile, but——

Missile Defense System/Russia-U.S. Relations/Iran

Q. Also with the missile shield——

The President. That's what I was about to describe, that this is not aimed at Russia. I mean, it—and frankly, it's absurd for somebody to say it is aimed at Russia, because the number of interceptors that would be there—the rockets to knock down the other rocket—will be limited in number, and therefore, somebody who has got a handful of rockets can overwhelm the system. It's just really aimed at, you know, a rogue nation that wants to hold a——

Q. Like Iran.

The President. ——hostage. Like Iran, absolutely. And hopefully, again, you know, the system becomes moot or not needed by getting the Iranians to back off their ambitions.

And, you know, we did something really interesting with Russia on this Iranian issue. The Iranians said, it's our sovereign right to have nuclear power. And I said, yes, it is; it is your sovereign right. But we can't trust you to enrich because you've been hiding your program from international inspectors. And so therefore, we will join—we agree with Russia when they said, you can have a plant, and we, Russia, will provide you the fuel and collect the fuel, which I strongly support.

And so—the only reason I bring that up is, I know that people think that our relations with Russia are, you know, may not be conducive to constructive action, but we got—we do—and there's no question, there's tensions on some issues.

Q. Okay.

The President. But we can work together as well.

President's Legacy

Q. Okay. Final question: You will have 1 year in office; how do you think you will be remembered as a President?

The President. I think I'll be remembered as a guy who, you know, was dealt some pretty tough issues to deal with, and I dealt with them head-on, and I didn't try to shy away. I didn't, you know, I didn't sacrifice—I was firm, and that I made decisions based upon principles, not based upon the latest Gallup Poll. And that I helped this country protect itself and, at the same time, was unashamed, unabashed at spreading certain values to others, the main one being liberty, whether it be the freedom from forms of government or the freedom from disease and hunger. And that we had a very robust foreign policy in the name of peace.

And at home, that the cornerstone of my policy is to trust the individual American to make the best decisions for his or her family. And that I dealt with not only a tax but recession and a lot of other challenges to our economy, and yet our economy is very strong.

We've had 50 consecutive months of uninterrupted job growth, which is the longest in American history. So you know something—but I'll be dead before they finally figure out my administration because history—it takes awhile to get the true history of an administration.

Q. Okay, first we both see how it's going to be. We might not be dead by then. [*Laughter*]

The President. I don't think so. I think—listen, they're still writing books analyzing George Washington.

Q. That's very true. That's right. And they come to different conclusions in every new book.

The President. They do. And so therefore, my attitude is, if they're analyzing the first President, the 43d President doesn't need to worry about it. The key thing that people need to know is, I make up my decisions based upon principles, not based upon politics—you know, what's good for a political party or trying to be popular. If you chase popularity, you can't lead. And popularity is just like—it comes and goes. And I've never been one to really worry about that, you know? Because when it's all said and done, I think the key thing in life is to look in the mirror and say, I didn't compromise my core beliefs. And I believe people will say that about me.

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

The President. You're welcome. Thanks for coming.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 2:33 p.m. in the Map Room at the White House for later broadcast. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 7. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

The President's News Conference With President Nicolas Sarkozy of France in Mount Vernon, Virginia

November 7, 2007

President Bush. Mr. President, welcome. Thank you very much for coming here to Mount Vernon, and thank you for coming to the United States. I think it's safe to say that you've impressed a lot of people here on your journey. You bring a lot of energy, enthusiasm for your job, love of your country, and a strong set of universal values in your heart.

We've just had an extensive conversation, one that you'd expect good friends to have. We talked about Iran and the desire to work jointly to convince the Iranian regime to give up their nuclear weapons ambitions for the sake of peace. We talked about the Middle East and the upcoming talks at Annapolis, Maryland. We spent some time on Kosovo, and I appreciate the President's leadership on Kosovo.

I can't thank the President enough for his willingness to stand with young democracies as they struggle against extremists and radicals. And one such democracy is Afghanistan. Mr. President, your leadership on that issue for your country was very impressive. You sent a very clear message. It's clear that you're a man who does what he says he's going to do. It's the kind of fellow I like to deal with.

And so, Mr. President, I also want to thank your administration in your staunch—strong stance for human rights and human dignity. Whether they be to those who are oppressed in Burma or Darfur or on the island of Cuba, France's voice is important, and it's clear that the human rights of every individual are important to the world. And I look forward to advancing peace and freedom with you, Mr. President.

Our bilateral relations are important. They are strong, and we intend to keep them that way. And so welcome here to George Washington's old home. Proud to have you in America. Thanks for coming.

President Sarkozy. I want to thank President Bush, his administration, and all Americans who have welcomed us in such exceptional fashion. I get the distinct sense that it is France that has been welcomed so warmly, with so much friendship, so much love. This was my hope, my ambition. And with Bernard Kouchner, Christine Lagarde, Rachida Dati, and myself, this is exactly what we wanted.

We've been very moved, deeply moved by your wonderful welcome, together with Mrs. Laura Bush, yesterday at the White House.

I especially enjoyed the skit of the dialog between George Washington and Lafayette that we witnessed.

The tokens of friendship that we have seen since we've been here, your openmindedness and the fact that we can address any and every subject—all those that you mentioned, sir, even though the European defense policy and NATO have also been addressed, environmental issues, which are close to our heart, and Afghanistan. I said that we would stay there because what is at stake is the credibility of the Atlantic Alliance and the fight against terror.

We spent hours discussing very important issue, commercial, economic, and others. And I will say that we have done so in a spirit of openness and trust, and that is something I've been particularly struck by. And I can tell you that this visit, I think, has been very widely covered in France. So when I say that the French people love the American people, that is the truth and nothing but the truth.

Now, I expressed—I spoke at length this morning, and I think the best would be that after President Bush—whom I wish to thank once again—we could answer any questions you may have.

President Bush. Two questions a side. Deb [Deb Riechmann, Associated Press]. We'll go——

Pakistan

Q. Mr. President, you came down so hard on Burma and other nations for their crackdowns on prodemocracy demonstrators. Yet you seem to be giving Musharraf a pass. So the question is, why are you going so soft on Musharraf? Is there a double standard?

President Bush. I spoke to President Musharraf right before I came over here to visit with President Sarkozy. And my message was that we believe strongly in elections, and that you ought to have elections soon, and you need to take off your uniform. You can't be the President and the head of the military at the same time. So I had a very frank discussion with him.

Look, our objective is the same in Burma as it is in Pakistan, and that is to promote democracy. There is a difference, however. Pakistan has been on the path to democracy; Burma hadn't been on the path to democracy. And it requires different tactics to achieve the common objective.

And as I told you, I just spoke to President Musharraf before I came here. And my message was very plain, very easy to understand, and that is, the United States wants you to have the elections as scheduled and take your uniform off.

You want to call on somebody?

President Sarkozy. You know, in France, I don't choose; I don't pick the journalists.

President Bush. You don't get to choose? Who chooses? I choose? [*Laughter*] Who would you like me to choose? [*Laughter*] Oh, he chose. Wait a minute. It didn't last very long, did it?

President Sarkozy. I didn't choose; I indicated a general direction. [*Laughter*]

Iraq/France-U.S. Relations/Pakistan

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. My question is on Iraq. Mr. President, this morning you talked at length about Afghanistan, Iran, but not Iraq. And I wanted to ask both of you, is France reconciled with the United States as the United States is reconciled with France? So what about Iraq? Can France, for instance, help to get out of the Iraqi quagmire? And President Bush, where do you stand on Iraq and your domestic debate on Iraq? Do you have a timetable for withdrawing troops?

President Bush. Yes. I don't—you know, "quagmire" is an interesting word. If you lived in Iraq and had lived under a tyranny, you'd be saying, "God, I love freedom"—because that's what's happened. And there are killers and radicals and murderers who kill the innocent to stop the advance of freedom. But freedom is happening in Iraq, and we're making progress.

And I can't thank the President enough for sending his Foreign Minister to Baghdad. It was a clear message that freedom matters; that when people are struggling to live in freedom, that those of us who have the comfort of a free society ought to help them.

We had a difference of opinion with your great country over whether or not I should have used military force to enforce U.N. demands. I reminded a TV reporter—I don't know if the person is here or not—but I said,

I just want to remind you that 1441 was supported by France and the United States, which clearly said to the dictator, you will disclose, disarm, or face serious consequences. Now, I'm the kind of person that when somebody says something, I take them for their word.

Having said that, we had a difference of opinion. But I don't sense any difference of opinion now that a struggling democracy wants help from those of us who live in the comfort of free societies. And, Mr. President, the strong gesture of sending your Foreign Minister there wasn't a message to the United States, because we're good friends; it was message to the Iraqi citizens. That said, we hear your cries for freedom; we want you to succeed, because one of the lessons of history is, free societies yield peace.

And so I appreciate your leadership on that issue, and I want to thank your Foreign Minister for—I don't see your Foreign Minister. Look, the guy was here. [*Laughter*] Oh, there he is, yes, next to—look, the President was blocking—next to Madam Rice. Anyway, thank you, sir.

President Sarkozy. Allow me to give you two answers in one. On Pakistan, yes, we're worried about the situation. It's worrisome, and we need to have elections as swiftly as possible. You cannot combat extremism using the same methods as extremists, and it is very important, it is of the essence that Pakistan organize elections. I, like President Bush, I wish this to take place as speedily as possible.

Let me remind you that this is a country of 150 million inhabitants who happens to have nuclear weapons. This is very important for us that one day we shouldn't wake up with a government, an administration in Pakistan which is in the hands of the extremists. And we should, each and every one of us, think about this, of the principles, the values that we uphold and that we defend and we must continue to uphold. And then there's the complexity, as it were, in the field. That's why it's important to convene election, call elections.

Now, on Iraq, Bernard Kouchner's trip to Iraq was very successful. What does France want? A united Iraq. No one—no, it is in no one's interest to see Iraq dismantled. We want a democratic Iraq. We want a diverse Iraq, where each component element of Iraqi society has learned to live with others; an Iraq which is—which can administer and govern itself and that has the means of ensuring the peace and security of every one of its citizens. And that is exactly Bernard Kouchner's message when he went to Iraq. And this is in the interest of one and all that it be thus, and that position is the position I will defend until the end.

President Bush. Toby [Tabassum Zakaria, Reuters].

Q. Mr. President, with——

President Bush. Which one?

Q. Both of you.

President Bush. Get moving, will you? [*Laughter*]

Oil Prices/Iran

Q. Okay. Mr. President, with oil approaching $100 a barrel, are you concerned that your hard words for Iran on its nuclear program are helping drive up oil prices, which can end up hurting the U.S. economy?

President Bush. No. I believe oil prices are going up because the demand for oil outstrips the supply for oil. Oil is going up because developing countries still use a lot of oil. Oil is going up because we use too much oil, and the capacity to replace reserves is dwindling. That's why the price of oil is going up.

I believe it is important for us to send clear signals to the Iranian Government that the free world understands the risks of you trying to end up with a nuclear weapon. And therefore, we will work together to try to find if there's not rational people inside your Government who are tired of isolation and who believe there's a better way forward.

Every time I give a talk about Iran, I make sure I speak to the Iranian people. And I want them to hear once again that we discussed your country today; that we believe—that I believe that you've got a bright future; that we respect your history and respect your tradition. However, you are governed by people who are making decisions that are isolating you from the rest of the world, and you can do better than that.

The idea of Iran having a nuclear weapon is dangerous, and therefore, now is the time for us to work together to diplomatically

solve this problem. And we spent a lot of time on the subject. And I thank the French President for his resolve on solving this issue peacefully.

Do you want to call on some——

President Sarkozy. I just wanted to say that we exchanged all the intelligence and information we had. It is unacceptable that Iran should have, at any point, a nuclear weapon. But Iran is entitled to the energy of the future, which is civilian nuclear energy. I believe in the effectiveness of sanctions. I believe even in the need to toughen the sanctions. But in my mind, the two go together. In other words, the open—the outstretched hand of dialog, of continuing discussions, because Iran deserves a better fate than that isolation. And I cannot imagine that there are not people, leaders in Iran who will stop to think about the consequences of what is going on.

This is a great people and a great civilization, and we must be firm for as long as there is no gesture on their part. And we have to keep the way of dialog open, because we must do everything to avoid the worst-case scenario. And this is indeed—was the subject of a very lengthy conversation which showed exactly how convergent our views were.

France's Role in Afghanistan/Lebanon's Presidential Election/Spread of Democracy

Q. Mr. President, with respect to your statements on Afghanistan and France's commitment on engagement, does this mean that France is going to be sending additional ground troops in to fight in the southern regions of Afghanistan, as the U.S. wishes them to do?

How do you feel about the fact that France has been engaging Syria on the upcoming Lebanese Presidential election? Do you think that's a good idea? And what are the chances that Lebanon will have a Presidential election by November 24th? Thank you.

President Bush. Thanks, good question. You want me to go first?

President Sarkozy. Well, on Afghanistan, I said what I thought and what I think. We've talked about it with President Bush. We will not pull out of Afghanistan because what is at stake here is the solidity of our alliance, and ultimately, what is at stake here is the fight against terror. We're thinking about the best way to help bring about a democratic Afghanistan. Is it by strength, in stepping up our training efforts so that we lay the groundwork or the basis of a modern Afghan state? Or is it by other means? Maybe perhaps military means? We're still thinking about it.

President Bush. First of all, you know, the Syrian influence in Lebanon was something that the previous Government and I worked on to—collaboratively. And because France and the United States worked together, we passed 1551 Resolution out of the United Nations, which got Syria out of Lebanon, by and large. And so we spent time collaborating on how best to make sure that Syria doesn't influence the Presidential elections, that, in fact, the Presidency is picked by the Lebanese people.

And I'm very aware that Mr. Hariri and Nabih Berry are in consultations as to whether or not they can come up with an acceptable candidate to them, not to Syria; whether or not the Lebanese people can be assured that their President is going to be representing the people of Lebanon, not the people—not the Government of Syria.

And I'm comfortable with President Sarkozy's Government sending clear messages that meet common objectives. And our common objective here is for this Lebanese democracy to survive, thrive, and serve as an example for others.

We will work with France and with others to see that this process be completed by November 24th. We believe it's in the interests of the Middle East that this Lebanese democracy survive.

I want Lebanon to serve as an example for the Palestinians, to show them what's possible. I believe in a two-state solution. I believe there ought to be two states living side by side in peace. So does the President; we discussed that today. There's nothing better for the Palestinians to see what is possible with a stable democracy in Lebanon.

The interesting challenge we face in the world in which we live is, there are murderers who will try to stop the advance of democracy, particularly in the Middle East. Isn't it interesting that the places where there's most violence is where there's young

democracies trying to take hold, whether it be Iraq or Lebanon or in the Palestinian Territories?

And the call for nations such as ourselves is to support those who want to live in freedom. Freedom is the great alternative to the ideology of people who murder the innocent to achieve their political objectives—by the way, the very same ones that came and killed 3,000 of our citizens.

And so what I'm telling you is—let me end this press conference by telling you this: I have a partner in peace, somebody who has clear vision, basic values, who is willing to take tough positions to achieve peace. And so when you ask, am I comfortable with the Sarkozy Government sending messages, you bet I'm comfortable.

Mr. President, thanks for coming. I appreciate you being here

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 3:12 p.m. at the Mount Vernon Estate. In his remarks, he referred to President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan; Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Bernard Kouchner of France; and Parliament Member Sa'ad Hariri and Speaker of Parliament and National Assembly President Nabih Berry of Lebanon. President Sarkozy referred to Minister of Economy, Finance, and Employment Christine Lagarde and Minister of Justice and Keeper of the Seals Rachida Dati of France. President Sarkozy and some reporters spoke in French, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks Following a Visit With Wounded Troops at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas

November 8, 2007

Thank you all very much for having me here today. If anybody were to come to this center, they would have to leave inspired and thankful, inspired by the service men and women who are recovering from wounds with such courage; thankful that there are instructors and preachers and volunteers who are helping these people get back on their feet and getting their lives together.

This center was funded entirely by contributions of more than 600,000 Americans through what's called the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund. This center is a tribute to the generosity of the American people. Make no mistake about it, the American people support the men and women who wear our Nation's uniform. This center is a testament to our deep belief that someone wounded in the defense of America needs all the help he or she can get. The service men and women here have borne the burdens of battle. They have kept our country safe. We honor them and their families by helping them with all we can.

I am here to highlight one of the world's top rehabilitation facilities, right here in my home State of San Antonio, Texas. It's a partnership between the private sector and the Federal Government. The Center for the Intrepid makes use of the best available technologies to give severely injured service members and amputees the opportunity to lead full and productive lives. That's the mission. The mission is to take a good man who I've met before and help him live a full and productive life.

This facilities include a pool, a—where's my man; there he is—a wave runner—by the way, this guy from Oklahoma handled those waves pretty well—an indoor running track, a two-story climbing wall, a prosthesis center, a virtual driving program that teaches patients how to control an automobile—that was my driver, right there—a fully furnished apartment that helps patients learn to adjust to disabilities in the real-life world.

This center also provides compassionate support for the families. The Fisher House Program—and I want to thank the Fishers for joining us today—provides onsite housing for up to 57 families, who—they're here to visit their injured loved ones. The Fisher family, that has supported the Fisher Houses, is a remarkable family, and these good folks represent the true spirit of America, people coming forth to help a neighbor in need. Real proud you both are here.

Medical advances have enabled facilities such as this one to provide wounded warriors with care that would have been unimaginable just a decade ago. The technology that's being used here is state of the art. Our system for managing the care, however, has fallen behind. The technology has advanced; our system needs to be modernized.

We have an outdated system that can bog down some of those recovering in a maze of bureaucracy. And that's what happened at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. The care at Walter Reed is fantastic. Our military doctors and nurses are some of the best in the world. The United States owes a huge debt of gratitude to the care providers at Walter Reed and at rehabilitation facilities like this one. However, there were serious problems caused by bureaucratic delays and administrative failures. And that is unacceptable. It's unacceptable to me as the Commander in Chief; it's unacceptable to the families of those who deserve the best care; and it's unacceptable to the American people.

And so at my request, I asked Senator Bob Dole, former Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala to analyze the issue, to look at the problem, and to come up with specific recommendations for modernizing and improving our system of care. They came up with recommendations, and I strongly support them, and so should the United States Congress.

Now, many of the recommendations require administrative action, and that's precisely what this administration is doing. For example, over the next few weeks, the first Federal recovery coordinators will be hired. These coordinators will guide seriously wounded service members through their recuperation. We don't want people to fall through the cracks of care. We don't want people to be confused by the system. We want people's families to be comfortable with the care that their loved one is receiving, and therefore, we'll have these specially trained people to stay with a person throughout their rehabilitation.

A pilot program to establish a single comprehensive disability exam is underway. This replaces the two difficult—two different, difficult exams that service members must currently undergo through the Defense and Veterans Affairs Departments separately. It makes no sense. Somebody gets hurt, there ought to be one exam, not two. The whole purpose is to analyze somebody to make sure that they get that which they're entitled to as quickly as possible, without confusion.

We're working to aggressively prevent and treat Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury. A new National Center for Excellence for PTSD and Traumatic Brain Injury has just hired its first staff members and moved into temporary offices. The purpose is to develop best practices. The real purpose is to make sure we help those coming out of combat to be able to adjust to real life as a civilian.

The Defense Department is working to ensure that the best health professionals are kept on duty at Walter Reed. There's some concern that since Walter Reed will be shut down, that Walter Reed is not going to have the best there is. They don't have to worry about it. We'll make sure that those at Walter Reed are incented to stay there until there's a new facility opened in Washington, DC.

And tomorrow the Department of Veterans Affairs will initiate two studies that will help provide the information necessary to modernize the veterans' disability system. The system needs to be modernized, and I want to make sure our men and women coming out of combat in Afghanistan and Iraq have a modern disability system. And that's what the studies are going to do.

Now, some of the recommendations put forward by Dole-Shalala Commission require legislative action. And we're working with the Congress. I look forward to having quick action by the Congress on the Dole-Shalala Commission recommendations, just like I expect the United States Congress to get the Veterans Affairs appropriations bill to my desk. Now, look, there's obvious—some disagreements between me and the Congress, but there's no disagreement over the amount of money we're going to spend for veterans. And they need to get the bill—to do their job. They need to get the bill to the desk of the President as a stand-alone piece of legislation, so the veterans of this country understand that we're going to support them.

Congress needs to take prompt action on measures that will send a clear signal that we support our troops in the field, and we support them when they're coming off the field; that we support those in harm's way, and that we support those through the best possible care and rehabilitation facilities.

Service members being treated here and at other veterans' facilities are focused on what they have left to give, rather than what

they have lost. And they have high hopes for their future.

Our country is inspired by Americans that we find in facilities like this. Christian Bagge is a guy I met over here at the hospital. I'll never forget looking at Christian's eyes and wondering whether or not he was going to make it. See, both his legs were blown off, and he didn't look good. I knew he'd get the best possible care. I knew that this Government would do everything we could to help him heal. And after talking to him for a minute, I realized he had the courage necessary. He told me one thing—he looked at me, he said, "Mr. President, you don't need to worry about me; someday I'm going to come to the White House and run with you on the South Lawn." I looked at him and said, "Come on, Christian. I'll be ready when you are"—not sure whether or not this good man would really be able to do it; certain he wanted to, but unsure. And if you'd have been in my position, you would have too. After all, he'd just come off the battlefield and lost both his legs.

Sure enough, the phone call came to the White House. Christian came. Guy who had both legs blown off, as a result of the care and compassion and as a result of the courage in his heart, came to run with the President at the White House. Plus, he outran me.

The spirit of America is strong in facilities like this. Our country is a remarkable country that has produced men and women who volunteer to protect our Nation in the face of danger. And there's no better example of finding those type of citizens than right here, citizens who have shown incredible courage, citizens who love our country, and citizens whose resolve is inspiring.

And so I appreciate you letting me come by. May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:27 p.m. at the Center for the Intrepid. In his remarks, he referred to former Senator Bob Dole and former Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna E. Shalala, Cochairs, President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors.

Statement on House of Representatives Approval of a Free Trade Agreement With Peru

November 8, 2007

I am pleased that the House of Representatives today approved the free trade agreement with Peru with a strong bipartisan vote.

Expanding markets for our goods and services is crucial to continued economic growth and job creation here in America. Through free trade agreements, we establish rules that ensure the opportunities and benefits of trade are available to our workers, ranchers, farmers, and service providers.

For more than 14 years, Peru has benefited from broad access to our markets under the Andean Trade Preference Act. This U.S.-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement will help level the playing field for American exporters and investors. Approval of this agreement will also send a strong signal that we are willing to support those who share our values of economic freedom and democracy.

By strengthening our trading relationships with important neighbors—including through our trade agreements with Colombia and Panama—we will significantly advance both our economic and national security interests. These democracies are trying to improve the lives of their citizens. We should embrace the strong commitment to economic freedom of countries in our region and the efforts of Colombia to fight terrorists and drug traffickers and to strengthen the rule of law.

Today's vote in the House is the first on a free trade agreement since my administration and the leaders of both parties in Congress agreed on a new bipartisan way forward.

I encourage the U.S. Senate to quickly approve this agreement and for Congress then to move promptly to consideration of our free trade agreements with Colombia, Panama, and South Korea.

Statement on Senate Confirmation of Michael B. Mukasey as Attorney General

November 8, 2007

I thank the Senate for its bipartisan vote confirming Judge Michael Mukasey as the Nation's 81st Attorney General. Judge Mukasey is a man of strong character and integrity with exceptional legal judgment. He was an accomplished prosecutor and, for more than 18 years, a distinguished Federal judge. Now he will be an outstanding Attorney General.

Judge Mukasey's confirmation comes at a critical moment for the Justice Department and for our Nation. As Attorney General, Judge Mukasey will lead the Justice Department as it works to protect the American people, whether from drug traffickers and other criminals on our streets or from terrorists who seek to attack our homeland.

Now that Judge Mukasey has been confirmed, I look forward to working with the Senate to fill the other senior leadership positions at the Justice Department so that America has the strongest, most capable national security team during this time of war.

Proclamation 8202—World Freedom Day, 2007

November 8, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

On World Freedom Day, we commemorate the fall of the Berlin Wall and reaffirm our conviction that freedom is the inalienable right of every man, woman, and child.

On November 9, 1989, the Berlin Wall fell—a triumph of freedom over those who denied hope and opportunity to millions. The collapse of this barrier signaled the demise of the Soviet empire and ushered in a new era of liberty for much of Central and Eastern Europe. In the end, tyranny was overpowered by ordinary people who wanted to live their lives freely, worship God freely, and speak the truth to their children. With moral clarity and courage, brave individuals can change the course of history.

Our Nation remains committed to the advance of freedom and democracy as the great alternatives to repression and radicalism. America calls on every country that stifles dissent to end its repression, to trust its people, and to grant its citizens the liberty they deserve.

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 November 9, 2007, as World Freedom Day. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities, reaffirming our dedication to freedom and democracy.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of November, 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, 9:52 a.m., November 13, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on November 14.

Notice—Continuation of National Emergency Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction

November 8, 2007

On November 14, 1994, by Executive Order 12938, the President declared a national emergency with respect to the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States posed by the proliferation of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons "weapons of mass destruction" and the means of delivering such weapons. On July 28, 1998, the President issued Executive Order 13094 amending Executive Order 12938 to respond more effectively to the worldwide threat of weapons of mass destruction proliferation activities. On June 28, 2005, I issued Executive Order 13382 which, *inter alia*, further amended Executive Order

12938 to improve our ability to combat proliferation. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means of delivering them continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States; therefore, the national emergency first declared on November 14, 1994, and extended in each subsequent year, must continue. In accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing for 1 year the national emergency declared in Executive Order 12938, as amended.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

George W. Bush

The White House,
November 8, 2007.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:54 a.m., November 9, 2007]

NOTE: This notice was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 9, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on November 13.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction

November 8, 2007

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I transmit herewith notice of a 1-year continuation of the national emergency with respect to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction that was declared in Executive Order 12938 of November 14, 1994, as amended.

George W. Bush

The White House,
November 8, 2007.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 9.

Notice—Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Iran

November 8, 2007

On November 14, 1979, by Executive Order 12170, the President declared a national emergency with respect to Iran pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701–1706) to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States constituted by the situation in Iran. Because our relations with Iran have not yet returned to normal, and the process of implementing the January 19, 1981 agreements with Iran is still underway, the national emergency declared on November 14, 1979, must continue in effect beyond November 14, 2007. Therefore, consistent with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing for 1 year this national emergency with respect to Iran.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

George W. Bush

The White House,
November 8, 2007.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:54 a.m., November 9, 2007]

NOTE: This notice was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 9, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on November 13.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Iran

November 8, 2007

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency

is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the Iran emergency declared in Executive Order 12170 on November 14, 1979, is to continue in effect beyond November 14, 2007.

Our relations with Iran have not yet returned to normal, and the process of implementing the January 19, 1981, agreements with Iran is still underway. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared on November 14, 1979, with respect to Iran, beyond November 14, 2007.

George W. Bush

The White House,
November 8, 2007.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 9.

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.

November 3

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

November 4

During the day, the President returned to Washington, DC.

November 5

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

During the day, in the Oval Office, the President participated in a photo opportunity with the U.S. Walker Cup team.

The President announced his intention to nominate Charles A. Gargano to be Ambassador to Austria.

The President announced his intention to nominate Mary Ann Glendon to be Ambassador to the Holy See.

The President announced his intention to nominate Eric J. Tanenblatt to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The President announced his intention to nominate Elizabeth F. Bagley, Victoria Clarke, and William J. Hybl to be members of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy.

November 6

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the evening, on the North Portico, the President and Mrs. Bush greeted President Nicolas Sarkozy of France. Later, in the East Room, they hosted entertainment for President Sarkozy.

November 7

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had a telephone conversation with President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan to express his condolences for the loss of life due to the November 6 suicide bombing in Baghlan Province. He then had a telephone conversation with President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan.

In the afternoon, the President and President Nicolas Sarkozy of France traveled to President George Washington's Estate in Mount Vernon, VA, where they met in the Large Dining Room and toured the grounds. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

November 8

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Houston, TX, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Patrick Kuykendall and the crew of the space shuttle *Discovery*. While en route aboard Air Force One, he had separate telephone conversations with Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel and Poland's Ambassador to Iraq Gen. Edward Pietrzyk, who was wounded in Iraq on October 3.

In the afternoon, at a private residence, the President attended a Texans for Senator John Cornyn and Texas Victory reception. Later, he traveled to San Antonio, TX, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Gloria Sanchez. He then

toured the Center for the Intrepid at Brooke Army Medical Center.

Later in the afternoon, at a private residence, the President attended a fundraiser for Senator John Cornyn.

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

The President announced his intention to nominate Mary Beth Long to be Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs).

The President announced his intention to nominate Patricia M. Haslach to be accorded the rank of Ambassador during the performance of her duties as U.S. Senior Coordinator for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum.

November 9

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush hosted a social dinner for Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany and her husband, Joachim Sauer.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

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

Submitted November 7

Elizabeth F. Bagley,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy for a term expiring July 1, 2008 (reappointment).

Victoria Clarke,
of Maryland, to be a member of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy for a term expiring July 1, 2009, vice Penne Percy Korth, term expired.

Charles A. Gargano,
of New York, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Austria.

Mary Ann Glendon,
of Massachusetts, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Holy See.

William J. Hybl,
of Colorado, to be a member of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy for a term expiring July 1, 2009, vice Barbara McConnell Barrett, term expired.

Eric J. Tanenblatt,
of Georgia, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for a term expiring October 6, 2012, vice Dorothy A. Johnson, term expired.

Submitted November 8

Patricia M. Haslach,
of Oregon, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, for the rank of Ambassador during her tenure of service as U.S. Senior Coordinator for the Asia-Pacific Economic Corporation (APEC) Forum.

Mary Beth Long,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense, vice Peter W. Rodman, resigned.

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 November 5

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Dana Perino

Transcript of a press briefing by a senior administration official on Pakistan and Turkey

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 327 and H.R. 1284

Released November 6

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Dana Perino and Health and Human Services Secretary Michael O. Leavitt

Statement by the Press Secretary on the decision to forward the nomination of Michael B. Mukasey as Attorney General to the full Senate

Statement by the Press Secretary on the terrorist attack in Baghlan Province, Afghanistan

Fact sheet: Import Safety Action Plan: Increasing Protection of American Consumers

Released November 7

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's telephone conversation with President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan concerning the November 6 terrorist attack in Baghlan Province, Afghanistan

Statement by the Press Secretary on the administration's efforts to reduce chronic homelessness

Released November 8

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Dana Perino

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 1808 and S. 2106

Fact sheet: In Case Congress Doesn't Quickly Pass an AMT Patch: Failure To Act Could Result in $75 Billion of Delayed Refunds

Fact sheet: Keeping America's Promise to Those Who Have Defended Our Freedom

Released November 9

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

Fact sheet: Michael Mukasey: A Strong Attorney General

Acts Approved by the President

Approved November 5

H.R. 327 / Public Law 110–110
Joshua Omvig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act

H.R. 1284 / Public Law 110–111
Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2007

Approved November 8

H.R. 1808 / Public Law 110–112
To designate the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Augusta, Georgia, as the "Charlie Norwood Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center"

S. 2106 / Public Law 110–113
Procedural Fairness for September 11 Victims Act of 2007

Passed November 8, over the President's veto

H.R. 1495 / Public Law 110–114
Water Resources Development Act of 2007