

attend underground churches in China. And we also honor the courage of the Dalai Lama and the Buddhists in Tibet.

And you know, last month here at the White House, I met with a Chinese dissident named Li Baiguang. He's a lawyer who worked on human rights cases; he's a house church Protestant. For his work, he's been repeatedly jailed and attacked. A few months ago, he was scheduled to meet with Members of Congress. State authorities blocked the meeting and detained Li on the outskirts of Beijing. This determined man has pledged: "I'll continue to seek justice for victims of rights abuses and promote the rule of law in China." And my message to President Hu Jintao, when I last met him, was this: So long as there are those who want to fight for their liberty, the United States stands with them.

Whenever and wherever I meet leaders, I'm going to constantly remind them that they ought to welcome religion in their society, not fear it. I'll remind them, someone pledged to love a neighbor like they'd like to be loved themselves is someone who will add to their society in constructive and peaceful ways.

I'm met by men and women who are working for religious freedom around the globe, people like Li. And when I do, I'm always impressed by their courage. I've attended worship services from Hanoi to Beijing. And when I speak to world leaders, I remind them—the leaders in those countries that the worship services are a necessary part of developing a society for which they can be proud.

And so as we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the International Religious Freedom Act, we pray that all those who seek their God will be able to do so free of oppression and fear.

I want to thank you all for your good work, and I ask for the good Lord to continue to bless our country. Thank you for your time.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:51 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Senator Donald L. Nickles; Nasrullah ibn Ibadullah, adviser, Turkmenistan's Council on Religious Affairs; Chinese Uighur dissident Rebiya Kadeer; and Tenzin Gyatso, the Dalai Lama of Tibet. The Office of

the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks on Energy

July 14, 2008

Good afternoon. Across the country, Americans are concerned about the high price of gasoline. Every one of our citizens who drives to work or takes a family vacation or runs a small business is feeling the squeeze of rising prices at the pump.

To reduce pressure on prices, we must continue to implement good conservation policies, and we need to increase the supply of oil, especially here at home. For years, my administration has been calling on Congress to expand domestic oil production. Unfortunately, Democrats on Capitol Hill have rejected virtually every proposal, and now Americans are paying at the pump. When Members of Congress were home over the Fourth of July recess, they heard a clear message from their constituents: We need to take action now to expand domestic oil production.

One of the most important steps we can take to expand American oil production is to increase access to offshore exploration on the Outer Continental Shelf, or what's called the OCS. But Congress has restricted access to key parts of the OCS since the early 1980s. Experts believe that these restricted areas of the OCS could eventually produce nearly 10 years worth of America's current annual oil production. And advances in technology have made it possible to conduct oil exploration in the OCS that is out of sight, protects coral reefs and habitats, and protects against oil spills.

Last month, I asked Congress to lift this legislative ban and allow the exploration and development of offshore oil resources. I committed to lift an executive prohibition on this exploration if Congress did so, tailoring my executive action to match what Congress passed. It's been almost a month since I urged Congress to act, and they've done nothing; they've not moved any legislation. And as the Democratically controlled Congress has sat idle, gas prices have continued to increase.

The failure to act is unacceptable. It's unacceptable to me, and it's unacceptable to the American people. So today I've issued a memorandum to lift the executive prohibition on oil exploration in the OCS. With this action, the executive branch's restrictions on this exploration have been cleared away. This means that the only thing standing between the American people and these vast oil resources is action from the U.S. Congress.

Now the ball is squarely in Congress's court. Democratic leaders can show that they have finally heard the frustrations of the American people by matching the action I've taken today, repealing the congressional ban, and passing legislation to facilitate responsible offshore exploration. This legislation must allow States to have a say in what happens off their shores, provides a way for the Federal Government and States to share new leasing revenues, and ensure the environment is protected.

This legislation should also take other essential steps to expand domestic production. Congress should clear the way for our Nation to tap into the extraordinary potential of oil shale, which could provide Americans with domestic oil supplies that are equal to more than a century's worth of current oil product—of oil imports. Congress should permit exploration in currently restricted areas of northern Alaska, which could produce roughly the equivalent of two decades of imported oil from Saudi Arabia. Congress should expand and enhance our domestic refining capacity, so that America will no longer have to import millions of barrels of fully refined gasoline from abroad.

The time for action is now. This is a difficult period for millions of American families. Every extra dollar they have to spend because of high gas prices is one dollar less they can use to put food on the table or send a child to school. And they are rightly angered by Congress's failure to enact common-sense solutions. Today I've taken every step within my power to allow offshore exploration of the OCS. All that remains is for the Democratic leaders in Congress to allow a vote. The American people are watching the numbers climb higher and higher at the pump, and they're waiting to see what the Congress will do.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:27 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Proclamation 8273—FBI Day, 2008

July 14, 2008

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

For 100 years, the committed men and women of the Federal Bureau of Investigation have worked diligently to deliver justice and keep Americans safe. On FBI Day, we recognize the Bureau's many accomplishments and pay tribute to all who have served in its ranks with valor and dedication.

The FBI traces its origins to 1908, when under the leadership of President Theodore Roosevelt and Attorney General Charles Bonaparte, a force of Special Agents was created, later to be called the Bureau of Investigation. As a Federal agency with the power to investigate crimes across State lines and enforce Federal law, the FBI has protected our country against threats from abroad and caught dangerous criminals like "Baby Face" Nelson, John Dillinger, Ted Kaczynski, and Ramzi Yousef. Today, the FBI is charged with guarding our Nation from terrorist attacks, combating public corruption and organized crime, resisting cyber attacks, and opposing other high-technology crimes. The FBI also has a deep commitment to civil rights, helping protect the values we cherish.

With an abiding respect for the Constitution, the men and women of the FBI bring strength, impartiality, and devotion to their pursuit of justice. They continue to uphold their motto of "Fidelity, Bravery, Integrity." On FBI Day, we especially remember the fallen agents who paid the ultimate price in serving our country and keeping our Nation safe.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim July 26, 2008, as