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Editor's Note: The President was in Paris, France, on June 13, 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

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Interview With Gianni Riotta of Italy's Rai TV

June 6, 2008

Iraq/Afghanistan/Iran

Mr. Riotta. Mr. President, the world has known tremendous change during your tenure, and three areas of concern remain: Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan. What's your assessment of those three theaters? And looking back in perspective, would you do anything different?

The President. Well, that's an interesting question on doing anything different. Of course, history is going to be the judge of that. But the decision, for example, on Iraq, to remove Saddam Hussein, was the right decision then, and it's the right decision now.

The progress in Iraq has been substantial. For a period of time, it—the democracy was in doubt, primarily because sectarian violence was really unacceptable. I decided to put more troops in, rather than pull back, and now the violence is the lowest it's been since March of 2004. And politics is beginning to happen. So I'm encouraged about Iraq.

Afghanistan is also difficult because of new democracy emerging from the shadows of a brutal regime. Last year, of course, the Taliban announced they were going to go on the offense. In fact, our coalition went on the offense and, from a security perspective, made some progress against the Taliban. The best progress, though, is the advance of better trained police forces—and I thank the Italian Government for helping—as well as a better Afghan Army, which over time needs to provide the security for the country. Iraq will probably—progresses quicker cause it's got wealth. Afghanistan is broke.

Iran—the free world must continue to send a clear message to the Iranians that their ability to enrich, which could be transferred to a program to develop a nuclear weapon, is unacceptable. And so I will continue to work on this trip to talk about the dangers of a nuclear Iran—not civilian nuclear power, but a program that would be aimed at blackmail or destruction—and that we've got to work to stop them from learning how to enrich. And there's other ways to approach it.

Iran

Mr. Riotta. Should Iran resist the international pressure, military option remains open?

The President. Yes, it does.

Iran/Italy

Mr. Riotta. Italy wants to join the 5-plus-1 group of contacts negotiating with Iran. Germany is skeptical; they don't want us. What do you say?

The President. I say that whatever is effective in terms of sending a clear message to Iran. I will be spending time talking to this with the Prime Minister, Silvio Berlusconi. I've talked to Condi about this issue. I said, look, whatever works. Let's make sure we're effective. Italy can be an effective voice in sending a message to the Iranians. And that you don't have to choose isolation; there's a better way forward. Verifiably suspend your enrichment program, and there's a better way forward for you and your people.

And Italy can be a critical part of that. And so we'll work—I haven't really taken the temperature that much, but my judgment is, Italy can be a very important contributor.

U.S. Foreign Relations/Energy/Food Prices

Mr. Riotta. The relationship between the United States and Europe has been strained sometimes in the recent past. During your trip, what do you suggest we can do together vis-a-vis the oil crisis, the food crisis, and the recession coming?

The President. Yes, you know—first of all, let me talk about strained relations. Look, I've had great relations with many of the leaders. America and Italy remain incredibly

close. Do we agree on every issue? No. But do we agree on common values? Absolutely. We believe in human rights and human dignity and free press and free religion. And so what unites us is a heck of a lot stronger than those moments where we don't necessarily agree on every single issue. And so I will remind people of that. I'll remind people that we've got a lot of work to do.

In terms of the current energy issue, look, we're too dependent on hydrocarbons. World demand is such, relative to supply, that the price of energy is high. And therefore, we need to be spending monies on new technologies to enable us to become less dependent on oil. And I'm a big nuclear power guy. I believe the United States must be much more aggressive expanding nuclear power for two reasons: one, less dependency on hydrocarbons; and two, it will make us better stewards of the environment. I mean, if you're concerned about global warming, one thing you ought to be concerned about then is making sure that we've got power generated from a clean source of energy, a renewable source of energy, which is nuclear power.

The food prices concern me, obviously. But the truth of the matter is, one reason why food price are so high is because energy prices are high. I mean, when you think about it, farming is a pretty energy-intensive business—fertilizer is an energy; driving a tractor is an energy; crops to markets require energy. And so the crux of a lot of the problem is the energy prices.

Italy-U.S. Relations

Mr. Riotta. Talking to Prime Minister Berlusconi, what areas do you—will you encourage Italy to work with the United States, especially?

The President. Well, Iran, of course, cause I just happen to see it as a major threat. We—look, we got a lot of common areas: Afghanistan—and I will thank the Italian people for their sacrifices to help this young democracy. Silvio Berlusconi and I worked a lot of big issues together in the past. I know him well; I trust him; I like him. I'm—I find him to be one of the really interesting world leaders. And I'm really looking forward to seeing him again in his capacity, once again, as the Prime Minister.

We ought to work on trade matters. We ought to work on diseases like HIV/AIDS and malaria on the continent of Africa, for example. I mean, there's a lot we can do together.

Pope Benedict XVI

Mr. Riotta. You met the Pope while in the United States, and how do you see his role in trying to reopen the dialog between different civilizations and religions?

The President. Yes, I think it's—look, the Holy Father is a significant world figure. And we had a fabulous visit here, and it was such an honor to welcome him to the South Lawn of the White House. I wish you could have seen it. But you—maybe you did see it. I wish your viewers could have seen the reception he was given here. I think it was one of the largest crowds ever on the South Lawn, like 13,000 people. And my own personal visit with him was so uplifting.

And we did talk about the interfaith dialog, that I think is really important for people to find common ground through religion to, like, deal with the violence that is used by some in the name of religion, to perpetuate an ideology, and to remind people that peace—religion is peace. And there's no better person to carry that message than His Holy Father.

I talked to the King of Saudi Arabia about his visit with the Holy Father, and those are two very important figures when it comes to, obviously, Christianity and Islam. And I think it's just—I think it's great that he's reaching out.

2008 Presidential Election

Mr. Riotta. I know you don't want to comment on the Presidential elections, but the world is watching and is very excited because——

The President. Yes.

Mr. Riotta. ——there is a former war hero, there is an African American candidate, there's been Italian Americans, there's been a lady running for President. How do you see vitality of the American democracy, looking at this?

The President. Well, look, I'm for McCain, and everybody knows that. On the other hand, I thought it was a really good statement, powerful moment when a major political party nominates a African American

man to be their standard bearer. And it's good for our democracy that that happened. And we also had a major contender being a woman. Obviously, Hillary Clinton was a major contender. So I think it's a good sign for American democracy.

Now the debate begins as to who could be the best President. And I'm in an interesting position. I ran hard for Presidency twice; I campaigned hard in the off years, and now I'll be passing the mantle on to Senator McCain, particularly at the convention when he becomes the official nominee of our party. Obviously, he's going to be the nominee, but there's a moment at the convention where it's—"here he is." And I'll do my part to help him win, and—but it's going to be up to him. That's—he'll be the man sitting in the Oval Office making the tough decisions for peace and security.

Iraq

Mr. Riotta. You mentioned history at the beginning of this interview. And you know—you're aware that history will ask you about Iraq. What do you think, now when you look back to Iraq, especially after the report yesterday, are you still happy with all these positions?

The President. Look, I want to remind people, the report yesterday was one of many reports that—everybody thought Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction. I will remind people—and one of the things that's important about history is to remember the true history. And so the Security Council resolution was 15 to nothing on Saddam Hussein: disclose, disarm, or face serious consequences. European nations—France, Great Britain—supported that—1441, because everybody thought he had weapons of mass destruction, including many of the people who—of the Democratic Party here in the United States. You should listen to their words and listen to their quotes.

And so, absolutely, getting rid of Saddam Hussein was the right thing. And it was—we're all disappointed the intelligence wasn't what it was. But now the challenge is to help this young democracy survive. And a democracy in the heart of the Middle East is going to be, in my judgment, a powerful part of change. And we've got to work to free people in the Middle East from tyranny, because that is from—the place from which the terrorists have launched their attacks.

President's Future

Mr. Riotta. In the few seconds that are left, what will you do next?

The President. You know, good question. I haven't had much time to think about it, because I've got a lot to do. But I will probably write a book talking about the decisions I had to make, precisely to make sure that history understands the conditions and the environment during which I had to make decisions; start a freedom institute at what's called Southern Methodist University in Dallas to talk about the universal values of freedom abroad and at home. And other than that, I'm open for suggestions.

Mr. Riotta. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Yes, sir. Thanks. Looking forward to going back to Rome. It's a fabulous city, one of the great cities of the world.

Mr. Riotta. Especially after you leave the White House, come and I will take you around. [*Laughter*] Without the constraint of official——

The President. I'd love to.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 10:28 a.m. in the Map Room at the White House for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy; Pope Benedict XVI; King Abdallah bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia; Democratic Presidential candidate Barak Obama; former Democratic Presidential candidate Hillary Clinton; and Republican Presidential candidate John McCain. The interviewer referred to former Republican Presidential candidate Rudolph W. Giuliani. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 7. A portion of this interview could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

The President's Radio Address

June 7, 2008

Good morning. Congress will soon vote on legislation to fund our troops serving on the frontlines of the war on terror. This is an opportunity for Congress to give our men and women in uniform the tools they need to protect us, and Congress should approve these vital funds immediately.

Congress has had this funding request for more than a year, and there is no reason for further delay. This money is urgently needed to support military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. I put forward some reasonable requirements this bill must meet. First, this bill must give our troops the resources they need to defeat the terrorists and extremists. Second, the bill must not tie the hands of our commanders. And third, the bill must not exceed the reasonable and responsible funding levels I have requested.

Congress has had 16 months to decide how they will meet these requirements, and now the time has come for them to support our troops in harm's way. If Congress does not act, critical accounts at the Department of Defense will soon run dry. At the beginning of next month, civilian employees may face temporary layoffs. The Department will have to close down a vital program that is getting potential insurgents off the streets and into jobs. The Pentagon will run out of money it needs to support critical day-to-day operations that help keep our Nation safe. And after July, the Department will no longer be able to pay our troops, including those serving in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Our men and women in uniform and their families deserve better than this. Around the world, our troops are taking on dangerous missions with skill and determination. In Afghanistan, they're delivering blows to the Taliban and Al Qaida. In Iraq, they've helped bring violence down to its lowest point since late March of 2004. Civilian deaths are down. Sectarian killings are down. As security has improved, the economy has improved as well, and political reconciliation is taking place at the grassroots and national levels. The Iraqi security forces are becoming more capable, and as they do, our troops are beginning to come home under a policy of return on success.

Each day, the men and women of our Armed Forces risk their lives to make sure their fellow citizens are safer. They serve with courage and honor. They've earned the respect of all Americans. And they deserve the full support of Congress. I often hear Members of Congress say they oppose the war but still support the troops. Now they have a chance to prove it. Congress should pass a responsible funding bill that gives our men and women in uniform the resources they need and the support they have earned.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:30 a.m. on June 6 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 7. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 6 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on the Death of Jim McKay

June 7, 2008

Laura and I were saddened to learn of the passing of Jim McKay. For a generation of Americans, Jim was more than the much-honored host of "Wide World of Sports" and ABC's Olympic coverage. He was a talented and eloquent newsman and storyteller whose special gift was his ability to make the viewers at home genuinely care about more than just who won or lost.

Jim was at his best during what had to be his most difficult assignment, hosting with skill and sensitivity ABC's blanket coverage of the 1972 Munich Olympics hostage crisis.

Off camera, he was a compassionate and generous person and devoted family man.

We are also grateful for Jim's service to his country as a naval officer aboard a minesweeper during World War II.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Jim's wife, Margaret, his children, Sean and Mary, and all of his family and friends.

Interview With Natasa Briski of Slovenia's POP TV

June 6, 2008

Ms. Briski. First of all, I would like to thank you very much for this opportunity and for your time, Mr. President. Thank you very much.

The President. You're welcome.

President's Visit to Slovenia

Ms. Briski. Your first—7 years ago—and what just might be your very last trip to Europe as President include both—includes both times a stop in Slovenia. Excellent choice, I might add. [*Laughter*]

The President. I don't blame you for saying it. First of all, my first trip was consequential because that's where I first met Vladimir Putin. This trip is consequential because, of course, we're going to have an EU-U.S. summit. And my impressions of Slovenia—I've told this to a lot of people—is first of all, it's a beautiful country.

Ms. Briski. It is.

The President. Probably somewhat undiscovered in America, but my fellow citizens ought to go and explore Slovenia cause it's, I think, not only—it's got—I mean, you can ski; you can play golf.

Ms. Briski. It's a lot of opportunities for mountain biking.

The President. You can fish, mountain biking. So it's beautiful. And plus, the people are incredibly friendly.

EU-U.S. Summit

Ms. Briski. You are coming for the U.S.-EU summit.

The President. Right.

Ms. Briski. To—no dramatic announcements expected. But it will be the last summit for you.

The President. Yes.

Ms. Briski. What outcome would you like to see?

The President. Well, you know, look, the important thing about these summits is that it reaffirms our mutual values of human rights and human liberty, of our desire to work together on some key issues. And the United States and Europe has had its differences on certain issues, and—but we've always had the same common values. And it's important for me to signal to the Europeans, as well as my fellow citizens, that this relationship is an important relationship. And I'm confident the next President will see it as an important relationship as well. But we'll discuss a lot of important issues there too.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization/ Europe-U.S. Relations

Ms. Briski. You're also coming to celebrate the 60th anniversary of Marshall plan and Berlin Airlift, the historic role U.S. had after World War II in supporting Europe. And, you know, Europe has changed a lot recently: Western Balkans, two new states; Kosovo high on a priority list for Slovenia's Presidency. I would like to hear, what do you think are the most memorable events, Europe-wise, that your administration helped to achieve in the past 7 years?

The President. Well, one, of course, is the expansion of NATO. And it's a—I'll never forget going to Romania right after nations—some nations were admitted into NATO and talking about Article 5—an attack on one is an attack on all. And a lot of countries had come from a different style of government and a different type of security arrangements to one in which free nations were bound together. And so the expansion of NATO and the offering of—sending a positive signal to Georgia and Ukraine recently has been an incredibly positive accomplishment.

I think working together in Afghanistan is a—is going to be an historic achievement; helping a young democracy recover from a society in which women, for example, were treated as unbelievably second-class citizens. I mean, it was just a barbaric regime.

Hopefully, in terms of trade, that we'll fight off protectionism and keep trade open. I know there's some trade disputes going on, but that shouldn't prevent us from being active in terms of perpetuating free and fair trade. And so one of the things, of course, we'll be discussing is the Doha round of the WTO.

Iran/U.S. Foreign Aid

Ms. Briski. That's true. And it probably—Iran might be also high on the agenda at the summit?

The President. Yes, Iran—kind of the common threats will be on the agenda. For me—as you know, I'm a big believer in freedom. Interesting that Europe is now whole, free, and at peace, and there's a reason why. And we got to, in my judgment, extend that same concept to the Middle East, from which a lot of violence comes. And obviously, one

of the problems that we face is preventing Iran from developing the know-how as to how to make a nuclear weapon.

And so we'll be discussing that kind of joint efforts, multilateral efforts. But, you know, I also want to emphasize that—but the United States—and I personally feel very strongly about helping people realize the blessings of life by freeing them from HIV/AIDS or malaria or hunger. And I'm very proud of our Nation's accomplishments in terms of those agenda items. And I'm looking forward to working with our European colleagues to see if we can't make it even more robust.

Visa Waiver Program

Ms. Briski. Next question would be on visa waiver.

The President. Yes. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Briski. It's an issue. I know. It's an issue in Europe.

The President. It is an issue. It is an issue.

Ms. Briski. And you know that currently, United States enforces two different systems for travelers from——

The President. Yes.

Ms. Briski. ——European countries. Plus, you just announced new, stricter rules for countries that are part of the Visa Waiver Program. I wanted to hear your opinion on that, and maybe your answer to those in Europe who say that America is not as welcoming a place that it used to be.

The President. Yes. No, look, I'm concerned about that impression, because we are a welcoming place. We want our friends to come. We want investment to be open.

You know, first of all, I can understand why many of our friends in Europe who aren't treated like other nations within the EU are treated on visas are concerned. They say, "Wait a minute. We're very supportive of the United States. We like the United States. And yet we're treated differently when it comes to visas." And this is a hangover from the old visa system, which I have been assiduously working to change. And we are making good progress. As a matter of fact, there—I think there's going to be quite a few nations that were—will get visa waiver.

As to whether or not we've made it harder for visa waiver countries to come to the United States, actually not. We've made it easier. In other words, you file your paperwork online before you come to the United States, which should actually facilitate travel, we hope. But, look, I am concerned that people say, "Well, America no longer wants us to come," when it's the exact opposite of my personal point of view and the view of my Government.

America's Image Abroad

Ms. Briski. Sure. And I have to ask you this: Public surveys taken globally indicate kind of anti-Americanism, and——

The President. Yes.

Ms. Briski. ——Europe is no exception in that. Do you believe that the American brand needs a makeover?

The President. No. I mean, we stand for liberty and human rights and freedom. Look, I've had to make some tough decisions that some people didn't like. But the truth of the matter is, when you really look at—like, for example, our relations in the Far East, we got great relations with Japan, China, and Korea—South Korea. Or India, for example—we got new relations with India that no administration has ever pushed—South America and Central America.

My attitude is this—this is what I tell people. First of all, you can't make decisions based upon opinion polls. Secondly, that a lot of people like America. They may not sometimes necessarily like the President, but they like America. They like what America stands for. Otherwise, why would so many people wanting to be—come here, for example, which we welcome. And so I don't—I hear just stuff like that, and I just—I dismiss it as kind of like what happens when there's, kind of, gossip and rumors and—because the truth of the matter is, America, just like many nations in Europe, stands for what's right, which is decency and freedom of speech and freedom to worship. And I'm very proud of my country, obviously.

2008 Presidential Election

Ms. Briski. Okay. And on American Presidency, actually on elections, international policies are the aspects where the President's work—that—where the Commander in

Chief has an opportunity to change the history's course.

The President. Yes.

Ms. Briski. And that is why people around the world follow the American elections very, very closely. It's been very interesting so far.

The President. Yes, it has.

Ms. Briski. The Democrats—Democratic candidates have not been very easy on you.

The President. Of course not. They got me—look, if you're—that's what happens. I mean, they say, "We want change." Of course—and I tell people, every time I ran for politics I said, "We want change," unless, of course, I was the incumbent, in which case I was not for change; I was for myself. But what you'll see is a lot of rhetoric, and I understand that. It's—and, you know, I'm in an unusual position because for the past 14 years, I've been an active candidate myself, and now I'm kind of getting to be a senior—kind of senior status. And I'll help my party, and of course, I'm for John McCain. But there will be a lot of debate, and it will be interesting to watch these candidates.

Ms. Briski. Sure. So your message to the 44th President of the United States would be?

The President. Stand on principle. Stay strong, promote freedom, defend America, and work with our friends and allies to achieve common objectives.

Ms. Briski. Mr. President, thank you very much for this interview. I hope you will have a safe flight to Europe. And as you referred to Slovenia 2 years ago, on our Prime Minister's visit to the White House, as an "interesting slice of heaven," I hope you will have a heavenly stay.

The President. I'll bet I do.

Ms. Briski. Thank you very much.

The President. Thank you so much. Good to see you.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 10:15 a.m. in the Map Room at the White House for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Vladimir Putin of Russia, in his former capacity as the President of Russia; and Republican Presidential candidate John McCain. Natasa Briski referred to Prime Minister Janez Jansa of Slovenia. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 8.

Executive Order 13465—Amending Executive Order 12989, as Amended

June 6, 2008

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including subsection 121(a) of title 40 and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, and in order to take further steps to promote economy and efficiency in Federal Government procurement, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Executive Order 12989 of February 13, 1996, as amended, is further amended:

(a) by striking the title and inserting in lieu thereof "Economy and Efficiency in Government Procurement Through Compliance with Certain Immigration and Nationality Act Provisions and Use of an Electronic Employment Eligibility Verification System"; and

(b) by striking the material that follows the title and precedes section 1 of the order and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

"This order is designed to promote economy and efficiency in Federal Government procurement. Stability and dependability are important elements of economy and efficiency. A contractor whose workforce is less stable will be less likely to produce goods and services economically and efficiently than a contractor whose workforce is more stable. It is the policy of the executive branch to enforce fully the immigration laws of the United States, including the detection and removal of illegal aliens and the imposition of legal sanctions against employers that hire illegal aliens. Because of the worksite enforcement policy of the United States and the underlying obligation of the executive branch to enforce the immigration laws, contractors that employ illegal aliens cannot rely on the continuing availability and service of those illegal workers, and such contractors inevitably will have a less stable and less dependable workforce than contractors that do not employ such persons. Where a contractor assigns illegal aliens to work on Federal contracts, the enforcement of Federal immigration laws imposes a direct risk of disruption,

delay, and increased expense in Federal contracting. Such contractors are less dependable procurement sources, even if they do not knowingly hire or knowingly continue to employ unauthorized workers.

"Contractors that adopt rigorous employment eligibility confirmation policies are much less likely to face immigration enforcement actions, because they are less likely to employ unauthorized workers, and they are therefore generally more efficient and dependable procurement sources than contractors that do not employ the best available measures to verify the work eligibility of their workforce. It is the policy of the executive branch to use an electronic employment verification system because, among other reasons, it provides the best available means to confirm the identity and work eligibility of all employees that join the Federal workforce. Private employers that choose to contract with the Federal Government should meet the same standard.

"I find, therefore, that adherence to the general policy of contracting only with providers that do not knowingly employ unauthorized alien workers and that have agreed to utilize an electronic employment verification system designated by the Secretary of Homeland Security to confirm the employment eligibility of their workforce will promote economy and efficiency in Federal procurement.

"Now, Therefore, to ensure the economical and efficient administration and completion of Federal Government contracts, and by the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including subsection 121(a) of title 40 and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, it is hereby ordered as follows:".

Sec. 2. Section 1 of Executive Order 12989, as amended, is further amended by:

(a) striking the last sentence in subsection 1(a); and

(b) striking subsection (b) and inserting in lieu thereof the following new subsections:

"(b) It is the policy of the executive branch in procuring goods and services that, to ensure the economical and efficient administration and completion of Federal Government contracts, contracting agencies may not enter into contracts with employers that do not use the best available means to confirm the work authorization of their workforce.

"(c) It is the policy of the executive branch to enforce fully the antidiscrimination provisions of the INA. Nothing in this order relieves employers of antidiscrimination obligations under section 274B of the INA (8 U.S.C. 1324b) or any other law.

"(d) All discretion under this order shall be exercised consistent with the policies set forth in this section.".

Sec. 3. Section 5 of Executive Order 12989, as amended, is further amended to read as follows:

"*Sec. 5.* (a) Executive departments and agencies that enter into contracts shall require, as a condition of each contract, that the contractor agree to use an electronic employment eligibility verification system designated by the Secretary of Homeland Security to verify the employment eligibility of: (i) all persons hired during the contract term by the contractor to perform employment duties within the United States; and (ii) all persons assigned by the contractor to perform work within the United States on the Federal contract.

"(b) The Secretary of Homeland Security:

"(i) shall administer, maintain, and modify as necessary and appropriate the electronic employment eligibility verification system designated by the Secretary under subsection (a) of this section; and

"(ii) may establish with respect to such electronic employment verification system:

"(A) terms and conditions for use of the system; and

"(B) procedures for monitoring the use, failure to use, or improper use of the system.

"(c) The Secretary of Defense, the Administrator of General Services, and the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration shall amend the Federal Acquisition Regulation to the extent necessary and appropriate to implement the debarment responsibility, the employment eligibility

verification responsibility, and other related responsibilities assigned to heads of departments and agencies under this order.

"(d) Except to the extent otherwise specified by law or this order, the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Attorney General:

"(i) shall administer and enforce this order; and

"(ii) may, after consultation to the extent appropriate with the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Labor, the Administrator of General Services, the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy, and the heads of such other departments or agencies as may be appropriate, issue such rules, regulations, or orders, or establish such requirements, as may be necessary and appropriate to implement this order.".

Sec. 4. Section 7 of Executive Order 12989, as amended, is amended by striking "respective agencies" and inserting in lieu thereof "respective departments or agencies".

Sec. 5. Section 8 of Executive Order 12989, as amended, is amended to read as follows:

"Sec. 8. (a) This order shall be implemented in a manner intended to minimize the burden on participants in the Federal procurement process.

"(b) This order shall be implemented in a manner consistent with the protection of intelligence and law enforcement sources, methods, and activities from unauthorized disclosure.".

Sec. 6. Section 9 of Executive Order 12989, as amended, is amended to read as follows:

"Sec. 9. (a) Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect:

(i) authority granted by law to a department or agency or the head thereof; or

(ii) functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budget, administrative, or legislative proposals.

"(b) This order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.

"(c) This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.".

Sec. 7. This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

George W. Bush

The White House,
June 6, 2008.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:02 a.m., June 10, 2008]

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 9, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on June 11.

Remarks on Departure for Kranj, Slovenia

June 9, 2008

Good morning. I'm just about to leave for Europe. I'm looking forward to my trip. I'm looking forward to meeting with our friends and allies. We've got strong relations in Europe, and this trip will help solidify those relations. And we got a lot to talk about.

First, I'm looking forward to talking about the freedom agenda with the European nations. You know, we've got a lot of work to do in Afghanistan. And the countries I'm going to have committed troops to Afghanistan, and of course, I want to thank them and remind them there's a lot of work to be done.

I talked to Laura yesterday, who, as you now know, took a trip to Afghanistan. I want to thank her for going. She gave me a good assessment about what she saw. She saw progress, but she also saw there needs to be a lot of work to be done—there's a lot of work to be done. And so she's going to go

to the Paris conference, along with Secretary Rice, on our behalf to ask nations to contribute to the development of Afghanistan, which will mean they'll be contributing to peace.

And then, of course, we'll be talking about the economy. A lot of Americans are concerned about our economy. I can understand why. Gasoline prices are high; energy prices are high. I do remind them that we have put a stimulus package forward that is expected to help boost the economy. Of course, we'll be monitoring the situation.

I will remind our friends and allies overseas that we're all too dependent on hydrocarbons, and we must work to advance technologies to help us become less dependent on hydrocarbons. I'll also remind them, though, that the United States has an opportunity to help increase the supply of oil on the market, therefore, taking pressure off gasoline for hard-working Americans. And that I've proposed to the Congress that they open up ANWR, open up the Continental Shelf, and give this country a chance to help us through this difficult period by finding more supplies of crude oil, which will take the pressure off the price of gasoline.

These are global issues we'll be discussing. Secretary Paulson will be also discussing issues at the G–8—the G–8 ministers in Japan this week.

As well, I'll talk about our Nation's commitment to a strong dollar. A strong dollar is in our Nation's interests. It is in the interests of the global economy. Our economy is large, and it's open and flexible. Our capital markets are some of the deepest and most liquid. And the long-term health and strong foundation of our economy will shine through and be reflected in currency values.

U.S. economy has continued to grow in the face of unprecedented challenges. We got to keep our economies flexible. Both the U.S. economy and European economies need to be flexible in order to deal with today's challenges.

I'm looking forward to my trip, and I'm looking forward to seeing Laura. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:55 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting Budget Amendments

June 9, 2008

Dear Madam Speaker:

I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed amendments to my FY 2009 Budget requests for the Departments of Agriculture, Energy, Homeland Security, Housing and Urban Development, the Interior, Labor, Transportation, and the Treasury; as well as the Corps of Engineers, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the Office of Personnel Management. These amendments will decrease by $3 million the overall discretionary budget authority in my FY 2009 Budget.

These amendments are necessary to correctly reflect policies proposed in my FY 2009 Budget. The details of these amendments are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 10.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting Budget Amendments

June 9, 2008

Dear Madam Speaker:

I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed amendments to my FY 2009 Budget for the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, the Interior, Labor, and the Treasury. Overall, the discretionary budget authority proposed in my FY 2009 Budget would not be increased by these requests.

I am requesting an additional $546 million for the Department of Commerce to cover increased costs to conduct the 2010 Decennial Census. I am also requesting $275 million for the Department of Health and Human Services to improve food and medical product safety and $1 million for the Department of Homeland Security to continue

operations of the Office of the Federal Coordinator for Gulf Coast Rebuilding through February 28, 2009. These amounts are fully offset by reductions to other accounts.

The details of these amendments are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 10.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting a Supplemental Budget Request for the Legislative Branch for Fiscal Year 2008

June 9, 2008

Dear Madam Speaker:

As a matter of comity, I am transmitting to the Congress, without modification, the enclosed supplemental proposal from the legislative branch for FY 2008.

The details of this request are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 10.

The President's News Conference With European Union Leaders in Kranj

June 10, 2008

Prime Minister Jansa. Good afternoon, and welcome to Slovenia. Welcome to Brdo, where we have just concluded this year's summit meeting between the EU and the U.S.A. I welcome in our midst the President of the United States of America, Mr. George W. Bush, and the President of the European Commission, Mr. Jose Barroso.

For the U.S. President, this is the eighth summit and his second visit to Slovenia. It happened on the same spot; also, the press conference was held here. This is a historic event. On my visit to Washington 2 years ago, Mr. President, you welcomed us by saying that Slovenia is a piece of heaven on Earth, and we enjoyed your excellent hospitality. I hope we are returning that hospitality to some extent today.

Our discussions at this summit were very good and open. We confirmed that the transatlantic partnership is solid and dynamic. This message carries special weight in the historic context of this summit. Sixty years ago, the U.S. offered the ravaged and divided Europe hope through the Marshall plan and through courage, solidarity, and vision. The first U.S. President, George Washington, once said that there will be a united states of Europe. This has not happened yet, but the European Union has been created, an area of freedom and progress uniting 500 million Europeans.

The European Union and the U.S. share the most important fundamental values: democracy, free entrepreneurial initiative, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the respect for the principles of the rule of law. The EU and the U.S. together represent 10 percent of the world's population. The trade in goods and services amounts to €3 billion a day, and they together produce almost 60 percent of the world's GDP. And together they contribute 75 percent of development aid to poor countries. However, they also emit the majority of greenhouse gases.

Because of all these reasons, they also share a significant joint responsibility impacting the key global challenges. Our views on certain paths differ. Our views are different on, for example, the death penalty or the mandatory restriction on CO_2 emissions, but we are openly discussing these differences and looking for solutions.

We spoke at length about the issues of climate change and energy security. These issues affect all humanity and our well-established habits and our way of life. We confirmed our readiness to face this challenge together. We in the European Union consider it necessary to define the mandatory objectives for reducing CO_2 emissions and to reach a global agreement. We must cooperate in protecting the environment, in

searching new sources of energy, and in developing new technologies.

High oil prices have forced us to intensify our search for new energy solutions. We are on the threshold of a new industrial revolution. Low carbon production and transport are becoming an economic necessity in addition to an environmental one. We need the most efficient solutions to the benefit of the present and future generations as soon as possible. The European Union and the U.S. will lead the new industrial revolution.

We must also create broad alliances. Several important meetings are ahead of us this year. We have great expectations concerning the G–8 summit and the U.N. conference on climate change in Poland.

We spoke about the most topical issues of the world economy. Our goals include a secure future, preservation of jobs, and combating protectionism. We are determined to cooperate in eliminating the global imbalances and to attract to this task the new, fast-growing economies. We are committed to continuing discussions on the Doha development agenda within the framework of the WTO and to the realization of the Millennium Development Goals.

We also discussed a series of regional issues. We focused in particular on the Western Balkans. In the European Union, we value greatly the role the U.S. played in the 1990s in putting an end to the violence in the region. Today, we are united and firm in our support of the prospect of these countries joining the Euro-Atlantic structures. This is the path which leads to peace and stability, as well as to the necessary democratic and economic reforms.

We were informed of the work carried out by the Transatlantic Economic Council. We remain committed to the elimination of barriers to mutual trade, a process which will bring economic growth and create new jobs. We are in favor of establishing the Transatlantic Economic Council as a mechanism for bringing tangible results that will benefit both consumers and producers in the EU and the U.S. The European Commission and its President, Barroso, are making every effort to this end.

The concrete results also includes the Air Transport Agreement. The first stage of the agreement has already entered into force. It liberalizes conditions for mutual investment and enables a freer access to air services. And in the middle of the former months, we launched the negotiations on the second stage. The work on the Aviation Safety Agreement has also been completed, and I hope it will be signed by the end of the month.

We also spoke about visa-free travel to the U.S. for all EU citizens. I am pleased that we are close to seeing new countries join the Visa Waiver Program soon. We are aware that certain restrictions are necessary for security reasons. Nevertheless, we remain determined to ensure that the need for enhanced security will not restrict the visa-free travel for our citizens.

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

Mr. President, European Union and United States are most developed democracies. Last big EU enlargement, which included Slovenia and other Central and Eastern European countries, has been one of the great—greatest achievements in terms of promotion of democracy. Today, almost whole Europe is free and united. This is very strong message for 21st century. The world is now complex. Nobody alone can solve all problems. War, peace, security, and promotion of democracy, climate change and fight against poverty are global challenges today. Even together we are not able to solve all of them, but if we don't work together and we are not able to form even stronger alliance, then I'm afraid we won't succeed.

I'm glad that we can conclude after last few and also after today's EU-U.S. summit that we indeed work together. Although we might have different approaches in some aspects, it should never overshadow the depth and quality of our cooperation. We covered, as I said, a wide range of issues during our talks, from foreign policy to economic cooperation. Many strategic projects are underway. Maybe we need to develop also a common name for them. Symbols and names are important in the world's politics.

Mr. President, we led strongly to the rich story of your—this time's European tour—60th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift and the

Marshall plan. United States engagement did not only bring rehabilitation to Europe by promoting integration, it set an irreversible process in motion. Today, Slovenia is hosting EU-U.S. summit, something that seemed impossible 60 years ago; something that seemed impossible even 20 years ago, during the Slovenian Spring, when our streets were full of people fighting for freedom and democracy.

Our history teach us that we must be ambitious. It's time to be ambitious. We have to create stronger alliance based on our democratic values—ever to protect them, but also to share them with others. Alliance of democracies is strong and credible toward inside and open to outside world. Alliance able to lead, to change, and to help; a new hope for those who suffer. Who else can start the work if the biggest and most developed democracies can't?

Now I invite the President of United States, Mr. George Bush, to take the floor and then the President of the European Commission.

Thank you.

President Bush. Mr. Prime Minister, thank you. Commission President Barroso, it's good to see you. Thank you for your time and friendship. Let me correct the record, Mr. Prime Minister. I said, "Slovenia was a little slice of heaven." I'd like to, with your indulgence, change my remarks. Slovenia is a big slice of heaven. [*Laughter*] And I'm——

Prime Minister Jansa. Thank you.

President Bush. ——honored to be back in your beautiful country. One of these days, I'm going to come back as a tourist. As you know, I'm close to retirement. [*Laughter*] And I'm looking forward to seeing more of your beautiful country and meeting more of your really gracious and hospitable people. So thank you very much.

This is my eighth EU-U.S. meeting. My message at the end is that it's really important for the United States to stay close with the EU. It's in our interest that the EU be strong, vibrant, and it's in our interests to work hard to have a partnership that solves problems.

And we discussed a lot of problems today. First, we discussed the freedom agenda. I find it ironic—not ironic, just interesting, that 20 years ago, Mr. Prime Minister, you were in jail—[*laughter*]—because of your beliefs, because——

Prime Minister Jansa. Not very happy times. [*Laughter*]

President Bush. You shouldn't have been happy about it. But because you had the courage to stand up and speak out clearly for freedom for all people, you were put in jail. And it seems like that any time we find people who were put in jail because they're willing to speak up for freedom, those of us who live in free lands ought to work to liberate them, Mr. Prime Minister.

And we spent a lot of time talking about how to help others realize the blessings of liberty, whether it be in the Balkans, whether it be a Palestinian state, and whether it be to use the EU as a way to encourage people to develop the habits of reformist societies.

And, by the way, one subject we didn't spend a lot of time on that I'd like to clarify the U.S. position on is, we strongly believe Turkey ought to be a member of the EU. And we appreciate Turkey's record of democratic and free market reforms in working to realize its EU aspirations.

We spent a lot of time on the Middle East. Besides the Palestinian state, we talked about Lebanon, Iran, and Syria. One thing is for certain: If more people lived in free societies in the Middle East, the Middle East would be a more hopeful and more peaceful place. And so we strategized as to how to do that, Mr. Prime Minister, and I want to thank you for that.

I thank you for your support in Iraq and Afghanistan. It's amazing how these countries have gone from tyrannical situations to hopeful, young democracies. And I believe it's in our mutual interest to work hard to help these democracies survive for the sake of peace and for the sake of human rights and human dignity.

We talked about Cuba. I want to thank very much your leadership—both of your leadership in having the EU summit in South America. Obviously, it's in the U.S. interest that you do so. We've got a lot of relations with countries in our neighborhood.

I want to thank you very much for your expressions on Cuba. They said, before relations should go forward, all political prisoners

ought to be freed. If the Castro administration really is different, the first way to show that difference to the world is to free the political prisoners. That's something, Mr. Prime Minister, that I'm sure you can relate to.

We talked about Zimbabwe, Darfur, and Burma. We talked about how to make sure we have travel in a way that comforts our societies. I understand the visa waiver issue very well. I spend a lot of time talking to people that are worried about not being able to be treated like other members of the EU. I know the problem. We're on our way to solving it in a way that, I think, will satisfy countries as well as the EU itself, Jose.

We spent a lot of time on Iran. And I appreciate the Foreign Minister, Solana, going to Iran to deliver a clear message: There is a better way for you to move forward than a way that, so far, has led to isolation. And a—Iran with a nuclear weapon would be incredibly dangerous for world peace. And so we've got to continue to work together to make it clear, abundantly clear to them, that it's their choice to make. They can either face isolation, or they can have a—better relations with all of us if they verifiably suspend their enrichment program.

We talked about trade and the Doha round. We're committed to a successful Doha round. It's not going to be easy, but it's, in our judgment, necessary that we continue to work together. I appreciate Ambassador Schwab and Commissioner Mandelson's cooperation in trying to get an agreement that we all can live with. It's really important to defeat the voices of protectionism now. And if you're truly worried about global development, if you're worried about poverty, one of the best ways to help poor people is through trade. And so we're committed to the global round.

I thought our discussions today were very good. And we don't—we spent time talking about HIV/AIDS and malaria on the continent of Africa. The United States is—looks forward to working with EU nations to helping alleviate folks from needless death. We've got a strategy in place that's effective, and we look forward to having partners join us.

And then finally, of course, we talked about energy and global climate change. I assured the leaders we have a strategy that we think will be effective at addressing global climate change and, at the same time, dependence on hydrocarbons, and that is through a major economies meeting, a series of meetings, all aimed at getting the major developing—the major economies to agree to a firm goal and to commit to strategies to achieve that goal. The United States is more than willing to engage in those discussions. I will just tell you that unless China and India are at the table, unless they agree to a goal, unless they agree to firm strategies to achieve that goal, then I don't see how any international agreement can be effective.

And so therefore, our strategy is to be realistic and to understand that the process is important but not nearly as important as the results. And so we've had good engagement, Mr. Prime Minister and Commission President Barroso. Thank you for your friendship. I'm—you know, it's interesting, my first visit as U.S. President to Europe included a—my first stop in Slovenia. My last visit as U.S. President to Europe includes first stop in Slovenia. It's a fitting circle. [*Laughter*]

Thank you.

Prime Minister Jansa. Thank you. Please.

President Durao Barroso. Thank you. Thank you, Prime Minister Jansa, President Bush. I'll start by this point. I think it's very symbolic and important that this summit, here with President Bush, the last one you will be present as President of the United States, with European Union is in Slovenia, a country that, more or less, 25 years ago was not yet free and independent. And today, it's the Presidency of the European Council, is a member of the euro zone, is a member of the Schengen area, and assuming full its responsibilities.

And let me underline this point, because it really deserves to be underlined. That would not have been possible without European Union and without strong transatlantic relationship, because during the cold war, we have always had support of the United States of America.

And this is very important to understand, for the public in Europe and, I believe, also in United States, that the support of the

United States of America to freedom and democracy and, indeed, to the European integration process was very, very important, and that this great project of European integration is well and running. Fifty years ago, we were 6 member states; now we are 27 countries. And this country where we were was not a free country. My own country, 45 years ago, was not a democracy. And now we have from the Atlantic to the Black Sea, from the Mediterranean to the Baltic Sea, democratic countries living together in peace and freedom.

This is indeed a great achievement. And this achievement was possible thanks to the commitment of the founding fathers of the European Union to a united Europe, but also thanks to support of the United States of America. That's why I think it's fair to say to the United States sometimes, thank you. Thank you for all the support you have been giving to the integration and progress of democracy also in Europe.

So I believe it's important that we put all our relations in this perspective: a community of values, a community of values not only for our respective nations but beyond, promoting and supporting a world based on human rights and democracy.

President Bush and Prime Minister Jansa already spoke about the main subjects. I will not repeat what—everything they said. Let me just underline one or two points that are more in the competence of the European Commission.

On trade issues, we must work hard to achieve a fair and balanced outcome to the current round of WTO talks. The deal remains there to be done if the political will is there. I believe the deal will be good for developing countries in terms of new opportunities. It will also give a needed boost to the global economy, including the European Union and the U.S. economies. Time to move is now. We have a fair and balanced deal in our grasp that will help us face the challenges of globalization.

So I believe together the United States and European Union can make a difference trying to bring others to a more realistic position so that we can achieve that deal on Doha trade and development talks.

One year ago, we have adopted a framework for advancing transatlantic economic integration, and I was proud, together with President Bush and Chancellor Merkel—then President of the Council—to create a Transatlantic Economic Council. We have put in place a new working method. Today I'm happy to say that in just 1 year of existence, this body has brought more and steadier progress on some issues than in many years before. We have made progress on open investment, on accounting standards, on finding alternative methods to animal testing, on certification of electrical equipment.

This might be seen as rather technical, but all of these developments add up to major cost savings for European Union companies and United States companies as well. This is understood by all parties. There were reports made by the transatlantic business community as estimated economic benefits of the items on our TEC—on our Transatlantic Economic Council agenda—as $10 billion in terms of savings for business on both sides of the Atlantic.

So it is fair to say that Transatlantic Economic Council has given new momentum to the bilateral economic agenda. Indeed, the European Union and the United States of America count for the largest bilateral trade relationship in the world. Transatlantic trade in goods and services totals over €1.9 billion a day, and the figures of all bilateral trade and investment show the high degree of interdependence of our economies. The European—the United States remains the largest export destination for the European Union. In a time of important challenges to our economies, we have reaffirmed our commitment to free trade, open economies in the face of protectionist voices on both sides of the Atlantic.

The challenging economic situation makes the partnership ever more important. As we see with rising fuel and food prices, we, now in Europe, are discussing what are the right policy choices to increase energy diversification, energy efficiency, and also to improve food management. And we believe that these developments make it even more urgent to find a global agreement on climate change, and we spent a lot of our time discussing this.

What we have in common? The will to come to that agreement. We need that agreement to be global, so, of course, to add also China, India, and others. And I believe it is important now to move ahead.

We have discussed some of the events that we are preparing, like that major economies meeting and also the G–8 meeting. And we hope that the United States and Europe can work even closer in this matter, because we—European and American leadership—it's quite clear for me that it will be easier to get that global agreement. We are trying to get it by 2009 in Copenhagen, a United Nations agreement that could, of course, create the right response—global response for a global problem in terms of climate change. We need that not only because of a responsibility towards our planet, but we need also because of energy security concerns and also because of the rising food prices and the pressure that those prices are putting on our economies and the competitiveness of our economies.

So those were two of the subjects that we have discussed—economic—more in detail: the economic and trade and investment relations and also climate change. There were many others that President Bush and Prime Minister Jansa also referred, but let me congratulate you, Prime Minister Jansa, for a very successful meeting and for the high quality of the debate and the open debate that you had today.

Prime Minister Jansa. Thank you. Now we have time for a few questions.

EU-U.S. Relations

Q. Hello, Mr. President, here I am—Slovenian public television. Mr. President, as you mentioned before, this is probably your last visit in Slovenia and Europe.

President Bush. As President. [*Laughter*]

Q. As President, of course. With your past experience of last, let's say, 8 years, how can you see the future of the European Union and its relations with United States? There are certain problems.

President Bush. Yes, there are problems. On the other hand, there is much more that unites us than divides us. Of course there is going to be problems and differences. That's normal.

First of all, there's going to be differences within the EU. You got—you have 27 nations all trying to come together to forge a common agenda. That's why I'd much rather have my job than Jose's job. [*Laughter*] But there will be differences. But somehow they managed to forge a common position on a lot of key issues, and that's where we discuss these issues.

And—but the thing that unites us—and this is important for all of us to realize—is that we share common values. And people say, oh, that's just corny; that doesn't mean anything. It means a lot if you believe in human rights and human dignity and rule of law and freedom to speak and freedom to worship. That's a lot. That's a foundation for a very firm and lasting relationship.

And so I am confident that whoever succeeds me as President will understand the importance of the EU in regards to United States foreign policy and will work hard to make sure ties, you know, remain strong. But make no mistake about it, there will be differences of—on how to approach certain issues, and that's okay, just so long as we let those—don't let those differences divide us permanently, and I don't believe they possibly can.

Moderator. All right, we'll take a question from the American side, Steven Lee Myers of the New York Times, please.

Iran

Q. Thank you, gentlemen. I wonder if I could ask about your statement on Iran and the communique today. And you described a combination of incentives as well as additional measures that you might take. And I wonder if you think that that is enough—the idea of the prospect of future action is enough or sufficient to get the Iranians to change their point of view?

And for you, President Bush, sir, are you frustrated at all by the pace of the diplomatic negotiations underway, particularly in light of the IAEA findings and Iran's insistence that it's going to continue to enrich? Thank you.

President Bush. I'll start. We've always made it clear to the Iranians there's a better way forward, that if they want to have a relationship with the EU–3 and the United States and other countries, they—all they've

got to do is verifiably suspend their enrichment program. And the reason why that's important is that they learn to enrich, it means they've learned to—a key part of developing a nuclear weapon. And if they end up with a nuclear weapon, the free world's going to say, why didn't we do something about it at the time, before they developed it? And so now is the time for there to be strong diplomacy.

You know, the fundamental question is not ours to make; it's theirs to make, and that is, are they going to continue on their path of obstruction? Will they continue to isolate their people? Are they going to continue to deny the people of Iran a bright future by basically saying, we don't care what the world says.

And that's the position they're in. I'll leave behind a multilateral framework to work this issue. I think the Prime Minister said it's—you know, one country can't solve all problems. I fully agree with that. A group of countries can send a clear message to the Iranians, and that is, we're going to continue to isolate you; we'll continue to work on sanctions; we'll find new sanctions if need be if you continue to deny the just demands of a free world, which is to give up your enrichment program.

They've ignored IAEA in the past, and therefore, they can't be trusted with enrichment. And I thought we had a very fruitful discussion. We're on the same page. And I want to thank both leaders up here and Foreign Minister Solana as well.

Iran/Israel/Environment

Q. [*Inaudible*]

President Bush. This is "Ask George" day. [*Laughter*]

Moderator. A question from the European side.

Q. Yes. I would have a question for both of—President and the Prime Minister.

President Bush. Which President? [*Laughter*] Let me guess.

Q. The President of the United States.

President Bush. Yes, all right. [*Laughter*] Sorry, Jose. Just trying to work you in the deal here, you know? [*Laughter*]

Q. As you said, he's the Commission's President.

President Bush. Okay, fine.

Q. On Iran, I would like to ask you, Mr. President, there is—seems to be an emerging debate in Israel about a military option against the nuclear installations in Iran. How do you see that debate?

And, Prime Minister Jansa, I would like to ask you on climate change, how do you rate the chances that in the following years there will be an agreement with the U.S. on this issue?

President Bush. First of all, if you were living in Israel, you'd be a little nervous too if a leader in your neighborhood announced that they—he'd like to destroy you. And one sure way of achieving that means is through the development of a nuclear weapon. Therefore, now is the time for all of us to work together to stop them. There's a lot of urgencies when it comes to dealing with Iran, and the Israeli political folks—and if you go to Israel and listen carefully, you'll hear that urgency in their voice—one of many urgencies. And I'm hopeful we can get it done.

And, by the way—I don't want to preclude the Prime Minister's answer—I think we can actually get an agreement on global climate change during my Presidency, just so you know.

Prime Minister Jansa. I believe in a global agreement for a joint fight against climate change. This is, as a matter of fact, the only solution. An agreement or a self-commitment of the most developed or industrial countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is not enough, especially because some developing countries are developing really fast. China will, in a few years, become the first in terms of the greenhouse gas emissions. And a global agreement without the developing countries would be a short-term solution.

So, as a matter of fact, we really need that everybody who is a key stakeholder sits at the table. And I have mentioned already in my introduction, those who are most developed should take the leading role. And therefore, this alliance, these agreements, these discussions on bringing closer the standpoints is of such significance.

As President Bush has mentioned, the commitment of the most developed economies—which is mandatory to reduce emissions by a certain deadline—this is a key commitment. How individual economies this reach is less important. However, the goals must be set, and we must have mandatory goals, and this is of key importance. And in this way, we will reduce the threat of climate change.

And of course, we should also attract to this task the other countries. Without the leading role of the European Union and the United States of America and without close cooperation, it is not possible to reach a global agreement in short term. Therefore, this discussion is of extreme importance. And the G–8 summit in Japan in next month should represent an important step forward if we wish, in time, before the U.N. conference in Copenhagen, reach this agreement. There is not much time left. The time is running out.

Moderator. All right, we'll take the last one from John McKennon of the Wall Street Journal.

President Bush. It's called technology. [*Laughter*]

Q. Thanks again.

President Bush. Yes. [*Laughter*] Glad to help out, you know.

U.S. Monetary Policy/European Economy/EU-U.S. Relations

Q. I'd like to ask each of you leaders about economic issues. For President Bush, will the United States intervene to support the dollar if your current efforts to talk it up don't succeed? And what also is your reaction to the Saudi Arabian proposal for a summit on energy prices?

For Prime Minister Jansa, what effects are you feeling in Eastern and Central Europe from the rising energy prices and the rising value of the Euro? Did those factors pose a risk to growth and integration for those countries, for your countries?

And for President Barroso, given the proliferation of disputes between Europe and the United States over food safety issues, is there a concern that the EU is being too restrictive on those issues?

President Bush. Okay, John, interesting idea by the—His Majesty, the King of Saudi Arabia. Secondly, I articulated a policy that I had been articulating ever since I have been the President. It's the same policy, which is, we believe in a strong dollar and that relative value of economies will end up setting the proper valuation of the dollar.

Prime Minister Jansa. Past growth, or growth with little comparison in the history—this is the growth of energy and food prices. And the food prices are going up due to high cost of energy or oil, and this has a significant effect on the economy in Slovenia and throughout Europe. This is one of the key questions being dealt with at the national level and at the level of the European institutions, as has been mentioned by President Barroso. This is a serious problem. It will, on the one hand, make us search long-term solutions. I have mentioned this in part before. And on the other hand, it will make us search short-term solutions. And one of these is energy efficiency.

We have also discussed this at today's summit, and this is a strong message. The investment in research and development, the investment into what the economy can do, an economy that is less dependent on carbon, less dependent on fossil fuels, this will have a long-term strategic effect on the price.

So the key is the technology. I remember the President of the United States saying 2 years ago at the summit meeting in Vienna that the key thing is investment in the development of new technologies. This is the key strategic reply to these challenge. And as far as the Euro is concerned, on the one hand, we are satisfied and happy that Euro is a strong currency. And since the 1st of January of last year, Slovenia is also part of the euro zone. And I can say that in the majority, the effects are positive. When calculating the high prices of oil in dollars, this slightly mitigates this jump. And on the other hand, this is also a problem for importers in the European Union. We wouldn't like to see a weak Euro and a strong dollar.

Moderator. The press conference is nearly completed.

President Durao Barroso. Honestly, I don't see the proliferation of difficulties with the United States on food. On the contrary,

some of the issues that we have been discussing for some time have now known some progress. What I believe is that on food and energy in general, there are issues that we have to address together. And some of those challenges are really global by nature, and we need to have a structured responses to them.

There will not be quick fixes. Some of those developments are long-term structural challenges. What is important, by the way, is that in the short term, we do not take measures against what is the long-term solution for those problems—namely, once again, we need a global agreement on climate change, is best way to fight some of the problems of energy prices and also to address some of problems of food security, namely in some developing countries.

But I don't see a proliferation of specific problems now on United States regarding food. On the contrary, I see a very cooperative position, and negotiations on the specific issues are going on with a very constructive mood.

Moderator. Thank you very much. The press conference has finished. And now I give the concluding words to the Prime Minister, Mr. Janez Jansa, the President of the Council of the European Union.

Prime Minister Jansa. Mr. President, before we conclude this press conference, let me repeat once again how much we appreciate your visit here after 7 years, concluding the circle, as you said. And we—our bilateral meeting, which we had in this morning, confirmed that Slovenia and the United States have established sound foundations for building excellent relations. And I want just to repeat the words from the President of the European Commission, that without the vital support of United States for this positive changes in Europe, before the fall of Berlin Wall and after it, maybe we wouldn't be here today at Brdo. And I surely wouldn't be here in this capacity. [*Laughter*]

But I also want to say thank you because of one other thing. Sir, hundreds of thousands of Slovenes driven from homeland by the economic and political hardship of our history have found open hands and hearts in the United States. Some of them are making great contributions their walks of life in the United States. We are proud of them here in Slovenia. We are also pleased that the progress that Slovenia has made since independence gives them pride. And I'm sure that today, as we host this summit, there is a lot of proud Slovenes in the States.

President Bush. Yes, sir.

Prime Minister Jansa. Mr. President, this was your eighth EU-U.S. summit. During this last 8 years, our EU-U.S. strategic partnership has developed significantly. It has faced also some serious challenges, which we have successfully overcome. Today, we are closer to common position to our most important global challenges than ever. It is not too early, but it's not too late either. Thank you, Mr. President, for your leadership.

President Bush. Thank you, sir. Thank you. I appreciate you. Good job.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 2:35 p.m. at Brdo Castle. Participating in the event were Prime Minister Janez Jansa of Slovenia, in his capacity as President of the European Council; and President Jose Manuel Durao Barroso of the European Commission. President Bush referred to President Raul Castro Ruz of Cuba; Foreign Minister Javier Solana Madariaga and Commissioner for Trade Peter Mandelson of the European Union; and King Abdallah bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia. President Durao Barroso referred to Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany. Prime Minister Jansa spoke partly in Slovenian, and those portions of his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

The President's News Conference With Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany in Meseberg, Germany

June 11, 2008

Chancellor Merkel. Well, good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I see that there are quite a number of you who have made the trouble to come here today. I would like to welcome you very warmly. Let me say that I'm delighted to be able to have this press conference together with the American President after our talks here today. Yesterday we had very intensive talks over dinner. We had intensive talks this morning. We're going to continue them over lunch later on. Let me say that I'm very, very pleased to have the President of the United States here

as our honored guest in this guest house of the Government.

We had a very good atmosphere. This atmosphere shows—I think shows very clearly that we have constructive dialog at virtually all levels on virtually all issues. We've had that for quite some time, and we're going to continue this dialog in the next few months to come.

We debated on the issues that are of global importance. First, the world trade round—Doha—I'm very glad to note that we have a common interest in seeing this Doha round to come to a successful conclusion. Free trade—particularly looking at the problems that developing countries have, as regards food, for example, food supplies, food prices—I think this trade round is absolutely essential for a balanced situation in the world at large. We have every chance to come to a successful outcome. We will see to it. We will pool all our efforts in order to bring this about, and also in the period leading up to the G–8, we will hopefully be able to activate all of our efforts.

This G–8 meeting in Japan will deal with very important issues, for example, with climate change. During the G–8 meeting, there will be also a so-called meeting of the major emitters. And we do hope that all of the issues that we started to talk about in Heiligendamm can be brought forward, in the sense that it is made clear we need a global agreement under the roof of the United Nations. But each and everyone has to take his or her share of that particular issue, and developing countries obviously will be in on this too.

The Heiligendamm process will also be continued. That is to say, the O–5 will be in on this, and what will be in the foreground here are food prices, energy prices. We also discussed this here in our meeting. There are basically two things that I think we need to do. On the one hand, there are a lot of speculations that are possible because—as regards energy prices—because the consumption and the demand is not yet sort of safely predictable. So we need to tell those countries how they intend to make themselves independent of gas and oil supplies—to these emerging economies. How can we actually further develop technology? What could we as industrialized country provide these emerging economies as regards technology, modern technology?

We in the European Union have initiated a number of activities. Particularly, Germany has held a very intensive discussion also on what renewables and new technology means in this respect.

We talked about the transatlantic dialog, about projects that are also quite difficult. Yesterday there was the EU-U.S. summit, or rather 2 days ago, and a lot of these issues were also on the agenda there.

As regards transatlantic economic cooperation, I would like to see us work together close also on biofuels. We have taken over very clear commitments here. We also know we need to have certain standards. We must not come into competition with food production, for example, here.

Then on Afghanistan—on international issues, Afghanistan was discussed, progress in the Middle East, Iran—the offers we put on the table to Iran, but also the fact that if Iran does not meet its commitments, then further sanctions will simply have to follow. We again said we want to give room for diplomatic solutions. We want to give diplomacy a chance, but we also have to stay on that particular issue.

These were constructive, very intensive talks, talks that were characterized by a friendship between us. And I think this can lend a contribution towards solving a number of issues that are outstanding in the world at large, and we show at the same time transatlantic cooperation between Germany and the United States is working very well. Thank you again, Mr. President, for coming, and a very warm welcome.

President Bush. Madam Chancellor, thank you for the invitation to this beautiful place, a modest little cottage by the lake. It is—I'm really glad you thought of this location. Laura and I loved our dinner last night. For those in the German press who thought I didn't like asparagus, you're wrong. [*Laughter*] The German asparagus are fabulous.

But anyways, it's a great place for—to relax and have a good discussion. Our relationship is strong, and our relationship is active. And I assured the Chancellor that when I say I'm going to sprint to the finish, that's what I

mean. And that we had a lot of—we've got a lot of issues that we can talk about.

I first want to thank the German people for their contributions to helping the people of Afghanistan realize the blessings of a free society. I know this is a controversial subject here, but I hope when the Afghanistan debates go forward, I hope people here think of young girls who couldn't go to school in the past but now can, or think of mothers who bring their babies to health clinics for the first time; think about farmers who now have got access to markets to help deal with food shortages. This is hard work—I understand that—to help a young democracy grow after years of tyranny, but I believe it's necessary work. And, Madam Chancellor, I appreciate your leadership on this issue.

I also want to thank you for the contributions you're making to the young democracy in Iraq as well. This has obviously been a contentious issue between our countries in the past, but what shouldn't be contentious is the mutual desire to help advance freedom in the Middle East as the great alternative to the ideology of the haters and the murderers, those who espouse violent extremism to advance their agenda.

We talked about, you know, progress in the Holy Land for the establishment of a Palestinian state. I'm still optimistic that we can get a state defined, clearly understood by both parties before the end of my Presidency.

We talked about Iran, of course. I told the Chancellor my first choice, of course, is to solve this diplomatically. All options are on the table, and that—but the first choice is to solve this problem by working closely together, by sending a dual message, which has been the consistent policy of this administration, that if you verifiably suspend your enrichment programs, you'll end your isolation, and there's a way forward for you.

The Iranian regime has made a choice so far, and it's a bad choice for the Iranian people. The Iranian people deserve better than being isolated from the world. They deserve better from having, you know, their Government held up as, you know, unsafe and not trustworthy. And so the message from the EU Foreign Minister, Solana, will be, there's a better choice for you. And we'll see what choice they make.

We talked about Lebanon and the need for that young democracy to survive. We did talk about global climate change, of course. The Chancellor started a very good process here in Germany nearly a year ago. As a result of her leadership, the United States is working very closely with, you know, other major economies to develop a common goal. Step one of solving a problem is for nations who actually emit carbon dioxide to agree to a goal. And that's just not European nations; that's the United States along with China and India. Once that goal is agreed to, then develop long-term and interim strategies that are binding strategies to meet those goals.

And so that's the process we're going forward. It turns out, the major economies meeting is working concurrently with the G–8—meeting at the same time as the G–8. And the objective is to be able to announce a long-term binding goal at the G–8 as well as the major economies meeting, Madam Chancellor, on a process that you started.

We talked about Doha. You know, it's—I'm a free trader. The Chancellor is a free trader. The question is, you know, is there a commitment to free trade in the face of protectionism? A lot of protectionism in the American political scene these days. I'm sure there's some protectionism here in Germany. I happen to think it would be, you know, disastrous for the world economy and disastrous for poor nations if we didn't trade freely and fairly.

And so one way to make that commitment is for the Doha round to succeed. I assured the Chancellor that we're committed to the Doha round. We will work hard to achieve it. The Transatlantic Economic Council is a very important council that we started together as a way to resolve our differences to make sure that trade is fair and free.

All in all, I—relations with Germany are strong, as I told you. And that's good, and that's important. And, Madam Chancellor, I want to thank you for your friendship as well.

Chancellor Merkel. Well, we now have the possibility to take questions. Maybe we ought to start with a German correspondent.

Q. [*Inaudible*]

Chancellor Merkel. You will get a microphone, don't worry.

Iran/Germany-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, Madam Chancellor, you spoke about Iran at some length. In Israel, the press writes that Israel might well contemplate action against this threat that Iran poses to them. What would be your—what are you saying, Mr. President, to the Israeli Government? And you said, Chancellor, give diplomacy a chance. Madam Chancellor, Mr. President, how long would you say diplomacy has to be given a chance? Can we exclude that during your term in office military action will be taken—will take place against Iran, Mr. President?

And you, Chancellor, how do you assess the era of George Bush? In your party, one of your leading party members said that you will not miss George Bush. Will you miss him?

And a question directed to both of you. Why do you, Mr. President——

Chancellor Merkel. I think—don't ask for too long.

Q. ——but why do you—why are you seen as so unpopular, Mr. President, in Germany?

President Bush. I just told you that all options are on the table, and my first choice is to solve this diplomatically. And the best way to solve it diplomatically is to work with our partners, and that's exactly what we're doing. And the message to the Iranian Government is very clear: That there's a better way forward than isolation, and that is for you to verifiably suspend your enrichment program. And the choice is theirs to make. Obviously, we want to solve this issue peacefully, and so we'll give diplomacy a chance to work. And I want to thank the message that came out of the EU meeting yesterday, which is that if they choose to be—continue to be obstinate, there will be additional sanctions.

Chancellor Merkel. We talked just now at some length about this. I very clearly pin my hopes on diplomatic efforts. And I believe that diplomatic pressure actually already has taken effect. If you look at the situation in Iran on the ground, you see that quite clearly. These efforts can have a success, but this presupposes, obviously, that the global community is sort of unified. Both in the European Union and in the world Security Council, we have to continue this common approach. We cannot exclude either that there may well be a further round of sanctions, and those need to be negotiated in the Security Council of the United Nations.

What's important now is to see to it that this last round of the sanctions is actually implemented and can take effect, because the effectiveness of sanctions is actually then proved only once they are taken seriously. And we are under certain—quite a considerable pressure to act together and in concert. And we in the European Union will do everything to see to it that this actually happens.

As regards our relationship, you know that this is a relationship characterized by friendship. It's a direct and candid relationship. When there are differences of opinion—whenever there were differences of opinions, we actually called a spade a spade. It's actually nice about the President that you can actually call a spade a spade with him. And when, for example, I had—as regards to the climate change discussion last year, this year, when we—ever we had differences of opinion, there was a way forward; there was a constructive way forward.

And I think that this initiative on climate by the European Union is a very important initiative. The President himself took, actually, forward action on this, apart from our military action that we do together, for example, in Afghanistan, in the general international negotiating processes.

We also need on other areas between the European Union and the United States, not only Germany and the United States, a lot of close cooperation in many areas. And there was always greater—great openness here between us. This cooperation is fun, I must say. And as the President said, it is going to be a sprint to the last day of his office. And I trust—often trust that we shall have other similar meetings of this kind, candid and open and constructive.

I'm looking forward to the G–8 summit in Japan. I hope that we can make further progress on climate protection, which—talking about targets now—that is to say, some kind of binding targets—I think is already great success.

Iran

Q. Thank you, sir. Mr. President, back on Iran, can you talk a little bit about—well, Iran has signaled that it seems likely to reject Mr. Solana's offer, presenting on behalf of you and the EU. What have you and your European counterparts agreed upon in terms of new measures against Iran if that is indeed the case?

And to Chancellor Merkel, what is Germany willing to do specifically, whether in implementing the sanctions already in place or taking further measures beyond those?

President Bush. That's exactly what we discussed: How do you implement sanctions that are already in place, and should we levy additional sanctions? Our position is, is that we ought to enforce the sanctions that are in place, and we ought to work with our allies to levy additional sanctions if they choose—if the Iranians choose to continue to ignore the demands of the free world.

Chancellor Merkel. I personally have always come out very strongly in favor of seeing to it that sanctions are decided at the level of the United Nations Security Council too, because including China and Russia obviously makes for much greater effectiveness of such sanctions. But that doesn't exclude that within the European Union too, we may discuss, for example, are further possibilities open, for example, in the banking sectors? But these further possibilities, these further measures, must not lead to a situation where at the greater—the bigger stage, so to speak, we then relent, because the more countries are in on this, the more the effect—the more effective the impact will be on Iran, for example.

We always think that quite often, on the one hand, people like to reject certain measures to be taken, but let us think of the people in Iran. This is what is essential. I think these people deserve a much more—sort of a better outlook also, as regards their economic prospects. And we would hope for the leadership in Iran to finally see reason. I mean, just look at the reports of the IAEA. They—it says clearly—the report states clearly that certain violations of agreements that were entered into have taken place. And we—it means that we need to react to this, even if it—with further sanctions, if that's necessary.

War on Terror in Iraq

Q. Mr. President, on the way to Europe, you gave a very interesting interview for the Times newspaper in which you basically said that you regret your war rhetoric. Now I'm wondering, do you actually just regret your war rhetoric, or do you regret having gone to war with Iraq?

President Bush. I don't regret it at all. Removing Saddam Hussein made the world a safer place. And yes, I told the guy—the guy said, "Now what could you do over?" First of all, you don't get to do things over in my line of work. But I could have used better rhetoric to indicate that, one, we tried to exhaust the diplomacy in Iraq; two, that I don't like war. But, no, the decision to remove Saddam Hussein was the right decision.

Myers [Steven Lee Myers, New York Times]. I mean—no, no, Eggen [Dan Eggen, Washington Post], Eggen, excuse me. I called you yesterday, Myers. What's the difference? [*Laughter*]

Iraq-U.S. Security Agreement/Germany's Role in Iraq

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, sir.

President Bush. Yes, no problem. [*Laughter*]

Q. Speaking of Iraq, there are increasing controversy in Iraq over the security agreement that's being negotiated. Some top Iraqi officials are calling for a dramatic reduction in the U.S. presence. Does this concern you that the direction that those negotiations are going in?

And, Madam Chancellor, does this have any impact on your approach towards Iraq?

President Bush. First of all, I think we'll end up with a strategic agreement with Iraq. You know, it's all kinds of noise in their system and our system. What eventually will win out is the truth. For example, you read stories, perhaps in your newspaper, that the U.S. is planning all kinds of permanent bases in Iraq. That's an erroneous story. The Iraqis know—will learn it's erroneous too. We'll be

there at the invitation of the sovereign Government of Iraq.

And I strongly support the agreement because I think it helps send a clear message to the people of Iraq that, you know, that security you're now seeing will continue. And one of the lessons of Iraq is, is that in order for a democracy to develop or in order for an economy to develop, there has to be a measure of security, which is now happening. And so I think we'll get the agreement done.

And as I said clearly in past speeches, this will not involve permanent bases, nor will it bind any future President to troop levels. You know, as to—look, Eggen, you can find any voice you want in the Iraqi political scene and quote them, which is interesting, isn't it, because in the past you could only find one voice, and now you can find a myriad of voices. It's a vibrant democracy; people are debating. There's all kinds of press in the Iraqi scene, of course, to the benefit of the Iraqi society.

And I deal with Prime Minister Maliki. He appreciates our presence there, and he understands that we're returning on success. As the situation merits and the situation improves, we're bringing our troops home. And I'm pleased with the progress. I don't know whether or not it's—the progress has made it here to Germany or not yet, but the progress in Iraq is substantial, and it's going to help change the Middle East for the better. And I love the idea of having—giving people a chance to live in a free society. The blessings of freedom are—shouldn't be just in a regional blessing. I believe freedom is universal, and I believe freedom yields peace.

Madam Chancellor.

Chancellor Merkel. Well, obviously, from the German side too, and the European side for that matter, we have every interest, indeed, a vital interest in seeing Iraq taking a turn for sort of a good kind of development. I invited the Iraqi Prime Minister here to Germany, and I think he will pay us the honor of a visit. We have been trying to have economic relations. We've also, outside of Iraq, also trained security personnel, and we're ready to continue that.

So everything we can do beyond a sort of military presence, everything we can do as regards civilian building up of the country, assisting them, is something that we're continuing to doing. And I would like to very much look forward to the visit of the Prime Minister. We're glad to see progress happening there on the ground, because it's in our vital interest to see to it that this region takes a turn for the better, and it's in the interest of the region too.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:34 a.m. at Schloss Meseberg. In his remarks, he referred to European Union Foreign Minister Javier Solana Madariaga; and Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq. Chancellor Merkel referred to Outreach 5 (O–5), a group of five important emerging economies that works with the G–8. Chancellor Merkel and a reporter spoke in German, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Interview With Christian Malard of France 3 TV

June 6, 2008

President's Legacy

Mr. Malard. Mr. President, after 8 years at the White House, how does President George W. Bush judge President George W. Bush? What are your good points, according to you, and your negative points?

The President. Well, you know, I think that people will say he's a decisive person who took action when necessary to protect his country and to address the problems of the world. Bad points are probably sometimes my rhetoric was a little—was misunderstood. I mean, I can remember saying, you know, "dead or alive," which sent—it sent signals that could be easily misinterpreted.

I think people will say that he was tough when he needed to be tough and compassionate when he needed to be compassionate, because our agenda was not only dealing with terror but freeing people is a compassionate act, but freeing people not only from forms of tyranny but from diseases like HIV/AIDS or malaria or hunger. And the United States is proudly in the lead on these issues.

War on Terror/Global Economy

Mr. Malard. Today, the world is struck by economic crisis.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Malard. Instability, terrorism still prevail in Middle East. Don't you feel your successor might face the risk of a major conflict, another September 11?

The President. You know, it's interesting, I think that's always a threat. No question that there's an enemy out there that would still like to harm America and, I believe, other free nations. But, what has changed is, one, we've got the pressure on Al Qaida. The very ones who attacked us are now on the defense. We're dismantling them. We're working hard to find them. Our intelligence is better; our intelligence sharing is better. But no question, it's still a dangerous world when it comes to that, and—but there's tools now in place—that we put in place, that will help the next President deal with the security issue.

And in terms of the economy, yes, look, economies go up and down, and right now it's a difficult period for all of us. Energy prices are high. Food prices are high. In our country, we've got a mortgage issue. But I do believe that we'll come out of this, and we'll come out of it stronger. And it's just that—it's what happens in free markets.

Middle East Peace Process

Mr. Malard. Israel-Palestinian conflict is the cancer of all evils in Middle East. Your predecessors tried to get a solution; you tried to get a solution. But it seems that the two sides don't want to make the necessary concessions and political sacrifices. So does that mean that the tragedy—I don't say "the show"—but the tragedy goes on?

The President. I don't—[*laughter*]—that's a good way of putting it. I don't think so. I think they'll come to—first of all, I'm the first President to have articulated two states, because I believe it's in the interest of the Palestinians to have a state of their own that is whole, that doesn't look like Swiss cheese. And I firmly believe it's in Israel's interest to have a state, a democratic state, as a neighbor.

I know these leaders well, Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas. I know they're committed to working out the differences on a variety of issues, such as what the borders look like, the refugee issue, security issues. I was confident when I went to the Middle East last time that there's still that desire to get something done. I feel—still feel good about it.

Obviously, the politics in Israel is a little different right now. But nevertheless, in my visit with Prime Minister Olmert at the Oval Office recently, he understands the importance of reaching an agreement with President Abbas on what the state looks like and how to deal with these very difficult issues.

Condi is going to go during the European trip—is going to go back to the Middle East and continue to work on it. And I'm very hopeful that we can get that vision defined.

Iran

Mr. Malard. Iranian President Ahmadinejad is gaining influence in Iraq, in Lebanon with Hizballah, no doubt. He doesn't show any sign of flexibility——

The President. Yes.

Mr. Malard. ——on nuclear—on his nuclear program. Mr. President, is there any space left still for discussion with him?

The President. Well, there will be definitely space for discussion when he verifiably suspends his enrichment program. First of all, I disagree with the premise that he is succeeding in Iraq. Quite the contrary. Iraq is becoming a democracy, a functioning democracy. They understand Iranian influence is destabilizing. Obviously, there is some influence inside of Iraq, but—Iranian influence inside Iraq—but it's less than it has been and will continue to lessen, in my judgment, as its economy and as its political society begins to develop.

The—therefore, in speaking with my friend President Sarkozy or any other European leaders, we've still got to continue to send that message to the Iranian leadership that you're isolated; you'll continue to get pressured unless you verifiably suspend your enrichment program. And the reason why that's important to continue the pressure on is that if they can enrich, they could easily transfer that knowledge to a weapons program, which would destabilize the Middle East.

Mr. Malard. There's no military option in the air?

The President. Yes, it's still there. Absolutely it's got to be on the table. But, of course, I've always said to the American people, we want to solve this problem diplomatically, and we're going to work to solve it diplomatically. But the Iranians have got to understand all options are on the table.

U.S. Foreign Policy

Mr. Malard. When you see the big push of China, India, Russia on the international stage today, do you think that in 10 years from now, America will still be the superpower of the world?

The President. You know, I—that's an interesting question. I think that—I would rather define us as a very influential nation that is willing to work with others to achieve common objectives. You mentioned those three nations, and my approach has been to have strong bilateral relations with all three. We've got strong bilateral relations with China, even though we differ on issues. I've had strong bilateral relations with Russia, a lot of it having to do with my personal relationship with Vladimir Putin. We've had our differences, but nevertheless, we found a lot of common ground to work together on, including Iran. And in India, I've changed the relationship between India and the United States in a way that we're partners as opposed to, you know, being antagonistic.

And therefore, if the United States is active diplomatically in maintaining good bilateral relations with these countries, I think we'll still be in a position to use our influence for the common good. And these relationships don't have to be antagonistic. They can be—I've worked hard to get to know these leaders individually so that we can be able to discuss matters, delicate matters, in open and honest ways without rupturing relations. And I hope it serves as a go-by for future Presidents, that you can have disagreements, but you don't have to have this kind of zero-sum attitude about life.

2008 Presidential Elections

Mr. Malard. Last two, short questions. I don't want to put you in trouble, interfering in American elections. But today, do you have the feeling that the barriers of—and the game is not over, far from being over, I know—but do you think the barriers have fallen down, to have a potential black citizen to become President of the United States?

The President. You know, look, I—my attitude about that is I think it's a good statement about American democracy that a major political party would nominate Senator Obama. Now that that process has ended, the fundamental question is, who can be the best President? That's the question.

And I'm obviously for John McCain. I think he'll be a really good President. And the American people will make that decision. And it's going to be up to each person to be able to describe how they're going to handle the pressures of the job, how they'll be making decisions, what principles they'll be standing on, because this is a job—that I'm sure you can imagine—where there's all kinds of pressures. And if you don't believe something in your soul, if you don't stand on principle and you're on shifting ground, you'll be very unpredictable. And the world doesn't need unpredictability, it needs predictability out of the United States.

France-U.S. Relations

Mr. Malard. Last point, Mr. President. You and President Sarkozy put on the right track the Franco-U.S. relationship. We were a bit of trouble between you and President Jacques Chirac. With your next successor, whoever it is, do you think it will go on very well between France and United States?

The President. I do. Look, France and the United States have had a fabulous history together. And I remind my friends that it was the French that stood strong with the American patriots in the Revolutionary War. It was the French that determined the balance of power when it came to whether or not the United States would even be the United States of America, an independent republic.

And we've had a great relationship. And of course, we've had our differences, but that's okay. There have been differences throughout our history. The fundamental question is, do we understand there are—common values unite us? And we do. The French love freedom and human rights and

human decency, and so do Americans. And so the relationship—and plus, there's a lot of personal relationship, a lot of friendship between individuals here in our country and French citizens that make it—there's no question in my mind, we'll have good relations with the French.

Q. Mr. President, I want to thank you very much, and I wish you the very best.

The President. Well, thank you, sir. I'm looking forward to going to beautiful Paris.

Q. Great to see you again.

The President. Thank you, sir. Good to see you.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 10:39 a.m. in the Map Room at the White House for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel; President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority; President Nicolas Sarkozy of France; Prime Minister Vladimir Putin of Russia, in his former capacity as the President of Russia; Democratic Presidential candidate Barack Obama; and Republican Presidential candidate John McCain. Mr. Malard referred to former President Jacques Chirac of France. This transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 12.

Remarks in a Discussion on Italy-United States Business Exchanges in Rome, Italy

June 12, 2008

Ambassador Ronald P. Spogli. Mr. President, good morning. Good morning to everyone. First of all, I'd like to welcome you to the American Academy, and thank you for having so graciously agreed to be with us here this morning. I'd like to also welcome all of our fellow roundtable participants.

As you know, we have eight students, five of whom have been to the United States on our BEST program, three of whom will shortly depart. And then we do have a couple of gentlemen who are slightly older than our researchers and scientists who are here—not that old, certainly, but a bit older—Michele and Marco, who have been successful entrepreneurs, have overcome the difficulties that we've talked about for some time in the Italian system, and who have graciously created an NGO that works on helping young entrepreneurs overcome difficulties. I'd like to also recognize our sponsors and welcome them this morning, and I'll have occasion to come back to you in a second.

[*At this point, Ambassador Spogli made brief remarks, concluding as follows.*]

Ambassador Spogli. Clearly, economic growth is the key question facing the country today, and so the Partnership for Growth was conceived as a way to make a contribution toward the economic growth of Italy. And we focused on three fundamental areas.

The first was commercializing research. Italy does a tremendous amount of high-quality research in nanotechnology and biotechnology and in other fields, but unfortunately, a relatively small amount of that research ever becomes commercialized. And so we wanted to fundamentally address that question.

Second issue is one of a scarcity of financing for risk-taking capital enterprises. Italy is a country of great savers, has a very high savings rate, yet, unfortunately, very little is channeled into venture capital and private equity. We wanted to address this particular question as well. So we've had over 200 events in the course of almost 3 years focusing on ways that we could share information and enhance not only our bilateral economic relationship but, hopefully, address some of these fundamental questions.

Which brings me to the third and most important element of the Partnership for Growth, and that is our BEST student exchange program. Many companies came to us and said, it's great that you're focusing on technology transfer; it's great that you're focusing on venture capital; but there's one very important element that we'd like you to make a contribution to, and that is helping to change and add to the entrepreneurial culture of our country. You need to send high-quality researchers and scientists and engineers to the United States, give them a full immersion opportunity in a place like Silicon Valley, have them come back, take some of those experiences and then begin to create here in Italy a wonderful, unique entrepreneurial ecosystem.

And so we did just that. We created the BEST program, Business Exchange and Student Training. And in that program, we send young, promising scientists and engineers to the United States. They study for 6 months in Silicon Valley, 3 months at the University of Santa Clara in their entrepreneurship center, and then they do a 3-month apprenticeship in a high-tech startup company to see literally how you can go from the creation of an idea to the—to, hopefully, the formation of the next great business here in Italy. The researchers must come back to Italy and share their experiences here and hopefully develop their research ideas.

The program started last year with a five-person contingent, all of whom are here today. This year it's 15—it's grown to 15, 3 of whom are here. And next year, we hope to grow the program to 25—and hopefully more into the future.

One final comment, sir, before I turn it over to you, and that is, the program would not have been possible without our many sponsors and supporters who are in the audience this morning. One hundred percent of this program was financed here in Italy by the generosity and forward thinking of our sponsors. Who do we have? We had Italian businesses; we had American companies who have subsidiaries in Italy; we had a number of associations that are interested in economic growth and development; we've had cities; and we've had regions participate.

So for example, the city of Milan was a very early supporter of our program, Mr. President, and we have the mayor of Milan, Mayor Moratti, who is here this morning representing her fine city. We've had tremendous support from the Italian postal system, and we have the Chief Executive Officer this morning, Massimo Sarmi, who is the head of that organization, certainly. And then we've had wonderful support from a number of American businesses, such as IBM, who is represented by Dr. Martucci this morning, who has been, again, a great supporter of our program. We're delighted they're here. They contribute over a million dollars to this program. We'd like them to contribute a lot more going forward so we can send more high-quality students.

And, sir, I'd like to turn it over to you, and thank you again.

President Bush. Mr. Ambassador, thank you. Now, first of all, I do want to thank the folks here at the American Academy for welcoming me and what generally is a rather large entourage. I'm real proud of the fact that my fellow citizens have contributed to the restorations building—it turns out, someone from the great State of Texas, notably Mercedes Bass. And I want to thank them and thank my citizens for supporting this important institute.

I want to thank you all for giving me a chance to come by and listen to you. I want to hear your impressions of America. I want to hear what you think of the challenges as this really important country moves ahead. And I really want to hear how you intend to contribute to the future of your country.

I want to thank you all for sponsoring these exchanges. Madam Mayor, I'm particularly pleased that you're here. You know, one of the best diplomacy—the best diplomacy for America, particularly among young folks, is to welcome you to our country. You get to see firsthand the truth about America, you know, like a lot of images. There's a lot of, in my view, misinformation and propaganda about our country. We're a compassionate, we're an open country. We care about people, and we're entrepreneurial. And we love the entrepreneurial spirit. We love it when somebody has a dream and then is—works hard to achieve the dream, thereby contributing to the society and creating jobs for people so they can realize their aspirations as well.

And so I want to thank you, Ambassador, for getting this program going. And thank you all for coming to share your thoughts with me. I really am looking forward to hearing from you.

We'll have—Marco, do you want to say a few words?

Marco Palombi. Well, yes, Mr. President.

President Bush. Marco, what do you do?

Mr. Palombi. I actually sold my company a year-and-a-half ago. I was——

President Bush. Oh, so you retired?

Mr. Palombi. Well, no, no. [*Laughter*] Not yet, no.

President Bush. Okay.

Mr. Palombi. We actually created, with Michele, the NGO the Ambassador was referring us for.

President Bush. Oh, that's good. Thank you.

Mr. Palombi. Yes. So basically, I created the largest blogging platform in Italy.

President Bush. Really?

Mr. Palombi. Yes, yes, yes. And then I sold it to one of the largest media company in Italy.

President Bush. Well, congratulations.

[*Mr. Palombi made brief remarks, concluding as follows.*]

Mr. Palombi. So what we did was basically introduce our friends who have achieved something in Italy too. We call them first generation entrepreneurs, because we think that the best role model will be someone who started from zero, who doesn't have his parents' money behind, and he really started from scratch, he risked. And we chose these guys, and we had these video chats on the Internet, which we—which are now there. And it's one of the best, probably, entrepreneurship material that you have in Italy right now. It's funny because right now, talking to people who have watched this video chats, they really are motivated by what they see. And this is amazing because you can change things by showing them that someone like them did it.

President Bush. Absolutely. That's good. Thanks, Marco.

Mr. Palombi. Sure.

President Bush. You ready?

Micol Macellari. Yes, I'm ready. [*Laughter*]

President Bush. Micol.

Ms. Macellari. I'm Micol, yes.

President Bush. Yes, thank you.

[*Ms. Macellari made brief remarks, concluding as follows.*]

Ms. Macellari. I really think—I strongly believe that in Italy, we have everything we need to make a success and to turn a good scientific project in business and bring greatest scientific idea to the market. We have a strong example of entrepreneurs that did so. So on our own, we can follow——

President Bush. Absolutely.

Ms. Macellari ——his example. And we can represent, as the first people who've gone there, a good example for all the other students for the future years.

President Bush. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:55 a.m. in the Villa Aurelia at the American Academy. In his remarks, he referred to philanthropist Mercedes T. Bass; and Mayor Letizia Moratti of Milan. Ambassador Spogli referred to Luciano Martucci, president and chief executive officer, IBM Italy. Participating in the discussion were U.S. Ambassador to Italy Ronald P. Spogli; 2007 BEST program participants Abramo Barbaresi, Elisabetta Capezio, Valentina Coccoli, Micol Macellari, and Emanuele Orgiu; 2008 BEST program participants Francesco Cattaneo, Chiara Giovenzana, and Michela Piacenti; and BEST program participant mentors Michele Appendino and Marco Palombi.

Proclamation 8270—Father's Day, 2008

June 12, 2008

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

On Father's Day, we honor our Nation's fathers for the unconditional love they give to their children and for their selfless dedication to the well-being of their families.

Fathers play a unique and irreplaceable part in the lives of their children and pass along values that help children grow into responsible adults. By providing their sons and daughters with a positive example, fathers help give their children the necessary foundation they need to make wise decisions throughout their lives. Fathers strive to inspire their children to lead lives of integrity, honor, and purpose, and they pray for wisdom and the strength to give their children the love and support they need to achieve their dreams.

All Americans are thankful for the extraordinary efforts of our Nation's fathers, stepfathers, grandfathers, and guardians. Their devotion and encouragement as mentors, providers, and role models help strengthen their families and our country. We are especially grateful for the fathers who serve in

our Nation's Armed Forces. These dedicated fathers protect liberty so that all children can have a more promising future. We pray for the safe return of all those serving overseas, and we thank the fathers who support sons and daughters who are defending our freedom around the globe.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, in accordance with a joint resolution of the Congress approved April 24, 1972, as amended (36 U.S.C. 109), do hereby proclaim June 15, 2008, as Father's Day. I encourage all Americans to express their appreciation to all fathers for their many contributions to our Nation's children. I direct the appropriate officials of the Government to display the flag of the United States on all Government buildings on this day. I also call upon State and local governments and citizens to observe this day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of June, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, 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, 10:08 a.m., June 16, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on June 17. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this proclamation.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy in Rome

June 12, 2008

Prime Minister Berlusconi. Good evening to all of you, and welcome to our American guests. And of course, I would like to extend my warmest welcome to President Bush, who is a friend—a personal friend of mine and also a great friend of Italy's. I also wish to thank him because Rome has the very great privilege of being the European capital that President Bush has visited more than any other capital in Europe. If I'm not mistaken, this is the sixth time that he's here in Rome. And we are certainly delighted to have always seen that he is an ally who has always helped our country have strong relations with the United States. And I must say that this has never been the case.

I also wish to thank him for all the efforts which he has undertaken during his administration in order to safeguard democracy and freedom. We have been the first Government to support one of his initiatives within the U.N., i.e. the Community of Democracies, which aims at spreading democracy throughout the world. We are both fully convinced that it is only through a real democracy that we can have true freedom. And it is only through freedom that individuals can tap their potentials fully, and this is how we can all help our families overcome any poverty. And obviously, this is how peoples can overcome poverty and, therefore, become evermore prosperous. And this is what we need to aim for in order to establish long-lasting peace throughout the world. This, in fact, is one of the issues that we have worked on and which we continue to pursue in the future.

We've discussed many issues this afternoon, and we've also had the opportunity to discuss two programs—two initiatives, which I think have commonalities. The university for liberal thinking, we think—or are thinking of establishing one of these universities here in Italy in fact. And I had the opportunity to show President Bush some of these photographs which I already have. And President Bush is thinking of doing something very similar in Texas, and therefore, we've decided that we'll perhaps have a professor exchange program. And obviously, I've also invited President Bush to come to act as visiting professor, and I've already told him that many of our colleagues, Prime Ministers and heads of states, in fact, have okayed that as well.

I know that you'll all have questions. You obviously are curious about what we've discussed, and that's very legitimate. We've gone over the international situation, and we've also reported some of the decisions taken by our Government with regard to our presence in Afghanistan, Kosovo, Lebanon and also our position vis-a-vis in some international developments. And of course, Iran

is a very, very sensitive issue and is one of—is among these.

Now, we are certainly in agreement on all these issues, as we always have been. And I wish to wind up by thanking President Bush wholeheartedly. I thank America, and I, again, was able to address the U.S. Congress a couple of years ago, and this is something that I'll never forget. And the Italians, especially those who are members of my generation, will never forget that this is a country that has sacrificed many lives to save us from totalitarianism, communism, fascism, nazism, and this is a country that has given us back our dignity and has ensured freedom and well-being for all Italians. Now this is something that I shall never, ever forget.

President Bush. [*Inaudible*]—you're right; we're good friends, and I appreciate that very much. I also have enjoyed coming to Rome. I always leave with a little extra culture and a little fatter. Thank you for your hospitality. Before I——

Prime Minister Berlusconi. President Bush doesn't know what's for dinner yet this evening.

President Bush. Turning to the meeting, I want to say something about the severe weather that has affected so many of the citizens back in the United States. There's been some terrible storms and a lot of destruction and some death. Throughout the trip, I've been updated on the devastation.

I've spoken with the Governors of three affected States, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Indiana. Our Government is in touch with the authorities. We will assist these States in any way we can to help people recover from the devastation. My thoughts and prayers are with the victims of the terrible tornadoes and flooding, especially those who lost loved ones. We've been inspired by the stories of heroism, neighbors helping neighbors, and communities coming together. It's a really tough time for the people in the Midwestern part of the United States. And they'll have the prayers of the American people, and we'll help them recover.

We did have a wide-ranging discussion. I appreciate very much the fact that Italy is meeting international obligations. I don't think the citizens at home really understand how many troops Italy has deployed to help troubled spots of the world, and we thank you for that, Mr. Prime Minister. You've got about 8,700 troops in places like Kosovo and Chad.

You've got a very significant presence in Afghanistan. And I appreciate very much the fact that the Government announced to the Parliament, with your instructions, Mr. Prime Minister, that the caveats that had restricted your forces in Afghanistan are—have been removed, and that you've committed additional Carabinieri to help train the Afghan police. Your Carabinieri are excellent professionals, and they're needed. And I want to thank you for that commitment.

We talked about Iraq and how Iraq is changing for the better, how people are beginning to realize the blessings of a free and peaceful society. And you're—you've been very helpful through the NATO mission there of training as well.

And I want to thank you very much for our discussion on Iran. We discussed how we can work effectively together to solve this issue diplomatically. I told the Prime Minister what I said yesterday in Germany, that all options are on the table, but the first choice, of course, is to convince the Iranians that they must give up their ambitions to develop the capacity to make a nuclear weapon, for the safety—for our own safety and for the sake of peace. And I'm confident we can continue to work together in a constructive way.

We did talk about the climate change issue. I talked to him about our strategy for the major economies meeting, which will run concurrently with the G–8. The United States is committed to convincing those of us that have got economic development and produce greenhouse gases to agree to a long-term goal.

Now, I reminded the Prime Minister our objective is to get nations like China and India to sign up to the goal, and that we'll develop our own strategies that will be firm strategies within the U.N. framework.

Over dinner, we'll talk about the Doha round, how the United States is committed to completing a successful round at Doha.

And finally, today I was real proud that Laura represented us at the food agency—

the food summit. The United States is committed to helping people who don't have food. Over the next—in '07 and '08, we'll have committed about $5 billion to help. I really think our strategy can be a lot more effective than just giving people food. I think we ought to be buying food from affected nations so they develop their own agriculture. I firmly believe it's in the world's interest that nations that prevent the export of food stop doing so.

And we ought to let sound science make the decision about genetically modified crops, be really interested in helping people in dry areas develop agriculture so they don't have to rely upon the world. And we ought to look at these GMAs with science in mind so that agriculture, sustainable agriculture, can be developed in the places that are—where the people are suffering.

And so we've had a good agenda, Mr. Prime Minister. It's great to be with you again. And looking forward to one of your famous meals, after we answer a few questions. [*Laughter*]

Ready to answer some questions?

Prime Minister Berlusconi. Thank you, yes. We've been told that we'll have two questions from our U.S. guests and two questions from Italian journalists. And I would ask the President to just go ahead and start with the American journalists.

President Bush. [*Inaudible*]—oh, there you are, yes.

U.S. Supreme Court Ruling on Guantanamo Bay Detainee Rights/2008 Presidential Election

Q. Mr. President, also back home, the Supreme Court ruled that Guantanamo detainees have rights under the Constitution to challenge their detention in U.S. civilian courts. Doesn't this rebuke of your policy on detainees validate the criticism that Gitmo has gotten all over the world, especially here in Europe?

President Bush. Yes.

Q. And for the Prime Minister, sir, who do you want to come see you as the next U.S. President?

President Bush. First of all, it's the Supreme Court decision. We'll abide by the Court's decision. That doesn't mean I have to agree with it. It's a deeply divided Court, and I strongly agree with those who dissented that. And their dissent was based upon their serious concerns about U.S. national security.

Congress and the administration worked very carefully on a piece of legislation that set the appropriate procedures in place as to how to deal with the detainees. And we'll study this opinion, and we'll do so with this in mind, to determine whether or not additional legislation might be appropriate so that we can safely say—or truly say to the American people, we're doing everything we can to protect you.

Prime Minister Berlusconi. As far as my question is concerned, well, of course, I cannot express any preference with regard to an electoral campaign going on in another country. However, I suppose I could express my own personal preference for one of the candidates, the Republican candidate. And this is for a very selfish reason, and that is that I would no longer be the oldest person at the upcoming G–8, because McCain is a month older than me, 29th of August, 1936—29th of September, which is when I was born. There you go. [*Laughter*]

The second question now from the American journalist, please.

President Bush. Let's see.

Prime Minister Berlusconi. [*Inaudible*]

President Bush. Yes, Jeff Stinson [USA Today].

Upcoming Middle East Oil Summit/ Energy

Q. First of all, for you, Mr. President, the Saudis, in about 10 days, will be hosting a summit on oil prices and supplies. Prime Minister Gordon Brown has said that he will go to this. With $4 a gallon gasoline back home, would you go?

President Bush. You know, I'm going to go back home and take a look at the intentions and purpose of the meeting. There will be a high-level official, for certain, from my administration. We ought to be at the table as producers. My call on Congress is to recognize the seriousness of the problem and pass law that encourages exploration for oil and gas in the United States so that down the road, an American President will go as a producer, not a consumer.

And our policies, frankly, have been—are now coming home to roost. For 8 years, I have been saying to the Congress, we ought to be exploring in ANWR; we ought to be drilling on the Outer Continental Shelf. And the Democratically led Congress has prevented that from happening. And now the prices of gasoline are high, and the American people don't like it. And I can understand why they don't like it. In the interim term, we'll—we need to be finding more oil and gas. In the longer term, we ought be diversifying away from our reliance upon oil.

And so, yes, I'm interested in the meeting. I said it's an interesting idea. And I'm going to get home and take a look, and we'll send somebody high-level there.

Thank you.

Prime Minister Berlusconi. Thank you very much. And now to the Italian journalists. Firstly, we have a journalist from Channel One news, our Susanna Petruni.

Iran/Italy's Role in the War on Terror and the Middle East Peace Process

Q. Two very quick questions, one for President Bush and the other for Prime Minister Berlusconi. Now, we know that you are in sound agreement. And, President Bush, I think that you were recently interviewed by my newscast, and you said that you were in favor of Italy being part of the 5-plus-1 group, which is handling the Iranian crisis issue.

Now, Stephen Hadley said today that your position is that of waiting to see what might happen. Now, the White House was backing Italy's participation in the 5-plus-1 group. So, an answer on that.

And, Prime Minister Berlusconi, will there be changes in Italy's presence in Afghanistan and other trouble spots after your talks with President Bush this afternoon?

President Bush. [*Inaudible*]—the P–5-plus-1. And I told Silvio I'd seriously consider it. I also made it clear, however, that all of us, P–5-plus-1 or not, need to be sending the same message to the Iranians, which is, verifiably suspend your enrichment program or else you will face further sanctions and further isolation. And the sad thing about this issue is that the Iranian people are suffering. They could be doing a lot better. Their lives could be much more hopeful, except their Government has made the decision to defy the demands of the free world, has made the decision to ignore the IAEA, and has continued to enrich in a way that we think is dangerous.

And so the choice is theirs to make. Foreign Minister Solana is going to see the Iranian here very shortly, and his message is one that—is the one I just delivered. And it's—I hope for the sake of the Iranian people that their Government changes course. There is a better way forward.

I want to remind you something about this Iranian issue. Vladimir Putin, our mutual friend, went to the Iranians and said, you have a right to have civilian nuclear power. I have said the same thing publicly as well. I mean, I'm a big believer in nuclear power. I think the best way to deal with climate change is the spread of nuclear power. The best way to become less dependent on foreign sources of energy is nuclear power. And I believe Iran should have a civilian nuclear power. I don't believe they can be entrusted to enrich.

And therefore, Vladimir Putin went and said—and he believes that—and he said, we'll provide the fuel for you, and we'll not only provide the fuel, we'll gather the spent fuel, so you don't need to enrich. So the argument of the Iranian Government that "we have a right to have civilian nuclear power" has been undermined by the Russian proposal.

And so it will be interesting to see their decision. But what they need to hear is, is that we are firm in our resolve to prevent them from having the capacity to make a nuclear weapon.

Prime Minister Berlusconi. And with regard to the question addressed to me, we've offered to join the other European countries, plus China, plus Russia, in order to make our contribution to the negotiations which are underway with the Iranian Government. Now, our offer is based on the fact that we know Iran very well from the inside. We have some leading companies that are operating in these countries, and therefore, we think that this would be very useful in helping President Bush and Vladimir Putin to pursue

the strategy that they've determined for that country.

Now, we obviously need to make sure that nuclear energy is being used for only peaceful reasons. With regard to the sanctions proposed by the United Nations, we have always abided by those. And the presence of our businesses have to do with agreements and contracts which date back several years.

Now, with regard to our willingness to remove or lift any caveats with regard to Afghanistan, we discussed that. And we also said that we are willing to keep our troops in other fronts, as it were, in other areas—in Kosovo and Lebanon and wherever it is that our Italian soldiers are today.

And I thank President Bush for his appreciation and acknowledgment of the Italian commitment in these international fronts. And, in fact, there are 40,000 troops that are currently operating in our foreign missions. And we—there—we obviously have a turnover, and we always manage to keep that very large number of troops there. And we will continue, therefore, to pursue this, because we are fully convinced that it is extremely important to be able to establish democracy in Iraq. This is a very important country in that region, and we'll obviously continue to pursue our other efforts. And we obviously back any agreement that will help us to overcome any divisions in Lebanon.

And we're also working on the agreements—on the negotiations for an agreement in Israel and the Middle East. And we are hoping that in all these countries it will be possible to establish peace and that they will certainly be able to become fully established democracies.

The second Italian journalist is from ANSA, the leading news agency.

U.S. Troop Levels in Iraq/Italy's Foreign Policy

Q. Good evening to all of you. I also have a couple of questions, one for President Bush—good evening, sir—and it is about Iraq. You've spoken about a change in the country. Do you think it might be at all possible to have a withdrawal, maybe a partial withdrawal, of U.S. troops? And if so, when do you think that might be?

My second question is for you, Prime Minister Berlusconi. Today the President talked about the fact that Italian foreign policy might change pace, as it were, thanks to the dialog that has been established among the political forces in Italy. Do you think that is so, and if you do, how do you think you can uphold the dialog with the opposition in Italy?

President Bush. The progress is such on the security front that we're—are bringing troops home. We anticipate having the troops that went in for this—what's called the surge back home by July. General Petraeus will come back; he'll assess the situation—come back to the United States—and make further recommendations. I don't know what those recommendations will be. I have told the American people, though, that conditions on the ground, the situation in Iraq, should determine our troop levels.

And so we are in the process of what's called return on success. And I had the honor of going to see the 82d Airborne that had been in Iraq, and they came home. And it was—I was—I am constantly amazed at the courage and the commitment of our troops. And I'm also pleased with the courage and commitment of the Iraqi Government and the people of Iraq. The situation is dramatically different than what it was a year ago. And United States and our allies must send a clear message to the Iraqis: We'll stand with them as their democracy continues to evolve and their economy continues to grow.

Prime Minister Berlusconi. And now my question—I'm very happy to acknowledge the forecast made by the President of Italy with regard to the attitude being shown by the opposition. And we are happy to think that the opposition might like to support our foreign policy, and our foreign policy will go along the same lines that we pursued in our previous Government for those 5 years.

And this is a pro-European integration foreign policy. It is a foreign policy which is based on the idea that we don't have two Western worlds, we don't have Europe on one side and the U.S. and Canada on the other. When we talk about the West, we mean only one West. And our foreign policy aims at being based on cordial relations with

an important country such as the Russian Federation.

So our policy is going to require our effort to strengthen the ties and the cooperation between the European Union and the Russian Federation. And it is a policy that will consider NATO to be the vehicle which will help to maintain and uphold peace throughout the world, as it has done over the past decades.

Now, what about the wounds in the world, at—where we know that they're going to need our generosity? Democracies are going to have to help those people who cannot establish freedom on their own. And as I said earlier, we think that this is the only way that we can possibly pursue in order to enable and ensure peace throughout the world after having fully eliminated terrorism.

Now let me also acknowledge your vision, Mr. President, your policy, and the courage that you have shown throughout all the years, of hard work on behalf—on the part of your administration. You've always expressed your ideas with great courage, your ideals for the future, your vision for the future. I have gotten to know President Bush very well. I consider him to be a very close friend, a very unique person. And when he says no, he means no; when he says yes, it means yes. And he's always known—he's always shown that he has been able to be very close to those friends of his who have shared his ideals.

I thank you very much, Mr. President, for your friendship between the two of us, on a personal level, your friendship shown to our country. And I thank you for the very courageous role that you have always taken as the leader of the most important country in the world, which is able to determine peace and freedom throughout the world.

Thank you once again. Thank you for being here this evening. And thank you to all our American friends who are accompanying the President.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 7:39 p.m. in the Salla della Loggia at the Villa Madama. In his remarks, the President referred to Gov. Chet Culver of Iowa; Gov. Jim Doyle of Wisconsin; Gov. Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr., of Indiana; European Union Foreign Minister Javier Solana Madariaga; Minister of Foreign Affairs Manuchehr Motaki of Iran; Prime Minister Vladimir Putin of Russia; and Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq. Prime Minister Berlusconi referred to Republican Presidential candidate John McCain; and President Giorgio Napolitano of Italy. A reporter referred to Prime Minister Gordon Brown of the United Kingdom. Prime Minister Berlusconi and some reporters spoke in Italian, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris, France

June 13, 2008

Thank you. Thank you very much. Mr. Secretary-General, thank you for your hospitality. It's good to see you again. I remember our days together in the *la frontera de Tejas y Mexico*, when I was the Governor of Texas and you were one of the leading officials of Mexico. And it's great to see you here in Paris, *tambien su esposa*. Madam Secretary, thank you; Ambassadors, World War II veterans, and distinguished guests. Laura and I have—are having a wonderful trip through Europe, and we are so pleased to be back in Paris. It's been a little more than 4 years since we were last in Paris together, and a lot has changed. Laura wrote a book. [*Laughter*] Our daughter got married. [*Laughter*] My dad jumped out of an airplane. [*Laughter*] And my hair is a lot grayer. [*Laughter*]

What has not changed is the friendship between America and France. Recent history has made clear that no disagreement can diminish the deep ties between our nations. France was America's first friend. And over the centuries, our nations stood united in moments of testing, from the Marne to Omaha Beach to the long vigil of the Civil War [cold war] *. After September the 11th, 2001, a major French newspaper published a headline my nation will never forget: "*Nous sommes tous Americains*." America is grateful to the people of France. We're proud to call you friends, and our alliance will stand the test of time.

* White House correction.

We gather to commemorate a landmark in the moment of that alliance, and that's the 60th anniversary of the start of the Marshall plan. In 1948, the United States Congress passed and President Harry Truman signed legislation to fund this unprecedented effort. And just steps from here, at the Chateau de la Muette—the headquarters for the organization that implemented the Marshall plan and worked with our allies to promote open economies and strong free market policies across Europe.

Through this building flowed friendly aid that helped renew the spirit of the continent, what one magazine called "the D-day for peace." From this building came money for fuel and vehicles and machinery that helped bring Europe's economies back to life. And in this building were written the first chapters of European unity, a story of cooperation that eventually resulted in institutions like NATO and the European Union and the organization that carries the spirit of the Marshall plan into a new century, the OECD.

The Marshall plan was the source of aid and assistant, and it wisely gave Europeans a leading role in reconstruction. By doing so, the plan conveyed a message of partnership and respect. And by offering help to nations across Europe, including Communist nations, the plan also had the effect of clarifying the new ideological struggle that was unfolding.

When he announced the plan, Secretary Marshall made it clear it was "directed not against any country or doctrine, but against hunger and poverty and desperation and chaos." With these words, he showed that we stood for a future of unity and prosperity and freedom throughout Europe. Yet the leaders in the Kremlin denied the Marshall plan aid to the suffering people of the Soviet Union and its captive nations. What followed was nearly a half century of repression and fear in the East, until at last freedom arrived. In an ironic final scene, the Soviets did accept some Western assistance after all. As the last Secretary General sat down to sign the papers ending the Soviet Union, he discovered that his pen was out of ink, so he borrowed one from an American news crew. [*Laughter*]

In the years since the cold war ended, Europe has taken inspiring strides toward a continent whole, free, and at peace. Over the past 8 years, we have watched nations from the Baltics to the Balkans complete the transition from the Soviet bloc to the European Union. We've seen former members of the Warsaw Pact proudly sign the treaty to join NATO. We witnessed an Orange Revolution in Ukraine, a Rose Revolution in Georgia, a Declaration of Independence in Kosovo, and the rise of a democratic movement in Belarus. America admires these brave stands for liberty. We look forward to the day when all free people on this continent take their rightful place in the institutions of Europe.

With these changes has come a revitalization between the relationship—of the relationship between Europe and the United States. Instead of focusing on issues within Europe, we're increasingly looking to matters of global reach. Instead of dwelling on our differences, we're increasingly united in our interests and ideals.

On my first trip abroad of my second term as President, I traveled to Brussels and called for "a new era of transatlantic unity." This week, I have seen the outlines of that new era. In leaders like Berlusconi and Brown and Merkel and Sarkozy, I see a commitment to a powerful and purposeful Europe that advances the values of liberty within its borders and beyond. And when the time comes to welcome a new American President next January, I will be pleased to report to him that the relationship between the United States and Europe is the broadest and most vibrant it has ever been. We see this broad and vibrant relationship in the expansive agenda for our meetings this week.

America and Europe are cooperating to open new opportunities for trade and investment. And we're determined to help make this the year the world completes an ambitious Doha round.

America and Europe are cooperating to address the twin challenges of energy security and climate change while keeping our economies strong. We will continue working to diversify our energy supplies by developing and financing new clean energy technologies. We will continue working toward an international agreement that commits

every major economy to slow, stop, and, eventually, reverse the growth of greenhouse gases.

America and Europe are cooperating to widen the circle of development and prosperity. We lead the world in providing food aid, improving education for boys and girls, and fighting disease. Through the historic commitments of the United States and other G–8 countries, we are working to turn the tide against HIV/AIDS and malaria in Africa. And to achieve this noble goal, all nations must keep their promises to deliver this urgent aid.

America and Europe are cooperating on our most solemn duty of all, protecting our citizens. From New York and Washington to London and Madrid to Copenhagen and Amsterdam, we've seen terrorists and extremists rejoice in the murder of the innocent. So America and Europe are applying the tools of intelligence and finance and law enforcement and diplomacy, and, when necessary, military power to break up terror networks and deny them safe havens. And to protect the people of Europe from the prospect of ballistic missile attacks emanating from the Middle East, we're developing a shared system of missile defense.

These measures are critical to the success in the fight against terror. Yet as in the cold war, we must also prevail in a wider struggle, the battle of ideas. On one side are all who embrace the fundamental tenets of civilization: the natural right to liberty, freedom of conscience and dissent, and the obligation of the strong to protect the weak. On the other side are men who place no value on life, allow no room for dissent, and use terror to impose their harsh ideology on as many people as possible.

Ultimately, the only way to defeat the advocates of this ideology is to defeat their ideas. So the central aim of our foreign policy is to advance a more hopeful and compelling vision, especially in the broader Middle East, a vision on the ideals of liberty and justice and tolerance and hope. These ideals are the foundation of France's Declaration of the Rights of Man and America's Declaration of Independence. Yet these ideals do not belong to our nations alone. They are universal ideals. And the lesson of history is that by extending these ideals—it's more than just a moral obligation—that by expending these—extending these ideals is the only practical and realistic way to protect—to provide our security and to spread the peace.

The rise of free and prosperous societies in the broader Middle East is essential to peace in the 21st century, just as the rise of a free and prosperous Europe was essential to peace in the 20th century. So Europe and America must stand with reformers and democratic leaders and millions of ordinary people across the Middle East who seek a future of hope and liberty and peace.

In Afghanistan, we must stand with a brave young democracy determined to defeat Al Qaida and the Taliban. NATO has accepted an historic mission in Afghanistan. And I applaud the leadership of President Sarkozy, who hosted an international support conference yesterday and will soon deploy additional forces to Afghanistan. President Sarkozy has said: "What is at stake in that country is the future of our values and that of the Atlantic alliance." He is right. Our nations must ensure that Afghanistan is never again a safe haven for terror.

In Lebanon, we must stand with those struggling to protect their sovereignty and independence. We must counter the dangers posed by Hizballah terrorists supported by Iran and Syria. And together we must show the people of Lebanon that they will have the lasting support of the free world.

In the Holy Land, we must stand with Palestinians and Israelis and all others committed to a two-state solution, a permanent peace based on two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in security and peace. I firmly believe that with leadership and courage, a peace agreement is possible this year.

In Iran and Syria, we must stand with the decent people of those two nations who deserve much better than the life they have today. We must stand—we must firmly oppose Iran and Syria's support for terror. And for the security of Europe and for the peace of the world, we must not allow Iran to have a nuclear weapon.

In Iraq, we must stand with the courageous people who have turned the momentum against Al Qaida and extremists. From

Anbar Province to mixed neighborhoods in Baghdad to the cities of Basra and Mosul, Iraqis of all backgrounds have made it clear they reject extremism and terror. Today, violence in Iraq is down to the lowest point since March of 2004. Civilian deaths are down; sectarian killings are down. And as security has improved, economic life has been revived. Reconciliation is taking place in communities across that country. And the Government in Baghdad is showing strong leadership and progress on the path to a free society. With the terrorists on the run and freedom on the rise, it is in the interests of every nation on this continent to support a stable and democratic Iraq.

Since 2001, the freedom movement has been advancing in the Middle East. Kuwait has had elections in which women were allowed to vote and hold office for the first time. Algeria held its first competitive Presidential elections. Citizens have voted in municipal elections in Saudi Arabia, in competitive parliamentary elections in Jordan and Morocco and Bahrain, and in a multiparty Presidential election in Yemen.

Liberty takes hold in different places in different ways, so we must continue to adapt and find innovative ways to support those movements for freedom. The way to do so is to stand with civil society groups, human rights organizations, dissidents, independents, journalists and bloggers, and others on the leading edge of reform. We have taken important steps in this area, such as the Broader Middle East and North American [North Africa] * Initiative led by the United States, the Forum for Freedom [Forum for the Future] * led by the G–8, and the Partnership for Democratic Governance led by the OECD.

Spreading the hope of freedom is the calling of our time. And as we look ahead to the great task, we can be guided by four key principles: unity, confidence, vision, and resolve.

We must go forward with unity. Over the course of the cold war, the transatlantic alliance faced moments of serious tension, from the Suez crisis in the 1950s to the basing of missiles in Europe in the 1980s. Yet with the distance of time, we can see these differences for what they were, fleeting disagreements between friends. We'll have more disagreements in the decades ahead, but we must never allow those disagreements to undermine our shared purposes. Dividing democracies is one of our enemies' goals, and they must not be allowed to succeed.

We must go forward with confidence. Our vision of freedom and peace in the Middle East and beyond is ambitious, and of course, there will be voices that will say it will never arrive. And that's natural, and it's not new. There were times when it seemed impossible that there could ever be peace between Britain and France, or France and Germany, or between Germany and Poland. Yet today, all those nations are at peace, and war in Europe is virtually unimaginable. Something happened in Europe that defied the skeptics and the pattern of the centuries, and that was the spread of human freedom.

In truth, this is a strange time to doubt the power of liberty. Over the past 30 years, the number of democracies has grown from 45 to more than 120, which is the fastest advance of freedom in history. As some of the world's oldest democracies, we should never be surprised by the appeal of freedom. We should stand against the moral relativism that views all forms of government as equally acceptable. And we should be confident that one day, the same determination and desire that brought freedom to Paris and Berlin and Riga will bring freedom to Gaza, Damascus, and Tehran.

We must go forward with a clear vision. In the cold war, we laid out a vision of liberty and trusted its power to transform societies. And that transformation took place in ways almost no one could foresee. In the late 1970s, for example, many in the West worried we were losing. And then one October afternoon, there came a sign as bright as the white smoke above the Sistine Chapel. Onto the balcony of St. Peter's stepped the first Polish Pope in history, who inspired millions behind the Iron Curtain with his call, "Be not afraid." John Paul's election was followed by the elections of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, who helped restore confidence in freedom's power and pursued a policy of peace through strength. And soon

* White House correction.

other remarkable events began unfolding: shipyard workers in Gdansk brought down a government; a jailed playwright in Prague touched off a Velvet Revolution; and citizens of Berlin prayed for the end of a wall and then found the strength to tear it down.

In today's struggle, we have again laid out a clear vision of freedom, and it will transform lives in the Middle East and beyond in ways we cannot fully predict. But we can see some of the sources of change. Sixty percent of the Middle East population is under 30 years old, and over time, these young people—surfing the Internet and watching satellite television and studying abroad—will demand that their societies fully join the free world. The women's movement in the region is growing, and over time, this movement will spark reform, as mothers and daughters make clear that it is costly and unwise to keep half the population from fully contributing to the life of a nation. Middle Eastern immigrants here in Europe are seeing the benefits of freedom, and over time, they will insist that the liberty of their adopted homelands also belongs in the lands of their birth. The future of the region is the hands of its people, and those of us who live in free societies must continue to encourage these early stirrings of reform.

And finally, we must go forward with resolve. In the years ahead, there will be periods of difficulty, yet history shows that freedom can endure even the hardest of tests. Picture what the future of Europe must have looked like for leaders meeting here in Paris 60 years ago. Moscow had occupied much of Central and Eastern Europe after World War II. Communist parties had threatened Governments in Italy and here in France. A severe Soviet threat imperiled Greece and Turkey. A Communist coup had toppled the elected Government of Czechoslovakia. Stalin ordered the blockade of Berlin.

Yet in America and in free capitals of Europe, we summoned the resolve to prevail. We launched the Marshall plan and the Berlin Airlift. Then came the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty and the formation of West Germany. Looking back over the decades, we can see that these brave early measures put us on the path to victory in the cold war.

There are moments today when the situation in places like the Middle East can look as daunting as it did in Europe six decades ago. Yet we can have confidence that liberty once again will prevail. We can have confidence because freedom is the longing of every soul, and it is the direction of history. We can have confidence because men and women in the Middle East and beyond are determined to claim their liberty, just as the people of Europe did in the last century.

Near the end of his life, George Marshall made a final trip to Europe. He came not for a military meeting or a diplomatic summit, but to accept the Nobel Peace Prize. In his address, Marshall offered a bold prediction: "Tyranny inevitably must retire before the tremendous moral strength of the gospel of freedom." Sixty years ago, the faith in liberty helped the gospel of freedom ring out in nations devastated by war. Today, freedom rings out across this continent. And one day, freedom will ring out across the world.

Thank you for having me. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:36 p.m. at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary-General Angel Gurria of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and his wife, Lulu Quintana; Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice; Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy; Prime Minister Gordon Brown and former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of the United Kingdom; Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany; President Nicolas Sarkozy of France; and former President Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic.

Statement on the Death of Tim Russert

June 13, 2008

Laura and I are deeply saddened by the sudden passing of Tim Russert. Those of us who knew and worked with Tim, his many friends, and the millions of Americans who loyally followed his career on the air will all miss him.

As the longest serving host of the longest running program in the history of television, he was an institution in both news and politics for more than two decades. Tim was a tough and hard-working newsman. He was always well-informed and thorough in his

interviews, and he was as gregarious off the set as he was prepared on it.

Most important, Tim was a proud son and father, and Laura and I offer our deepest sympathies to his wife, Maureen, his son, Luke, and the entire Russert family. We will keep them in our prayers.

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.

June 7

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

June 8

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

June 9

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Ljubljana Joze Pucnik Airport, Slovenia, arriving in the evening. While en route aboard Air Force One, he participated in an interview with Gerard Baker and Tom Baldwin of the Times.

Later in the evening, upon arrival at Ljubljana Joze Pucnik Airport, the President participated in a greeting with Prime Minister Janez Jansa of Slovenia. He then traveled to the Kokra Hotel in Kranj, Slovenia.

The President declared a major disaster in Indiana and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding beginning on June 6 and continuing.

The President announced his intention to nominate Michael Bruce Donley to be Secretary of the Air Force and designate him as Acting Secretary of the Air Force.

June 10

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Brdo Castle, where he met separately with President Danilo Turk and Prime Minister Janez Jansa of Slovenia. He then returned to the Kokra Hotel, where he was joined by Mrs. Bush.

Later in the morning, the President and Mrs. Bush met with U.S. Embassy staff and their families. He then returned to Brdo Castle, where he participated in a photo opportunity and met with European Union leaders. Later, he traveled to the Brdo Congress Centre, where, in the Splendens Room, he participated in the EU-U.S. summit.

In the afternoon, in the Glass Hall at the Brdo Congress Centre, the President participated in the EU-U.S. summit working lunch. Later, he returned to Brdo Castle, where he was joined by Mrs. Bush. Then, on the South Lawn of Brdo Castle, they viewed the Lipizzaner Horse Exhibition.

Later in the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Ljubljana Joze Pucnik Airport, where they, Prime Minister Jansa, and his fiancee, Urska Bacovnik, participated in photo opportunities and met with Slovenian military personnel. They then traveled to Meseberg, Germany, arriving in the evening.

Later in the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to the Schloss Meseberg, where they had dinner with Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany and her husband, Joachim Sauer.

The President announced his intention to nominate Frederick S. Celec to be Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical, and Biological Defense Programs.

The President announced his intention to nominate John Melvin Jones to be Ambassador to Guyana.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the President's Commission on White House Fellowships: Dionel M. Aviles; Ari Bousbib; Amy Woods Brinkley; Deirdre P. Connelly; Louis DeJoy; George M. Drysdale; John H. Frey; Trey Grayson; Frederick D. Gregory; Mark F. Hearne II; Thomas C. Leppert; Catherine J. Martin; Roger B. Porter; Amy Tuck; and Dennis Zeleny.

The President announced his intention to appoint Brig. Gen. Errol R. Schwartz as

Commanding General of the Militia of the District of Columbia.

June 11

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Garden Salon of Schloss Meseberg, he and Mrs. Bush had breakfast with Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany.

In the afternoon, in the Garden at Schloss Meseberg, the President had lunch with Chancellor Merkel. Later, he traveled to Rome, Italy. He then traveled to the Villa Taverna, the official residence of U.S. Ambassador to Italy Ronald P. Spogli.

June 12

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. He then traveled to the Villa Aurelia at the American Academy.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Quirinale Palace, where, in the President's Office, he met with President Giorgio Napolitano of Italy. Then, in the Mirror Room, they had lunch. Later, he returned to the Villa Taverna.

During the day, the President was briefed on the June 11 storms and flooding in the Midwest.

In the evening, the President traveled to the Villa Madama, where, in the Dining Room, he had a working dinner with Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy. Later, he returned to the Villa Taverna.

The President announced his intention to nominate Michael J. Sison to be Ambassador to Lebanon.

The President announced his intention to nominate James Christopher Swan to be Ambassador to Djibouti.

The President announced his intention to appoint Carole Jean Jordan as Chairperson of the National Women's Business Council.

The President announced his intention to appoint Florence Shapiro as a member of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the National Cancer Advisory Board: Victoria Lee Champion; William H. Goodwin, Jr.; Waun Ki Hong; Judith Salmon Kaur; Mary Vaughan Lester; Herbert Kim Lyerly; and Jennifer A. Pietenpol.

The President announced his intention to designate Carolyn D. Runowicz as Chairman of the National Cancer Advisory Board.

June 13

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to the Vatican, where he was joined by Mrs. Bush. They then participated in a greeting with Pope Benedict XVI.

Later in the morning, the President met with Pope Benedict XVI. They then toured the Vatican Gardens. Later, they and Mrs. Bush attended a cultural performance.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Paris, France. Later, he traveled to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development headquarters. He then traveled to the American Embassy Residence.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Elysee Palace, where he participated in an arrival ceremony with President Nicolas Sarkozy of France. They then had dinner with President Sarkozy and his wife, Carla Bruni. Later, they returned to the American Embassy Residence.

The President declared a major disaster in Montana and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe winter storm on May 1 and 2.

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 June 10

John O. Agwunobi,
of Florida, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the African Development Foundation for a term expiring February 9, 2014, vice Ephraim Batambuze, term expired.

Frederick S. Celec,
of Virginia, to be Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Nuclear and Chemical and Biological Defense Programs, vice Dale Klein, resigned.

Julius E. Coles,
of Georgia, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the African Development Foundation for a term expiring September 22, 2011, vice Willie Grace Campbell, term expired.

Morgan W. Davis,
of California, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the African Development Foundation for a term expiring November 13, 2013, vice Edward Brehm, term expired.

Marylyn Andrea Howe,
of Massachusetts, to be a member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2011 (reappointment).

John Melvin Jones,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Cooperative Republic of Guyana.

John W. Leslie, Jr.,
of Connecticut, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the African Development Foundation for a term expiring September 22, 2013 (reappointment).

Heather McCallum,
of Georgia, to be a member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2011, vice Cynthia Allen Wainscott, term expiring.

Lonnie C. Moore,
of Kansas, to be a member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2011 (reappointment).

Christina Alvarado Shanahan,
of North Carolina, to be a member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2011, vice Patricia Pound, term expired.

Submitted June 12

Matthew S. Petersen,
of Utah, to be a member of the Federal Election Commission for a term expiring April 30, 2011, vice Hans von Spakovsky.

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 June 9

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Dana Perino, Deputy National Security Adviser for Regional Affairs Judith Ansley, and Assistant to the President for International Economic Affairs Daniel M. Price

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Indiana

Released June 10

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Dana Perino and National Security Adviser Stephen J. Hadley

Fact sheet: The United States and the European Union: Working Together To Advance Freedom and Prosperity Around the World

Text of U.S.-EU Summit Declaration

Text of Transatlantic Economic Council report to the EU-U.S. Summit 2008

Released June 11

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Dana Perino, Deputy National Security Adviser for Regional Affairs Judith Ansley, and Assistant to the President for International Economic Affairs Daniel M. Price

Announcement of Presidential Medal of Freedom recipients

Released June 12

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Dana Perino and National Security Adviser Stephen J. Hadley

Statement by the Press Secretary on reports on the arrest in Zimbabwe of Secretary General Tendai Biti of the Movement for Democratic Change

Excerpts from the President's remarks in Paris, France

Fact sheet: The Afghanistan Support Conference: Renewed U.S. and International Commitment

Released June 13

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Dana Perino and the First Lady

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Montana

Acts Approved by the President

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