

small Colonies into a great and growing nation of more than 300 [million]* people. They've made America a melting pot of cultures from all across the world. They've made diversity one of the great strengths of our democracy. And all of us here today are here to honor and pay tribute to that great notion of America.

Those of you taking the oath of citizenship at this ceremony hail from 30 different nations. You represent many different ethnicities and races and religions. But you all have one thing in common, and that is a shared love of freedom. This love of liberty is what binds our Nation together, and this is the love that makes us all Americans.

One man with special appreciation for liberty is Mya Soe from Burma. As a member of the Shan ethnic group, Mya faced discrimination and oppression at the hands of Burma's military junta. When he tried to reach local villagers—when he tried to teach local villagers how to read and write the Shan language, the regime interrogated him and harassed him. In 2000, he left a life of fear for a life of freedom. He now works as a painter in the Charlottesville community. Today, we welcome this brave immigrant as a citizen-to-be of the United States of America.

I'm sure there are other stories like Mya's among you. But we must remember that the desire for freedom burns inside every man and woman and child. More than two centuries ago, this desire of freedom was—had inspired the subjects of a mighty empire to declare themselves free and independent citizens of a new nation. Today, that same desire for freedom has inspired 72 immigrants from around the world to become citizens of the greatest nation on Earth, the United States of America.

I congratulate you. I welcome you. I wish you all a happy Fourth of July. Thanks for inviting me. May God bless you, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:07 a.m. at Monticello. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Timothy M. Kaine of Virginia and his wife, Anne Holton.

* White House correction.

Statement on the Death of Senator Jesse Helms

July 4, 2008

Laura and I are deeply saddened by the passing of our good friend and a great American, Senator Jesse Helms. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Dot, and all the members of the Helms family.

Throughout his long public career, Senator Jesse Helms was a tireless advocate for the people of North Carolina, a stalwart defender of limited government and free enterprise, a fearless defender of a culture of life, and an unwavering champion of those struggling for liberty. Under his leadership, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee was a powerful force for freedom. And today, from Central America to Central Europe and beyond, people remember, in the dark days when the forces of tyranny seemed on the rise, Jesse Helms took their side.

Jesse Helms was a kind, decent, and humble man and a passionate defender of what he called "the miracle of America." So it is fitting that this great patriot left us on the Fourth of July. He was once asked if he had any ambitions beyond the United States Senate. He replied, "The only thing I am running for is the Kingdom of Heaven." Today, Jesse Helms has finished the race, and we pray he finds comfort in the arms of the loving God he strove to serve throughout his life.

The President's Radio Address

July 5, 2008

Good morning. This weekend, Americans are celebrating the anniversary of our Nation's independence. Two hundred and thirty-two years ago, our Founding Fathers came together in Philadelphia to proclaim that all men are created equal and that they are endowed by their Creator with unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

The man who wrote those immortal words was Thomas Jefferson. Yesterday, I celebrated the Fourth of July at Monticello, Jefferson's home in Virginia. While there, I witnessed an event that would have made the author of the Declaration of Independence

proud. On Monticello's lawn, more than 70 men and women from dozens of countries raised their right hands to take the oath of American citizenship. They swore their allegiance to the Constitution. They promised that they would defend the laws of the United States. And they reminded everyone in attendance that the promise of America is open to all.

These new citizens come from countries as diverse as Burma, Afghanistan, Norway, and Iraq. These new citizens are proof that there is no American race, just an American creed. In the United States, we believe in the rights and dignity of every person; we believe in equal justice, limited government, and the rule of law; and we believe in personal responsibility and tolerance towards others. This creed of freedom and equality has lifted the lives of millions of Americans, whether citizens by birth or citizens by choice.

This creed of freedom has required brave defenders, and every generation of Americans has produced them. From the soldiers who fought for independence at Bunker Hill and Yorktown to the Americans who broke the chains of slavery, liberated Europe and Asia from tyranny, and brought down an evil empire, the people of this great land have always risen to freedom's defense.

Today, the men and women of America's Armed Forces continue this proud tradition of defending liberty. In places like Afghanistan and Iraq, many risk their lives every day to protect America and uphold the principle that human freedom is the birthright of all people and a gift from the Almighty. These brave Americans make it possible for America to endure as a free society. So on this Fourth of July, we owe all those who wear the uniform of the United States a special debt of gratitude. And we thank their families for supporting them in this crucial time for our Nation.

The Fourth of July is a day when all Americans take a moment to share a collective sense of pride in our country. We live in a Nation founded on the power of an idea, a Nation where opportunity is limited only by imagination, and a Nation that has done more than any other to spread the light of liberty throughout the world. Today, that

light shines as brightly as it did in 1776. And with "the protection of Divine Providence," it will continue to shine brightly for generations to come.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 8:55 a.m. on July 3 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 5. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 3 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda of Japan in Toyako, Japan

July 6, 2008

Prime Minister Fukuda. We had a very substantive meeting with President Bush for about an hour. In the meeting, we first shared the view that the peace and stability in this region, in the past decades, have been maintained thanks to the Japan-U.S. alliance. We then reaffirmed that in the 7½ years or so since the inauguration of the Bush administration in January of 2001, the alliance has deepened by leaps and bounds in security, economic, people-to-people exchanges, and other areas. And we agreed to further strengthen this alliance.

In the security area, cooperation between Japan and the United States grew more concrete, substantive, and broader in nature, as exemplified by the cooperation in the fight against terrorism and assistance for Iraqi reconstruction following 9/11, the agreement on and steady implementation of a roadmap for U.S. forces realignment, and the joint development of ballistic missile defense and successful intercept tests.

On North Korean issues, I told President Bush that the verification of their declaration is extremely important to realize complete nuclear abandonment by North Korea; that simultaneous settlement of denuclearization and the abduction issue will be important; and that to that end, Japan wishes to continue to cooperate closely with the United States. And President Bush concurred with me and