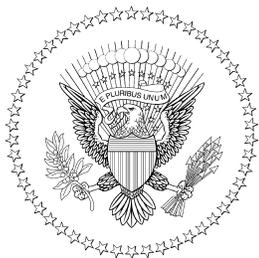


Weekly Compilation of  
**Presidential  
Documents**



Monday, December 18, 2006  
Volume 42—Number 50  
Pages 2147–2171

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## WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

## PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

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Week Ending Friday, December 15, 2006

**Presidential Determination on Sanctions Against North Korea for Detonation of a Nuclear Explosive Device**

*December 7, 2006*

Presidential Determination No. 2007-07

*Memorandum for the Secretary of State*

*Subject:* Presidential Determination on Sanctions Against North Korea for Detonation of a Nuclear Explosive Device

In accordance with section 102(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act and section 129 of the Atomic Energy Act, I hereby determine that North Korea, a non-nuclear-weapon state, detonated a nuclear explosive device on October 9, 2006. The relevant agencies and instrumentalities of the United States Government are hereby directed to take the necessary actions to impose on North Korea the sanctions described in section 102(b)(2) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended (22 U.S.C. 2799aa-1), and section 129 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2158).

You are authorized and directed to transmit this determination to the appropriate committees of the Congress and to arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register*.

**George W. Bush**

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 8. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Proclamation 8090—Human Rights Day, Bill of Rights Day, and Human Rights Week, 2006**

*December 8, 2006*

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

Peace and justice prevail when people are free to speak, assemble, and worship, when their rights are protected, and when governments are accountable to their citizens. These blessings of freedom are guaranteed for Americans in the Bill of Rights of our Constitution. During Human Rights Day, Bill of Rights Day, and Human Rights Week, we celebrate the ideals of our founders and reaffirm the belief that freedom is the gift of God and the right of all mankind.

Just over six decades ago, the future of freedom seemed bleak, with only a small number of democracies around the world. Today, citizens of over 100 nations enjoy the blessings of democracy, and freedom is taking root in places where liberty had been unimaginable. The United States will continue to support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation.

The advance of freedom is the story of our time, and new chapters are being written before our eyes. Around the world, freedom is replacing tyranny and giving men and women the opportunity to enjoy lives of purpose and dignity. Because Americans are committed to the God-given value of every life, we cherish the freedom of every person in every nation and strive to promote respect for human rights. By standing with those who desire liberty, we will help extend freedom to many who have not known it and lay the foundations of peace for generations to come.

**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 December 10, 2006, as Human Rights Day; December 15, 2006, as Bill of Rights Day; and the week beginning December 10, 2006, as Human Rights Week. I call upon the people of the United States to mark these observances with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

**In Witness Whereof**, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of December, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., December 13, 2006]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on December 14. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

### **Memorandum on Designation of Officers of the Department of Justice** *December 8, 2006*

*Memorandum for the Attorney General*  
*Subject:* Designation of Officers of the Department of Justice

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, 5 U.S.C. 3345 *et seq.*, I hereby order that:

**Section 1. Order of Succession.** During any period when the Attorney General, the Deputy Attorney General, the Associate Attorney General, and the officers designated by the Attorney General pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 508 to act as Attorney General have died, resigned, or otherwise become unable to perform the functions and duties of the office of Attorney General, the following officers of the Department of Justice, in the order listed, shall perform the functions and duties of the office of Attorney General, if they are eligible to act as Attorney General under the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, until such time as at least one of the officers mentioned above is able to perform the functions and duties of the office of Attorney General:

United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York;

United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia; and

United States Attorney for the Western District of Texas.

**Sec. 2. Exceptions.** (a) No individual who is serving in an office listed in section 1 in an acting capacity, by virtue of so serving, shall act as Attorney General pursuant to this memorandum.

(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of this memorandum, the President retains discretion, to the extent permitted by the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, 5 U.S.C. 3345 *et seq.*, to depart from this memorandum in designating an acting Attorney General.

**Sec. 3.** The Memorandum for the Attorney General of March 19, 2002, entitled "Designation of Officers of the Department of Justice," is hereby revoked.

**Sec. 4.** The Attorney General is authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:31 a.m., December 11, 2006]

NOTE: This memorandum was published in the *Federal Register* on December 12. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

### **The President's Radio Address** *December 9, 2006*

Good morning. This week, I held important meetings at the White House about the situation in Iraq.

On Monday, I met in the Oval Office with one of Iraq's most influential Shi'a leaders, His Eminence Abdul Aziz Al-Hakim. We discussed the desire of the Iraqi people to see their unity Government succeed and how the United States can help them achieve that goal.

On Thursday, I had breakfast with Prime Minister Tony Blair of Britain. We discussed the sectarian violence in Iraq and the need to confront extremists inside Iraq and throughout the region. The Prime Minister explains it this way: "The violence is not an

accident or a result of faulty planning. It is a deliberate strategy. It is the direct result of outside extremists teaming up with internal extremists—Al Qaida with the Sunni insurgents and Iran with Shi'a militia—to foment hatred and thus throttle, at birth, the possibility of nonsectarian democracy.”

The Prime Minister and I also discussed the report I received this week from the Iraq Study Group, chaired by former Secretary of State James Baker and former Congressman Lee Hamilton. Their report provides a straightforward picture of the grave situation we face in Iraq. The Iraq Study Group's report also explicitly endorses the strategic goal we've set in Iraq: an Iraq that can “govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself.”

The report went on to say, quote, “In our view, this definition entails an Iraq with a broadly representative government that maintains its territorial integrity, is at peace with its neighbors, denies terrorism a sanctuary, and doesn't brutalize its own people. Given the current situation in Iraq, achieving this goal will require much time and will depend primarily on the actions of the Iraqi people.”

I agree with this assessment. I was also encouraged that the Iraq Study Group was clear about the consequences of a precipitous withdrawal from Iraq. The group declared that such a withdrawal would, quote, “almost certainly produce greater sectarian violence” and lead to “a significant power vacuum, greater human suffering, regional destabilization, and a threat to the global economy.” The report went on to say, “If we leave and Iraq descends into chaos, the long-range consequences could eventually require the United States to return.”

The Iraq Study Group understands the urgency of getting it right in Iraq. The group also understands that while the work ahead will not be easy, success in Iraq is important, and success in Iraq is possible. The group proposed a number of thoughtful recommendations on a way forward for our country in Iraq. My administration is reviewing the report, and we will seriously consider every recommendation. At the same time, the Pentagon, the State Department, and the National Security Council are finishing work on their own reviews of our strategy in Iraq.

I look forward to receiving their recommendations. I want to hear all advice as I make the decisions to chart a new course in Iraq.

I thank the members of the Iraq Study Group for their hard work and for the example of bipartisanship that they have set. The group showed that Americans of different political parties can agree on a common goal in Iraq and come together on ways to achieve it. Now it is the responsibility of all of us in Washington—Republicans and Democrats alike—to come together and find greater consensus on the best way forward.

As part of this effort, I met this week with House and Senate leaders from both parties, as well as senior members of the Armed Services, Foreign Relations, and Intelligence Committees. We had productive discussions about our shared duty to forge a bipartisan approach to succeed in Iraq. The future of a vital region of the world and the security of the American people depend on victory in Iraq. I'm confident that we can move beyond our political differences and come together to achieve that victory. I will do my part.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:50 a.m. on December 8 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on December 9. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 8 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his address, the President referred to Abdul Aziz Al-Hakim, chairman, Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

### **Statement on Congressional Passage of Outer Continental Shelf Legislation**

*December 9, 2006*

I commend Congress for passing the Outer Continental Shelf legislation, which will help to reduce our dependence on imported sources of energy by increasing access to domestic sources of oil and gas. Developing these reliable domestic resources in an

environmentally sound manner will help address high energy prices, strengthen our energy security, and protect manufacturing jobs. The bill also provides the producing States of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama a share in the royalty revenues from OCS leases. I appreciate the commitment by the State of Louisiana to use revenues from these leases to restore coastal wetlands.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 6111.

### **Statement on Congressional Passage of Legislation To Reauthorize the Ryan White CARE Act**

*December 9, 2006*

In 1990, Congress passed the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency (CARE) Act to advance our domestic battle against HIV/AIDS. This landmark legislation has provided Americans in need with better access to medical care, antiretroviral treatments, and counseling and has helped them live longer lives. The act also supports HIV testing to prevent the further spread of this devastating disease.

Laura and I thank the House and Senate for reauthorizing the Ryan White CARE Act. This legislation focuses on life-saving and life-extending services and increased accountability and will provide more flexibility to the Secretary of Health and Human Services to direct funding to areas of greatest need. The Ryan White CARE Act demonstrates the compassionate and generous spirit of America, and I look forward to signing this important legislation into law.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 6143.

### **Statement on Congressional Passage of Legislation To Authorize Permanent Trade Relations With Vietnam**

*December 9, 2006*

I commend the Congress for its bipartisan support for my request to approve legislation authorizing the grant of permanent normal trade relations to Vietnam. PNTR marks a significant step forward in the process of nor-

malizing relations with Vietnam and will benefit both our nations. This designation will advance our trade and investment relations with Vietnam and ensure that the United States shares in the economic benefits generated by Vietnam's imminent membership in the World Trade Organization. Vietnam is demonstrating its strong commitment to continuing economic reforms, which will support political reform and respect for human rights. The American people welcome the remarkable transformation and economic progress in Vietnam, and we will continue to work together to strengthen our ties.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 6406.

### **Statement on Congressional Passage of Fisheries Management Legislation**

*December 9, 2006*

I applaud Congress for working in a bipartisan manner to pass a stronger Magnuson-Stevens Act. Our Nation is committed to maintaining our thriving commercial and recreational fishing communities. This bill embraces my priorities of ending overfishing and rebuilding our Nation's fish stocks through more effective, market-based management and tougher enforcement. This landmark legislation also provides stronger tools to achieve progress internationally to ensure healthy fish stocks, promote better management, and halt destructive fishing practices based on sound science.

Since my administration released the Ocean Action Plan in 2004, we have been making great strides in our efforts to make our oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes cleaner, healthier, and more productive. Enactment of this bill is one of the top priorities of the Ocean Action Plan and is another significant bipartisan environmental achievement.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 5946.

**Statement on Congressional Passage of United States-India Nuclear Energy Cooperation Legislation**

*December 9, 2006*

Congress has agreed upon bipartisan legislation that will strengthen the strategic relationship between America and India and deliver valuable benefits to both nations. I am pleased that our two countries will soon have increased opportunities to work together to meet our energy needs in a manner that does not increase air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, promotes clean development, supports nonproliferation, and advances our trade interests.

I appreciate Congress's support for the U.S.-India civil nuclear cooperation initiative and would like to thank Chairman Hyde, Ranking Member Lantos, Chairman Lugar, and Ranking Member Biden for their leadership on this extraordinary legislation. I look forward to signing this bill into law soon.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 5682.

**Statement on the Situation in Darfur, Sudan**

*December 10, 2006*

I send my greetings to those participating in events around the world protesting the situation in Darfur. It is only fitting that we take the time today to remember the value of every human life and the right of every person in the world to live in peace with dignity and respect.

Our Nation is appalled by the genocide in Darfur, which has led to the spread of fighting and hostility in the Republic of Chad and the Central African Republic. We call on the Government of the Republic of Sudan and the rebel groups to cease fighting and pursue peace.

We continue to work on establishing a credible and effective peacekeeping force to stop the violence in Darfur. To this end, we are aggressively engaging all stakeholders to implement U.N. Resolution 1706 to transition the African Union Mission in Sudan to a strong international peacekeeping operation. We are urgently seeking to broaden

support for the Darfur Peace Agreement and pressuring all sides to implement an immediate cease-fire. We will continue to work with the Congress, the United Nations, the African Union, and the international community to provide aid to those who are suffering. The United States is committed to achieving stability, lasting peace, and the restoration of basic human rights for the people of Darfur.

**Remarks Following a Meeting With Senior State Department Officials**

*December 11, 2006*

Thank you all for coming. I just had a briefing with my senior policy advisers here at the State Department. I want to thank you for your hospitality, Madam Secretary.

We talked about a lot of things. We talked about what's taking place on the ground in Iraq, particularly from the perspective of the State Department. I must tell you, there are some fantastic, brave souls who are heading PRTs, Provincial Reconstruction Teams. These are our civilian components on the ground there in Iraq. And we got a briefing from Baghdad, with one of our PRT leaders here in Washington, about the challenges and the tasks to help this Iraqi Government get a country that can sustain and govern and defend itself.

No question in my mind, there are some very brave State Department officials who are engaged in this really important endeavor, and I want to thank them and their families. I appreciate the advice I got from those folks in the field. And that advice is an important part and an important component of putting together a new way forward in Iraq. Like most Americans, this administration wants to succeed in Iraq, because we understand success in Iraq will help protect the United States in the long run.

We also talked about the neighborhood, the countries that surround Iraq and the responsibilities that they have to help this young Iraqi democracy survive. We believe that most of the countries understand that a mainstream society, a society that is a functioning democracy, is in their interests. And it's up to us to help focus their attentions

and focus their efforts on helping the Iraqis succeed.

I appreciate so very much the Iraqi leadership taking the lead in its neighborhood. After all, one of the things we're trying to do is help this Government get on its feet so it can govern and it can conduct its own foreign policy. But the role of America is to help this young democracy survive.

I'm looking forward to continuing my deliberations with the military. There's no question, we've got to make sure that the State Department and the Defense Department are—the efforts and their recommendations are closely coordinated so that when I do speak to the American people, they will know that I've listened to all aspects of Government and that the way forward is the way forward to achieve our objective: to succeed in Iraq. And success is a country that governs, defends itself, that is a free society, that serves as an ally in this war on terror.Q06

And the reason why that's vital is because Iraq is a central component of defeating the extremists who want to establish safe haven in the Middle East, extremists who would use their safe haven from which to attack the United States, extremists and radicals who have stated that they want to topple moderate governments in order to be able to achieve assets necessary to effect their dream of spreading their totalitarian ideology as far and wide as possible.

This is really the calling of our time, that is, to defeat these extremists and radicals. And Iraq is a component part, an important part of laying the foundation for peace.

And so, Madam Secretary, thank you for the briefing. I want to thank your team here in Washington for their good work, and I thank those out in the field who have shown such incredible bravery to do the hard work necessary to secure our country.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. at the Department of State.

## Remarks Following a Meeting With Deputy President Tariq al-Hashimi of Iraq

December 12, 2006

**President Bush.** It's been my honor to meet with the Vice President of Iraq again. I had the pleasure of meeting the Vice President in Baghdad. It was there that I invited him to come to Washington, DC, and I did so because I understand his importance to the future of Iraq.

The Vice President has suffered unspeakable violence in his family. He's lost loved ones to violent action. And yet, in spite of his grief and in spite of pain in his heart, he was willing to work for a united Iraq and a peaceful Iraq, an Iraq that can govern itself and sustain itself and defend itself, a free Iraq that will be an ally in the war against extremists and radicals.

And Mr. Vice President, I respect your courage, and I respect your advice.

I spent time with the Vice President today talking about the conditions in Iraq and what the United States can do to help this Iraqi Government succeed. He brought me up to date on the terrible violence that is taking place in some of the neighborhoods in Baghdad. He spoke eloquently about the suffering that innocent families have gone through. And my heart goes out to those, Mr. Vice President, who have suffered at the hands of extremists and killers.

Our objective is to help the Iraqi Government deal with the extremists and killers and support the vast majority of Iraqis who are reasonable people who want peace.

And so, Mr. Vice President, my message to you today, and to the Iraqi people is, we want to help you. We want to help your Government be effective. We want your help—your Government live up to its words and ideals. And I thank you for being a leader of one aspect of Iraqi society—you're the leader of many Sunnis and you're committed to a government that is Shi'a, Sunni, Kurdish, and everybody else in your country, every other group in your country that will help us yield peace.

And I welcome you, I thank you, and I praise your courage.

**Deputy President Hashimi.** I would like to express my sincere thanks to Mr. President for the invitation, first of all, and too when he expedites my visit to the States, which left a really positive message to the Iraqi people that the American administration, while they are revising their strategy, they are looking for a balance and fair analysis from diversified leaders in Iraq.

So this visit coming after the visit of Mr. Hakim, I would like also to express my appreciation to the unique and unforgettable commitment of the President when he said, and continued saying that we are committed to the success in Iraq. And I share his views and aspirations that there is no way but success in Iraq.

We have no other option in Iraq but to achieve that success. And with the cooperation with our friends and Mr. President and the American administration, we will join forces to achieve that success in the foreseeable future.

There is a chance, and I can assure you there is a great and real chance to get out of this present dilemma. It is a hard time that the Iraqis face in time being, but there is a light in the corridor. There is a chance, but we need a good will and a strong determination, the same strong determination that the Mr. President has. There will be a chance for the country and for Iraq to succeed.

During my discussion and dialog with the Mr. President, I had really a frank and positive dialog and conversation. We tackled key issues. And hopefully at the end of the day, I would like to see my comments and observations welcomed, because at the end of the day, what I say to Mr. President is achieving—or could be seen as a genuine and—[inaudible]—part in the way of achieving the success.

I thank Mr. President again for the time given to myself and to my colleagues. And I leave United States with a great hope that we do have friends in Washington, that they are very much interested, in fact, to help us in these very difficult times, and to achieve the unforgettable, the long-awaited success. Whatever the sacrifices, my family and the country, at the end of the day, we have no other option but to maintain this momentum

and to struggle until we meet that success, *inshallah*.

**President Bush.** Thank you, sir. Thank you very much. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:51 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Deputy President Hashimi referred to Abdul Aziz Al-Hakim, chairman, Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq.

### Remarks Following a Meeting With Senior Department of Defense Officials and an Exchange With Reporters in Arlington, Virginia

December 13, 2006

**The President.** I've just concluded a very productive meeting with the Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Pete Pace, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Vice President. I thank these men who wear our uniform for a very candid and fruitful discussion about the—about how to secure this country and how to win a war that we now find ourselves in.

We spent a lot of time talking about a new way forward in Iraq, to help the Iraqi Government confront and defeat the enemies of a free Iraq. We all agree it's in our Nation's interest that we help this Government succeed. We recognize that there are enemies that would like to topple this young democracy so they could have safe haven from which to plot and plan attacks against moderate nations in the Middle East, as well as attacks against the United States. It's in our interest that we help this Government succeed.

There have been a lot of violence in Iraq, and the violence has been horrific. Scores of innocent men, women, and children are being brutally killed by ruthless murderers. Our troops are engaged in offensive operations, and we mourn the loss of life. We are saddened by the loss of every single life amongst our service men and women. Our folks are very active in Al Anbar and in Baghdad, which is where the enemy is concentrated.

Our commanders report that the enemy has also suffered. Offensive operations by Iraqi and coalition forces against terrorists

and insurgents and death squad leaders have yielded positive results. In the months of October, November, and the first week of December, we have killed or captured nearly 5,900 of the enemy.

While the enemy is far from being defeated, there should be no doubt in anybody's mind that every day and night, the Iraqi Government and our brave men and women of the Armed Forces are taking the fight to the enemy; that in spite of the fact that I am conducting a strategic review of the best way forward in Iraq, there are a lot of operations taking place, day and night.

Yesterday, the Secretary and the Vice President and General Pace and I were on the SVTS with General Casey, and he's talking about the hard work our troops and Iraqi troops are doing to defeat these enemies.

I do want to say something to those who wear our uniform. The men and women in uniform are always on my mind. I am proud of them. I appreciate their sacrifices. And I want them to know that I am focused on developing a strategy that will help them achieve their mission. Oh, I know there's a lot of debate here at home, and our troops pay attention to that debate. They hear that I am meeting with the Pentagon or the State Department or outside officials, that my national security team and I are working closely with Iraqi leaders, and they wonder what that means. Well, I'll tell you what it means: It means I am listening to a lot of advice to develop a strategy to help you succeed.

There's a lot of consultations taking place, and as I announced yesterday, I will be delivering my—my plans, after a long deliberation, after steady deliberation. I'm not going to be rushed into making a difficult decision, a necessary decision, to say to our troops, "We're going to give you the tools necessary to succeed and a strategy to help you succeed." I also want the new Secretary of Defense to have time to evaluate the situation, so he can provide serious and deliberate advice to me.

I do want our troops to understand this, though: that this Government and this group of military leaders are committed to a strategic goal of a free Iraq that is democratic, that can govern itself, defend itself, and sustain itself and be a strong ally in this war

against radicals and extremists who would do us harm. Secondly, that our troops deserve the solid commitment of the Commander in Chief and our political leaders and the American people.

You have my unshakable commitment in this important fight to help secure the peace for the long term. I pledge to work with the new Congress to forge greater bipartisan consensus to help you achieve your mission. I will continue to speak about your bravery and your commitment and the sacrifices of your families to the American people. We're not going to give up. The stakes are too high and the consequences too grave to turn Iraq over to extremists who want to do the American people and the Iraqi people harm.

I thank you for your service. I'm proud to be your Commander in Chief. We'll honor the sacrifices you are making by making sure your children and grandchildren can grow up in a more peaceful world.

God bless.

I'll take a couple of questions. AP man [Ben Feller, Associated Press].

### **War on Terror Strategy**

**Q.** Mr. President, thank you. You've been gathering advice, as you said, from leaders here and from leaders in Iraq. As you've gone through that extensive process, have you heard any new ideas at all, anything that would change your thinking?

**The President.** I've heard some ideas that would lead to defeat, and I reject those ideas—ideas such as leaving before the job is done; ideas such as not helping this Government take the necessary and hard steps to be able to do its job.

I've heard interesting ideas. I won't share them with you because I want to make sure I continue to collect those ideas and put them together in a strategy that our military and the commanders and our national security team understands will lead to an Iraq that can govern and sustain and defend itself.

I put off my speech—actually, I was quite flexible about when I was going to give my speech to begin with but—and one of the main reasons why is, I really do want the new Secretary of Defense to have time to get to know people and hear people and be a part of this deliberation. And he will not

be sworn in until next Monday. I also—one of the interesting things about this experience is that there's a lot of ideas and a lot of opinions. And I want to make sure I hear from as many of those ideas and opinions as possible.

Today I heard from some opinions that matter a lot to me, and these are the opinions of those who wear the uniform. These generals have spent a lot of time thinking about this issue. There's nobody who cares more about our troops than they do, and nobody who wants us to achieve more—than to achieve our objectives than they do. And it was a fascinating discussion we had. These are smart people and capable people and people whose judgment I listen to. And at the appropriate time, I will stand up in front of the Nation and say, "Here's where we're headed."

But one thing people got to understand is, we'll be headed toward achieving our objectives. And I repeat: If we lose our nerve, if we're not steadfast in our determination to help the Iraqi Government succeed, we will be handing Iraq over to an enemy that would do us harm, the consequences of which—of leaving Iraq before the job is done, for example, would be grave for the American citizens.

As we learned on September the 11th, the enemy has got the capacity to strike us. And there's no doubt in my mind, a failure in Iraq would make it more likely the enemy would strike us. It would certainly make it more likely that moderate people around the Middle East would wonder about the United States will. Moderate people—moderate governments in the Middle East would be making irrational decisions about their future. It would be a disaster for governments that have got energy resources to be in the hands of these extremists. They would use energy to extract blackmail from the United States. And when you couple all that with a regime that is—doesn't like the United States having a nuclear weapon, you can imagine a world of turmoil. And we're not going to let it happen.

Caren [Caren Bohan, Reuters].

### ***Iraq Study Group Report***

**Q.** Thank you, sir. You said you would reject plans that would lead to defeat. Would you put the Baker-Hamilton report in that category?

**The President.** No, my opinion of Baker-Hamilton hasn't changed. One, I appreciated their look. Secondly, I thought it was interesting that both Democrats and Republicans could actually work in concert to help achieve an objective. And the objective they stated, that was necessary in their report, was a government that could defend itself, govern itself, sustain itself and serve as an ally in the war on terror. I thought there were some good ideas in there. And I—as I told both Baker and Hamilton and the American people after I received the report, I take every one of their considerations seriously.

### ***War on Terror Strategy***

**Q.** As you give the new Defense Secretary time to get more in the mix, what is the strategy that you're looking to build? Is it a military strategy for success in Iraq or a political one?

**The President.** I think that our military cannot do this job alone. Our military needs a political strategy that is effective. And that includes things such as an oil law passed by the Iraqis that basically says to the people, "All of you, regardless of where you live or your religion, get to share in the bounty of our Nation." It requires a reconciliation effort, including a rational de-Ba'athification law.

**Q.** That's not something you can do with your new strategy, is it?

**The President.** Oh, absolutely. Absolutely, I can do that with my new strategy. I mean, it is—I can hold people to account. It's something the military recognizes that they're not—that's not their job; it's my job to convince the Maliki Government to make the hard decisions necessary to move his country forward.

But the good news is, he agrees. In my conversations with him, I have said, you know, "Are you going to promote a unity government or will you be so divisive in your approach that you can't achieve the objectives that the Iraqi people expect you to achieve?" How do I know they expect to

achieve? They voted; 12 million of them actually went to the polls and expressed their opinions.

And so there needs to be a political track; and we're working very hard with the Maliki Government to achieve that political track. That's what I've been doing the last couple of days. As a matter of fact, today on the telephone I spoke to the two Kurdish leaders. These men have been outspoken about the desire to have a moderate governing coalition, which we support. I met with the major Sunni leader yesterday, all talking about how we hope that there is political reconciliation and a commitment to a political process that says to the Iraqi people, "You count; you matter for the future of our country."

There needs to be an economic component. As you know, part of our successful strategies in parts of Iraq have been based upon a "clear, hold, and build." Well, "build" means getting projects up and running in key parts of the country, so that people see the benefits of either working with coalition forces and/or the benefits of supporting a government. And so this is much more than a military operation.

And finally, there's the foreign policy piece that's necessary. And we spend a lot of time in our Government talking to people like Saudi Arabia or Egypt or Jordan or Turkey and sending messages, clear messages, to countries like Syria and Iran. And I believe, for example, the Saudis are committed to a government that will bring peace and stability, and that's a unity government. It's in their interest they do so. And we're working hard with them to figure out a strategy to help the Maliki Government succeed.

I'm pleased when Iraqi leaders go to Saudi Arabia and talk to my friend, the King of Saudi Arabia, and talk about how they can work together to achieve stability. It's in Saudi's interest; it's in Jordan's interest; it's in the gulf coast countries' interest that there be a stable Iran, an Iran that is capable of rejecting Iranian influence—I mean Iraq that is capable of rejecting Iranian influence. It's in our interests that we succeed in Iraq so that we can continue to send a clear message to those in Iran that are desirous of a free society that freedom is possible in your neighborhood.

And so the stakes are high in this fight. Nobody knows that better than the gentlemen standing behind me. They clearly understand the stakes that are confronted—that confront this Nation. And I am proud to have listened to their points of view. And I'm proud to be working with them, as they help lead the greatest military ever assembled—a military, by the way, in which we've got brave volunteers, people who understand the stakes of this fight, saying, "I want to be in; I want to serve my country."

It's a remarkable period in American history right now. And as I deliberate the way forward, I keep in mind that we've got brave souls that need—to need to know that we're in this fight with a strategy to help them achieve the objectives that we've got.

Listen, thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:45 p.m. at the Pentagon. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; Secretary of Defense-designate Robert M. Gates; James A. Baker III and Lee Hamilton, cochairs, Iraq Study Group; Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, President Jalal Talabani, and Deputy President Tariq al-Hashimi of Iraq; Masoud Barzani, president, Kurdistan region in Iraq; and King Abdallah bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia.

## Statement on the Government of Syria

*December 13, 2006*

The United States supports the Syrian people's desire for democracy, human rights, and freedom of expression. Syrians deserve a government whose legitimacy is grounded in the consent of the people, not brute force.

The Syrian regime should immediately free all political prisoners, including Aref Dalila, Michel Kilo, Anwar al-Bunni, Mahmoud Issa, and Kamal Labwani. I am deeply troubled by reports that some ailing political prisoners are denied health care while others are held in cells with violent criminals.

Syria should disclose the fate and whereabouts of the many missing Lebanese citizens who "disappeared" following their arrest in

Lebanon during the decades of Syrian military occupation. The Syrian regime should also cease its efforts to undermine Lebanese sovereignty by denying the Lebanese people their right to participate in the democratic process free of foreign intimidation and interference.

The people of Syria hope for a prosperous future with greater opportunities for their children and for a government that fights corruption, respects the rule of law, guarantees the rights of all Syrians, and works toward achieving peace in the region.

### Remarks Following a Meeting With President Thomas Yayi Boni of Benin

December 14, 2006

**President Bush.** It's been my honor to have a visit with the President of Benin. We had a very long discussion about a variety of subjects. My administration is committed to helping the democracies on the continent of Africa deal with very significant problems. The President and I are about to go to a summit where the United States of America will commit resources, time, and talent to help rid much of Africa of malaria.

And, Mr. President, I'm proud to announce today that you're one of the countries that we'll be concentrating our help upon. We cannot succeed, however, unless there's an administration that is willing and capable to do the hard work necessary to educate people, spread nets, insecticides necessary to deal with a disease that can be defeated.

We talked about the Millennium Challenge Account. It's one of the most innovative foreign policy initiatives ever proposed by an administration. It's having a positive effect around the world. And I want to thank you for working toward that end.

We talked about the need for us to work together to deal with problems such as Darfur. The President recognized the genocide taking place in Darfur, as does the administration. We want to work through the United Nations to have a very strong and capable AU force, augmented by United Nations help, to save lives.

One thing I'm impressed with is the President's commitment to democracy, rule of

law, decency, and education. And to the extent that we can help—continue to help your country, Mr. President, we will do so.

Welcome, I'm glad you're here.

**President Yayi.** I have come here to, first and foremost, thank Mr. President Bush for all the initiatives that have been taken so far to eradicate poverty on the continents. As you may know, among these initiatives, we have the agua initiative, empowerment of women, the fight against HIV/AIDS, and the initiative of MCA—that is Millennium Challenge Account. It is very important for us in Africa because the MCA will help us eradicate poverty. And I would like to thank President Bush for that last initiative he took.

Africa is aware of her responsibility in the roles she has to play, globally speaking, because we have to reach prosperity, and that prosperity has some conditions. We need peace. We need stability. We need security. And Africa—America has a leading role to play in our combat to restore a peaceful continent.

Of course, we have to be together with America to build—succeed in all these challenges, to take up all these challenges. And multilaterally, it should be also a part of concern of the American people. We are aware of the fact that America can really play a very important role to continue building capacity among the institutions like IMF and the World Bank, and the institution of—[*inaudible*]  
—which is very important for us also.

And the efforts should continue being made by the American Government within the G-8 group, because Africa needs a lot from this G-8, and international exchanges also have to be reenforced. The Doha negotiations need to find a solution now—try to make it easier because cotton is but one of our important products in Africa, and in my country, two people out of three live out of cotton. It's the same reality in countries like Burkina Faso, Mali, Senegal, where cotton is a very important product.

So some subsidies granted to some countries like America here cause a kind of disfunctioning in our country and on the continent also. So America should help us smooth this mechanism. I'm very happy to hear that America is trying to set up a parallel mechanism that would really help promote

the production of cotton. So by the time the WTO will also reach an agreement, I think that this problem of Doha will be definitely solved.

Let me end my speech by saying that I want to thank the American Government, thank President Bush, and the American people for all they are doing to really help us eradicate poverty on African continent.

**President Bush.** Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:02 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. President Yayi spoke in French, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

### Remarks at the White House Summit on Malaria

*December 14, 2006*

**The President.** Thank you. Please be seated. Thanks for inviting me to what sounded like a festive occasion. [*Laughter*] I'm honored to be here. I'm pleased to visit with you all here at the National Geographic Society, and I want to thank you for inviting me to come to this important conference. I appreciate all of today's speakers, including my personal favorite—[*laughter*]—Laura.

As you conclude this summit, we turn our thoughts to those who carry the burden of sickness during this holiday season. There are members of our own families here in America who are ill, and they live in villages halfway around the world. For many of their illnesses, there is a known relief; for many, there is no known relief. Yet for malaria, we know exactly what it takes to prevent and treat the disease. The only question is whether we have the will to act. All of you have heard the call to act, and you have responded, and I appreciate your compassion.

Because of your work, children who once wanted [*sic*] to die are now preparing to live, and whole regions are replacing suffering and fear with hope and health. We can take pride in the progress we have made, and today we will renew our commitment to a world without malaria.

I've just had a state visit, an important visit, with a remarkable leader from Benin. Mr. President and Mrs. Yayi, welcome to America, and thank you for being here.

The President is committed to a free society. He understands the need to confront illness so his people can live in peace. And, Mr. President, I thank you very much for your commitment and your willingness to work with those who want to help to eliminate malaria in your country.

I want to thank members of my Cabinet who are here, particularly Madam Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings. Thanks for coming. I thank Randy Tobias. He's the Director of USAID. He, by the way, led the initiative to help put America squarely in the fight to eliminate HIV/AIDS on the continent of Africa. Randy, you will have a wonderful legacy in your service to our country, and I want to thank you.

I appreciate Admiral Tony [Timothy]\* Ziemer. He is the U.S. Malaria Coordinator. I see a lot of people who are working hard in my administration on these initiatives, and I thank you for your participation. I thank members of the diplomatic corps who have joined us. I want to thank Members of Congress—I think that's Senator Leahy, Senator Frist—[*laughter*]—thank you all for coming. Thank you for taking an interest in it—Congressman Smith. I'd better stop. [*Laughter*] I think I'm going to leave somebody out. But I want to thank you all for your interest in this initiative.

I appreciate John Fahey—he's the president and CEO of National Geographic Society—and Gil Grosvenor. I want to thank Ray Chambers, who is the chairman of the board of Malaria No More. I thank all the social entrepreneurs who are here. I think people will understand that there is a call to act when we see a crisis at hand, and I want to thank you for acting. I appreciate Isaiah Washington, who is the emcee of this event. I want to thank all the program participants. Thank you all for coming.

By bringing together such a wide variety of people, this summit is sending a clear message that we are determined to defeat malaria. We are also sending a broader message about America's purpose in the world. In this new century, there is a great divide between those who place no value on human life and rejoice in the suffering of others and those

\* White House correction.

who believe that every life has matchless value and answer suffering with compassion and kindness.

The contrast is vivid, and the position of America is clear: We will lead the cause of freedom, justice, and hope, because both our values and our interests demand it. We believe in the timeless truth: To whom much is given, much is required. We also know that nations with free, healthy, prosperous people will be sources of stability, not breeding grounds for extremists and hate and terror. By making the world more hopeful, we make the world more peaceful. And by helping others, the American people must understand, we help ourselves.

One area in which America has a tremendous potential to help is in the fight against malaria. At home, malaria was eliminated decades ago. It is possible to eliminate malaria. In Africa, malaria remains a persistent killer. I think our citizens will be amazed to hear that last year, about a million Africans died of malaria. The vast majority were children under five; their lives ended by nothing more than a mosquito bite. In some countries, more people die of malaria than HIV/AIDS, and last week, a new study showed that people who contract malaria become more likely to spread HIV. The burden of malaria costs sub-Saharan Africa an estimated \$12 billion a year. And if the disease continues to spread, the cost in lives and lost productivity is going to grow exponentially worse. Now is the time to act.

Allowing Africa to continue on that path is just simply unacceptable. So we are acting, and we're leading. And with partners across the world, we are helping the people of Africa turn the tide against malaria. The goal of defeating malaria is a challenging goal, yet it can be done. It's not going to require a miracle; it just requires a smart, sustained, focused effort. And that's what we're here to talk about.

Experts have identified four key steps for combating malaria in Africa: distributing insecticide-treated bed nets; expanding indoor insecticide spraying; providing antimalaria medicine to pregnant women; and delivering cutting-edge drugs to people with the disease. These are four things that, if done, will save lives. They are not impossible things to

do. I believe that our country must help and continue to take the lead. That's why last year, I announced an initiative to increase our commitment to fighting malaria in Africa. And I want to thank the Members of Congress for supporting this initiative.

We're spending \$1.2 billion over 5 years to provide bed nets and indoor spraying and antimalaria medicine in 15 African countries. We are focusing our efforts to eradicate malaria on 15 countries. We are insisting on measuring. This project is measurable. We can determine whether or not nets are being distributed or medicine is being provided. But more importantly, we can measure whether or not we're saving lives. We look—work toward this historic goal to cut the number of malaria-related deaths in half. That's what we're headed for, as quickly as possible.

The malaria initiative is off to a strong start. We have launched the program in three countries: Uganda, Angola, and Tanzania. I want our fellow citizens to hear this startling statistic: In a short period of time, more than 6 million people have benefited. It's in our interests that the 6 million people we've helped—lives have been improved. In Uganda, groups funded by our malaria initiative distributed more than 300,000 nets and almost 300,000 doses of medicine to children and pregnant women. In Angola, the initiative supported a spraying campaign that protected the homes of more than a half a million people. And in Tanzania, the initiative paid for local health clinics to distribute more than 130,000 nets and spray homes for more than a million people. We're in action. Your taxpayers' money is working to save lives.

The statistics are impressive, and behind them are the stories of families with renewed hope in the future. Not long ago, the Zanzibar islands off the coast of Tanzania were a hotbed of malaria infection. Then, with the support of the malaria initiative, local groups launched a campaign called "Kataa Malaria"—which is Swahili for "Reject Malaria." Workers went door-to-door to teach people how to use bed nets; they launched a campaign of TV and radio ads; and they spoke in mosques about malaria prevention and treatment. Now the people of Zanzibar are beginning to see results. One island reported that in the first 9 months of this year, the

number of malaria cases dropped almost 90 percent compared to the same time last year. One man said this: “Personally, the initiative gives me a leap of faith. The ultimate outcome is that we should have a malaria-free Zanzibar. There is no turning back.”

He’s right; there’s no turning back. We’re going to continue to expand the malaria initiative to reach other countries across Africa as quickly as possible. Earlier this year, Laura announced that four nations will join the initiative in ’07: Senegal, Malawi, Rwanda, and Mozambique. Today I am going to announce eight more countries will join in ’08: Ghana, Madagascar, Mali, Zambia, Kenya, Liberia, Ethiopia, and Benin. President, I can assure the people that you are determined to beat malaria. And it’s that determination by the leadership of a country that is required for our initiative to be as successful as quickly as it possibly can. You can count on us as a steady, reliable partner.

Defeating malaria is going to require a lot more work than just the action of the U.S. Government. Defeating malaria requires cooperation between government and grassroots volunteers. I want to thank the leadership of Malaria No More, which is energizing the grassroots and raising money and mobilizing thousands of volunteers to fight malaria. There’s a lot of people out of our country who, if called to serve and to love, will do so. Rick Warren has got a church called Saddleback Church. He believes like I believe: To whom much is given, much is required. They’re going to send thousands of volunteers into African villages and clinics. These groups rely upon the skill of doctors and nurses. And for doctors and nurses who are serving in Africa to help achieve the goal of eliminating malaria, I thank you on behalf of a grateful nation.

I am pleased to announce that I am going to expand a Federal program called Volunteers for Prosperity, which allows organizations that recruit skilled volunteers to receive Federal grants more easily. I believe it’s in our interests to use taxpayers’ money to encourage these private-sector initiatives. Organizations involved with the malaria initiative will find it easier to receive Federal funds, I hope. The point is, we’re going to try to eliminate as much bureaucracy as possible

to get money into the hands of those who are recruiting and encouraging volunteers to be on the frontline of fighting malaria.

I want to thank all the grassroots volunteers who are here. I want to thank you for doing what you’re doing. I hope that you can do more, and I hope that this summit, which Laura and her team put together, enables you to go out and recruit, because the quicker we eliminate malaria, the better off the world will be.

Defeating malaria requires cooperation between Government and the private sector. When I announced the malaria initiative, I called on foundations and corporations to participate. In other words, I said, “You’ve got to be with us; the Government alone can’t solve the problem. We can address it; we can fund it; but we need your help.” I want to thank the Gates Foundation. Melinda, thank you for being here. This foundation is a fantastic example of social entrepreneurship. It was caused to be because of fantastic business entrepreneurship. It is now using the business acumen and the rewards of being smart to fund unbelievable programs. And I’m proud of what you’re doing.

I want to thank the Red Cross. And, Bonnie, thank you very much. You’ve trained thousands of health workers in sub-Saharan Africa, and you’re going to train more. I want to thank the Global Business Coalition that thus far has brought more than 200 companies together to raise money for bed nets and other supplies. Two hundred is a little short, as far as I’m concerned. In other words, I view it as a good start, kind of a down payment. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank ExxonMobil and Marathon Oil, who funded—which have funded antimalaria projects in some of Africa’s most heavily affected nations. I think it’s in your corporate interests that the people of Africa see that you’re willing to invest in the future of their countries. America’s businesses and foundations are showing a lot of wisdom and generosity. I appreciate your support.

Defeating malaria requires cooperation between our country and the international community. We have given nearly \$2 billion to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS—and I want to thank the leader of the fund, who

is here today by the way—Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. And nearly a quarter of that money has been used for antimalaria projects. We support the efforts to fight malaria being led by the WHO and the new leader, as well as UNICEF and my friend, Ann Veneman, and the World Bank, where Paul Wolfowitz has made antimalaria projects a high priority. Some of our allies in Europe have committed resources to these efforts, and frankly, they should commit more. This is a global effort to fight malaria. The United States is proud to take the lead. I encourage other countries—to whom much is given, much is required—to step up and give. I want to thank those who understand that malaria is a global problem, and we've got to work to solve it together.

Defeating malaria requires cooperation between America and African nations. The malaria initiative is based on partnership, Mr. President, not paternalism. Leaders like you know your people; you know their problems, and you are determined to solve them. Our job is to help you. I fully understand that many times people have got great ambitions and great intentions, but they have no money to do—to help. And that's why this Government is committed to providing money and technology to help the leaders accomplish the objectives that we've set forth.

African leaders also understand, in the long run, that defeating malaria requires more than nets and sprays and drugs. It requires changing the conditions that help malaria thrive: poverty and the lack of education and unresponsive governments and corruption and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. To help African leaders overcome these challenges, this administration has doubled development aid to Africa during my Presidency, and I propose to double it again by the end of this decade.

We've created the Millennium Challenge Account to support nations that govern justly. It doesn't make any sense for us to send taxpayers' monies to countries that steal the money. We give to—and part of the Millennium Challenge Account, headed by Ambassador Danilovich, is to encourage countries to invest in their people and to encourage economic freedom. And so far, we have

signed compacts with five African nations, and we're working on more.

We launched one of the most important initiatives in American history, as far as I'm concerned, and that is the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, which thus far has brought lifesaving drugs to more than 800,000 people on the continent of Africa in 5 short years.

Development aid is one thing, but so is the capacity for us to help nations through trade. I appreciate the work of my predecessor, President Clinton, and subsequent Congresses to pass and now extend the African Growth and Opportunity Act, which has enabled me to report to you that between Africa and America, trade has doubled since 2001.

In all these ways, we stand with the people of Africa in their time of need. And by doing so, we help lift a burden of unnecessary suffering, and we help reduce the appeal of radicalism, and we forge lasting friendships on a continent that is growing in strategic importance.

As we come to the end of this historic summit, every citizen can be proud of the work our Nation is doing to fight disease and despair. Our development agenda in Africa and beyond is the most ambitious commitment America has made since the Marshall plan. And once again, our efforts are showing the world what kind of country America is. We're a nation of optimistic people and generous people and decent people who value human life. We're a nation that believes that we're fortunate and that through our fortune, we ought to help others. We're a compassionate people who care deeply about the future of the world. And it is my honor to lead such a people.

God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. at the National Geographic Society. In his remarks, he referred to President Thomas Yayi Boni of Benin and his wife, Chantal de Souza Yayi; Gilbert M. Grosvenor, chairman of the board, National Geographic Society; Richard D. "Rick" Warren, founder and senior pastor, Saddleback Church, Lake Forest, CA; Melinda French Gates, cochair, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Bonnie McElveen-Hunter, chairman, American Red Cross; Richard G.A. Feachem, executive director, Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and

Malaria; Margaret Chan, director-general-elect, World Health Organization; and Ann M. Veneman, executive director, United Nations Children's Fund.

**Executive Order 13418—  
Amendment to Executive Order  
13317, Volunteers for Prosperity**  
*December 14, 2006*

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and to add combating malaria as one of the objectives of the global prosperity agenda, it is hereby ordered that section 1(a) of Executive Order 13317 of September 25, 2003, is amended by:

- (a) striking “, and stemming the spread of HIV/AIDS.” and inserting in lieu thereof “, stemming the spread of HIV/AIDS and controlling malaria.”; and
- (b) striking “, and the Middle East Partnership Initiative.” and inserting in lieu thereof “, the Middle East Partnership Initiative, and the President’s Malaria Initiative.”.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
December 14, 2006.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., December 15, 2006]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on December 18.

**Memorandum on Determination  
Pursuant to Section 2(c)(1) of the  
Migration and Refugee Assistance  
Act of 1962, as Amended**

*December 14, 2006*

Presidential Determination No. 2007–08

*Memorandum for the Secretary of State*

*Subject:* Determination Pursuant to Section 2(c)(1) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, as Amended

Pursuant to section 2(c)(1) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, as

amended, 22 U.S.C. 2601(c)(1), I hereby determine that it is important to the national interest that up to \$5.215 million be made available from the U.S. Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance Fund for the purpose of meeting unexpected urgent refugee and migration needs resulting from conflicts in Somalia and Sri Lanka. These funds may be used, as appropriate, to provide contributions to international, governmental, and nongovernmental organizations and, as necessary, for administrative expenses of the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.

You are authorized and directed to inform the appropriate committees of the Congress of this determination and the obligation of funds under this authority and to publish this determination in the *Federal Register*.

**George W. Bush**

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 15.

**Remarks on Presenting the  
Presidential Medal of Freedom**

*December 15, 2006*

*The President.* Please be seated. Thank you all for coming. Welcome. Mr. Vice President, members of my Cabinet, Laura and I are please you could join us on this special occasion. We're delighted to welcome our distinguished honorees as well as their families and friends to the White House. Thanks for coming.

The Presidential Medal of Freedom is our Nation's highest civil honor. The Medal recognizes high achievement in public service, science, the arts, education, athletics, and other fields. Today we honor 10 exceptional individuals who have gained great admiration and respect throughout our country.

Norman Y. Mineta personifies the terms “public servant” and “patriot.” He served as an Army intelligence officer, the mayor of San Jose, California, 10-term U.S. Congressman, and a Cabinet member under Presidents of both parties. He was my Secretary of Transportation. No Secretary of Transportation ever served longer or confronted greater challenges than Norm Mineta.

On September the 11th, 2001, he led the effort to bring thousands of commercial and private aircraft swiftly and safely to the ground. Norm was calm, and he was decisive in a moment of emergency. He showed those same qualities in the months and years afterward, ably transforming his Department to face the dangers of a new era.

Norm Mineta's whole life has been an extraordinary journey. At the age of 10, he was sent with his mom and dad to an internment camp for Japanese Americans. Such wrongful treatment could have left a person bitter, but not Norm Mineta. Instead he has given his country a lifetime of service, and he's given his fellow citizens an example of leadership, devotion to duty, and personal character. Mr. Secretary, you're a good friend and a great man, and our country honors you.

With us today is Warren O'Neil, who will accept the Medal of Freedom on behalf of his brother, John Jordan "Buck" O'Neil. Buck O'Neil passed away in October, after a baseball career spanning more than seven decades. He joined the Negro League in 1938, as a first baseman for the Kansas City Monarchs. Buck O'Neil won two batting titles and played on nine championship teams, and as a manager, guided the Monarchs to four league titles. After finishing his playing career, Buck O'Neil joined the Chicago Cubs as a scout and later as the first African American coach in the major leagues. He never did slow down. For the rest of his life, he was active in baseball—not just from the stands or the dugout.

In July of this year, he took a turn at bat in a minor league all-star game in Kansas City. They wisely pitched around him—[laughter]—he drew a walk—at the age of 94 years old. [Laughter] Buck O'Neil is also remembered as one of the game's best historians and ambassadors. He was the driving force behind the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum; he was proud to be its chairman. But he once said: "It never should have been a Negro League. Shouldn't have been." Buck O'Neil lived long enough to see the game of baseball and America change for the better. He's one of the people we can thank for that. Buck O'Neil was a legend, and he was a beautiful human being. And we honor the memory of Buck O'Neil.

One day in 1961, Ruth Colvin of Syracuse, New York, read a disturbing statistic in the morning newspaper. She learned that more than 11,000 people in her hometown could not read. Ruth wondered, "Why isn't somebody doing something about it?" Ruth decided that she would do something. Working out of her basement, she formed a network of citizens willing to donate their time as reading tutors. Before long, that network reached beyond Syracuse and beyond New York, and it had a name: Literacy Volunteers of America. Over the years, the volunteers have helped hundreds of thousands of adults learn the reading and language skills they need to build a better life. Ruth rightly says, "The ability to read and write is critical to personal freedom and the maintenance of a democratic society."

Ruth's good influence has continued to grow. She travels the world promoting literacy with her husband and best friend, Bob. She started literacy campaigns on multiple continents. Ruth has also made many dear friends, including another great crusader for literacy—my mother. [Laughter] Ruth's children, Terry and Lindy, know what I know—that you better listen to your mother. [Laughter] Ruth has said, "I am and always have been a volunteer." More than that, Ruth Colvin is a person of intelligence and vision and heart, and she has earned the gratitude of many and the admiration of us all. Congratulations.

Like Ruth, Dr. Norman C. Francis has dedicated his life to education. He achieved early distinction as the first African American to graduate from the Loyola University College of Law. In 1968, he became president of his alma mater, Xavier University in New Orleans, and he is today the longest serving university president in the United States. Dr. Francis is known across Louisiana and throughout our country as a man of deep intellect and compassion and character. He's an Army veteran. He led the United Negro College Fund. He was chairman of the board of the Educational Testing Service, and he holds only 35 honorary degrees. [Laughter]

Last year, after Hurricane Katrina did great damage to the Xavier campus, Dr. Francis vowed the university would overcome and reopen its doors by January, and

he kept that pledge. Dr. Francis continues to help the people of southeast Louisiana as the leader of the Louisiana Recovery Authority. As they continue to rebuild from the devastation of the hurricanes, the people of the Pelican State will benefit from the leadership of this good man. And all of us admire the good life and remarkable career of Dr. Norman C. Francis.

Joshua Lederberg has always seemed ahead of his time. He was researching genetics when the field was scarcely understood. He was studying the implications of space travel before there were astronauts. And even three decades ago, he was warning of the dangers of biological warfare. All of his life, people have seen something special in this rabbi's son from Montclair, New Jersey. Someone who knew him in college said, "You could tell that Joshua was in the lab because you could hear the breaking glass." [*Laughter*] "He was so young, bursting with potential."

He earned his Ph.D. in his early twenties. At the age of 33, he won the Nobel Prize. Dr. Lederberg has remained at the top of the scientific field as a professor, researcher, and writer. As a columnist and adviser to many administrations, he brought clear, independent thinking and wisdom to matters of public policy, especially in national security and nonproliferation. For his brilliant career, his high ethical standards, and his many contributions to our country, the United States thanks Joshua Lederberg.

Americans first came to know Natan Sharansky as a voice for freedom inside an empire of tyranny. As a Jew applying to immigrate to Israel, he was refused and harassed by the Soviet regime. Natan Sharansky became a leading dissident and advocate for human rights. And after a show trial, he was sentenced to a gulag for 10 years. The authorities may have hoped the world would forget the name Sharansky. Instead, leaders like President Reagan and Ambassador Kirkpatrick spoke often of his persecution, and the case of Natan Sharansky became a symbol of the moral emptiness of imperial communism.

Today, the Soviet Union is history, but the world still knows the name Sharansky. As a free man, he's become a political leader in

Israel, winning four elections to the Knesset and serving more than 8 years in the Cabinet. He remains, above all, an eloquent champion for liberty and democracy. Natan reminds us that every soul carries the desire to live in freedom and that freedom has a unique power to lift up nations, transform regions, and secure a future for peace. Natan Sharansky is a witness to that power, and his testimony brings hope to those who still live under oppression. We honor Natan Sharansky for his life of courage and conviction.

The struggle between freedom and tyranny has defined the past 100 years, and few have written of that struggle with greater skill than Paul Johnson. His book, "Modern Times: The World from the Twenties to the Eighties," is a masterful account of the grievous harm visited on millions by ideologies of power and coercion. In all his writings, Paul Johnson shows great breadth of knowledge and moral clarity and a deep understanding of the challenges of our time. He's written hundreds of articles and dozens of books, including "The History of the Jews," "The History of Christianity," "The Quest for God," and "The Birth of the Modern." Obviously, the man is not afraid to take on big subjects. [*Laughter*]

Eight years ago, he published "A History of the American People," which Dr. Henry Kissinger said, was "as majestic in scope as the country it celebrates." In the preface, Paul Johnson called Americans "the most remarkable people the world has ever seen." He said, "I love them, and I salute them." That's a high tribute from a man of such learning and wisdom, and America returns the feeling. Our country honors Paul Johnson and proudly calls him a friend.

One of America's unique gifts to the world is a music called the blues. And in that music two names are paramount—B.B. King and his guitar, Lucille. [*Laughter*] It has been said that when John Lennon was asked to name his great ambition, he said, "to play the guitar like B.B. King." Many musicians have had that same goal, but nobody has ever been able to match the skill or copy the sound of the "King of the Blues."

He came up the hard way in the Deep South, living alone when he was 9 years old,

walking miles to school and picking cotton for 35 cents a day. Barely out of his teens, he made his first trip to Memphis, Tennessee, with his guitar and \$2.50 in his pocket. He made his name on Beale Street, and his studio recordings made him a national favorite. B.B. King has sold more than 40 million records. He won 14 Grammys. He has a place on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. He's influenced generations of musicians from blues to rock, and he's performed in venues from roadside nightclubs to Carnegie Hall. He's still touring, and he's still recording, and he's still singing, and he's still playing the blues better than anybody else. In other words: The thrill is not gone. [Laughter] America loves the music of B.B. King, and America loves the man himself. Congratulations.

William Safire joined the White House staff nearly 38 years ago as a speechwriter to the President. President Nixon once introduced Bill this way: "This is Safire, absolutely trustworthy, but watch what you say—he's a writer." [Laughter] Writing has been at the center of Bill Safire's eventful life, going back to his days in the U.S. Army and as a PR man in New York. As a young speechwriter drafting remarks for a New York City official, he used the word "indomitable." When they asked Bill to find a better speech-word, he suggested "indefatigable." [Laughter] They fired him. [Laughter] We're a little more lenient about speechwriting here. [Laughter]

From the White House, Bill moved to the New York Times, where he spent more than 30 years as a columnist who was often skeptical about our government but never cynical about our country. He always was committed to the cause of human freedom. His wit and style and command of English earned him another spot, his own page in the Times magazine every Sunday. Bill has said that his "On Language" column attracts more mail than any of his other work. People write me about my language too. [Laughter] Bill Safire has also written novels and a respected political dictionary. He won the Pulitzer Prize for commentary. He's a voice of independence and principle, and American journalism is

better for the contributions of William Safire. Congratulations.

David McCullough has won the Pulitzer Prize twice—for "Truman" and "John Adams," two of the most successful biographies ever published. In person and on the printed page, David McCullough shares the lessons of history with enthusiasm and insight. He has written definitive works on the Johnstown flood, the building of the Brooklyn Bridge, and the digging of the Panama Canal. His first book out came—came out nearly 40 years ago; all of his books are still in print. David McCullough is also, for millions of Americans, the voice of history, as the narrator of Ken Burns's "The Civil War" and other films.

For those who question the importance of history, David likes to quote Harry Truman, who said, "The only thing new in the world is the history you do not know." David McCullough reminds us that "the laws we live by, the freedoms we enjoy, the institutions that we take for granted are all the work of other people who went before us." He's a passionate man about our responsibility to know America's past and to share it with every new generation. He's fulfilled that duty in his own career with splendid results. This chronicler of other times is one of the eminent Americans of our own time. The Nation owes a debt of gratitude to a fine author and a fine man, David McCullough.

Now the military aide will read the citations for the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

[At this point, Lt. Comdr. Robert A. Roncska, USN, Navy Aide to the President, read the citations, and the President presented the medals.]

**The President.** Thank you all for coming. Congratulations to our honorees. Laura and I would like to invite you to a reception here to pay tribute to some of the finest citizens the Almighty has ever produced.

God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:18 a.m. in the East Room at the White House.

**Remarks at an Armed Forces Full Honor Review for Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld in Arlington, Virginia**

*December 15, 2006*

Thank you all. Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary and Joyce. Mr. Vice President, thank you for your kind words. Lynne and Senator Warner, Deputy Secretary England, Secretary Harvey, Winter, Wynne, General Pace, members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, distinguished guests, men and women of the Armed Forces: I'm pleased to join you as we pay tribute to one of America's most skilled, energetic, and dedicated public servants, the Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld.

Don Rumsfeld has been at my side from the moment I took office. We've been through war together. We have shared some of the most challenging moments in our Nation's history. Over the past 6 years, I have come to appreciate Don Rumsfeld's professionalism, his dedication, his strategic vision, his deep devotion to the men and women of our Nation who wear the uniform, and his love for the United States of America.

That devotion began at an early age, inspired by a man in uniform he called dad. His father, George, was 37 when America was attacked at Pearl Harbor. Too old to be drafted, he volunteered for service in the United States Navy. One of Don's earliest memories is of standing on the hangar deck of his dad's aircraft carrier, the USS *Hollandia*, at the age of 11. He was taking in the sights and sounds of the ship as it prepared to leave for the Pacific war.

His father's example stayed with him, and after graduating from Princeton, Don Rumsfeld joined the United States Navy, rising to become a pilot, a flight instructor, and a member of the Naval Reserve for nearly 20 years.

In the decades since he first put on the uniform, Don Rumsfeld has served with distinction in many important positions: Congressman, Counsellor to the President, Ambassador to NATO, White House Chief of Staff, Secretary of Defense. Yet, to this day, the title that has brought him his greatest pride is dad, and now granddad. And so

today, as we honor a fine man, we also honor his family, Joyce Rumsfeld and his children.

Don is the only man—Don Rumsfeld is the only man to have served as Secretary of Defense for two Presidents in two different centuries. [*Laughter*] In 2001, I called him back to the same job he held under President Gerald Ford, and I gave him this urgent mission: Prepare our Nation's Armed Forces for the threats of a new century.

Don Rumsfeld brought vision and enthusiasm to this vital task. He understood that the peace of the post-cold-war years was really the calm before the next storm and that America needed to prepare for the day when new enemies would attack our Nation in unprecedented ways. That day came on a clear September morning, and in a moment of crisis, our Nation saw Donald Rumsfeld's character and courage.

When the Pentagon was hit, Secretary Rumsfeld's first instinct was to run toward danger. He raced down smoke-filled hallways to the crash site so he could help rescue workers pull the victims from the rubble. And in the weeks that followed, he directed the effort to plan our Nation's military response to the deadliest terrorist attack in our Nation's history.

Under Secretary Rumsfeld's leadership, U.S. and coalition forces launched one of the most innovative military campaigns in the history of modern warfare, sending Special Operations forces into Afghanistan to link up with anti-Taliban fighters, to ride with them on horseback, and to launch a stunning assault against the enemy. In Operation Enduring Freedom we combined the most advanced laser-guided weapons with one of the oldest tools in the military arsenal—a man with a weapon on a horse.

History will record that the first major ground battle in the 21st century involving American forces began with a cavalry charge. I guess that's what you get when you bring together a President from Texas with a Secretary of Defense who actually remembers when America had a cavalry. [*Laughter*]

In 2003, on my orders, Secretary Rumsfeld led the planning and execution of another historic military campaign, Operation Iraqi Freedom. In this operation, coalition forces

drove Saddam Hussein from power in 21 days. And in the years that followed, Don Rumsfeld helped see the Iraqi people through the resumption of sovereignty, two elections, a referendum to approve the most progressive Constitution in the Middle East, and the seating of a newly elected Government.

On his watch, the United States military helped the Iraqi people establish a constitutional democracy in the heart of the Middle East, a watershed event in the story of freedom.

As he met the challenges of fighting a new and unfamiliar war, Don Rumsfeld kept his eyes on the horizon and on the threats that still await us as this new century unfolds.

He developed a new defense strategy and a new command structure for our Nation's Armed Forces, with a new northern command to protect the homeland, a new joint forces command to focus on transformation, a new strategic command to defend against long-range attacks, and a transformed U.S. special operations command ready to take the lead in the global war on terror.

He launched the most significant transformation of the Army in a generation. He led my administration's efforts to transform the NATO Alliance, with a new NATO response force ready to deploy quickly anywhere in the world. On his watch, NATO sent its forces to defend a young democracy in Afghanistan, more than 3,000 miles from Europe. It was the first time NATO has deployed outside the North Atlantic area in the history of the Alliance.

He helped launch the Proliferation Security Initiative, an unprecedented coalition of more than 80 nations working together to stop shipments of weapons of mass destruction on land, at sea, and in the air.

He undertook the most sweeping transformation of America's global defense posture since the start of the cold war, repositioning our forces so they can surge quickly to deal with unexpected threats and setting the stage for our global military presence for the next 50 years.

He took ballistic missile defense from theory to reality. And because of his leadership, America now has an initial capability to track

a ballistic missile headed for our country and destroy it before it harms our people.

Most importantly, he worked to establish a culture in the Pentagon that rewards innovation and intelligent risk taking and encourages our military and civilian leaders to challenge established ways of thinking.

The record of Don Rumsfeld's tenure is clear. There have been more profound change—there has been more profound change at the Department of Defense over the past 6 years than at any time since the Department's creation in the late 1940s.

And these changes were not easy, but because of Don Rumsfeld's determination and leadership, America has the best equipped, the best trained, and most experienced Armed Forces in the history of the world. All in all, not bad for a fellow who calls himself a "broken-down ex-Navy pilot." This man knows how to lead, and he did, and the country is better off for it.

In every decision Don Rumsfeld made over the past 6 years, he always put the troops first, and the troops in the field knew it. A few years ago, the editors at Time magazine came to his Pentagon office, and Don correctly suspected they were thinking of naming him "Person of the Year." Without hesitation, Don Rumsfeld told them, "Don't give it to me. Give it to our men and women in uniform." And that's exactly what Time magazine did.

Don Rumsfeld's selfless leadership earned him the admiration of our soldiers and sailors and airmen and marines. And we saw how they feel about him this week when he paid a farewell visit to our troops in Iraq.

Don Rumsfeld's strong leadership has earned him my admiration and deep respect. We stood together in hours of decision that would affect the course of our history. We walked amid the rubble of the broken Pentagon the day after September the 11th, 2001. He was with me when we planned the liberation of Afghanistan. We were in the Oval Office together the day I gave the order to remove Saddam Hussein from power.

In these and countless other moments, I have seen Don Rumsfeld's character and his integrity. He was—always ensured I had the best possible advice, the opportunity to hear and weigh conflicting points of view. He

spoke straight. It was easy to understand him. He has a sharp intellect, a steady demeanor, and boundless energy. He began every day at the Pentagon with a singular mission—to serve his country and the men and women who defend her.

Mr. Secretary, today your country thanks you for 6 outstanding years at the Department of Defense. And I thank you for your sacrifice and your service and your devotion to the men and women of our Armed Forces.

I want to thank Joyce for her poise and her grace and for the example she has set for our Nation's military families. Laura and I will miss you both, and we wish you all the best in the years to come.

And now, ladies and gentlemen, I bring to this podium America's 21st Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:50 p.m. at the Pentagon. In his remarks, he referred to Lynne Cheney, wife of Vice President Dick Cheney; Secretary of the Navy Donald C. Winter; and Secretary of the Air Force Michael W. Wynne. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld.

### **Message on the Observance of Hanukkah 2006**

*December 15, 2006*

I send greetings to all those celebrating Hanukkah, the festival of lights.

During Hanukkah, Jewish people everywhere honor the liberation of Jerusalem and the great miracle witnessed in the Holy Temple more than 2,000 years ago. After Jerusalem was conquered by an oppressive king and the Jews lost their right to worship in freedom, Judah Maccabee and his followers courageously set out to reclaim Jerusalem from foreign rule. Though their numbers were small, the Maccabees' dedication to their faith was strong, and they emerged victorious. When they returned to their Holy Temple for its rededication, the Maccabees discovered enough oil to burn for only one day. Yet the oil lit the Holy Temple for eight days, and the light of hope still shines bright in Jewish homes and synagogues throughout the world.

Each year, the glow of the menorah is a reminder of the blessings of a just and loving God and the sacrifices made over the centuries for faith and freedom. Laura and I pray that this holiday season will be a time of happiness in every home and a time of peace throughout the world.

Happy Hanukkah.

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

### **Proclamation 8091—Wright Brothers Day, 2006**

*December 15, 2006*

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

America has a rich history of exploration and discovery, marked by scientific and technological achievements that have transformed the world. On Wright Brothers Day, we remember two aviation pioneers from Ohio whose big dreams and extraordinary accomplishments helped change the course of human history.

On December 17, 1903, Orville and Wilbur Wright completed the first manned, powered flight in history and ushered all of mankind into a new era of possibility and promise. With Orville at the controls, the Wright brothers' small aircraft traveled 120 feet in 12 seconds above the dunes of Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. The age of flight had begun, and in the decades that followed, advancements in aviation would enable determined American risk-takers to cross oceans, break the sound barrier, and walk on the Moon.

Today, our Nation follows the Wright brothers' example of innovation as we continue to explore the frontiers of air and space. My Administration has outlined a vision for space exploration that includes a return to the Moon and a long-term human and robotic program to explore Mars and the solar system. By working to expand the realm of the possible, we can gain a better understanding of the universe and continue the journey that the Wright brothers began more than a century ago.

The Congress, by a joint resolution approved December 17, 1963, as amended (77 Stat. 402; 36 U.S.C. 143), has designated December 17 of each year as “Wright Brothers Day” and has authorized and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation inviting the people of the United States to observe that day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim December 17, 2006, as Wright Brothers Day.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of December, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:34 a.m., December 18, 2006]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on December 19.

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## Digest of Other White House Announcements

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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.

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### **December 9**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

### **December 10**

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush went to the National Building Museum where they participated in the taping of the annual “Christmas in Washington” concert for later television broadcast.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush returned to the White House.

### **December 11**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President participated in an interview with Stephen F. Hayes of the *Weekly Standard*. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with outside experts on Iraq.

The President announced his intention to appoint Patricia Hanahan Engman, Robert E. Peterson, and Peter W. Tredick as members of the Presidential Emergency Board No. 240, and, upon appointment, to designate Peter W. Tredick as Chair.

### **December 12**

In the morning, in his private dining room, the President had breakfast with Secretary of Defense-designate Robert M. Gates. Later, he had an intelligence briefing.

Later in the morning, in the Roosevelt Room, the President participated in a video conference call with U.S. military commanders and Ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad.

In the evening, on the State Floor, the President and Mrs. Bush hosted two holiday receptions.

The President declared a major disaster in Washington and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, flooding, landslides, and mudslides on November 2–11.

The President declared a major disaster in New York and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding on November 16–17.

### **December 13**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had separate telephone conversations with President Jalal Talabani of Iraq and Masoud Barzani, president of the Kurdistan region of Iraq.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Arlington, VA. Later, at the Pentagon, he and Vice President Dick Cheney met with U.S. military personnel. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

In the evening, on the State Floor, the President and Mrs. Bush hosted a holiday reception.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Jose

Manuel Barroso of the European Commission to the White House on January 8, 2007.

The President announced the recess appointment of Dabney Langhorne Friedrich and Beryl A. Howell as members of the U.S. Sentencing Commission.

The President announced the recess appointment of John R. Steer as a member of the U.S. Sentencing Commission and designated him Vice Chair.

#### **December 14**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the evening, on the State Floor, the President and Mrs. Bush hosted a holiday reception.

#### **December 15**

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Abdullah bin Ahmad Badawi of Malaysia. He then had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Arlington, VA. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

Later in afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush went to the State Department where they participated in a holiday reception for members of the diplomatic corps. Later, they returned to the White House.

In the evening, on the State Floor, the President and Mrs. Bush hosted a holiday reception.

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### **Nominations Submitted to the Senate**

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

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### **Checklist of White House Press Releases**

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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.

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#### **Released December 9**

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.J. Res. 102

#### **Released December 11**

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Tony Snow

#### **Released December 12**

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Tony Snow

Statement by the Press Secretary: Holocaust Denial Conference Sponsored by Iranian Regime

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 2383, H.R. 3817, H.R. 4000, H.R. 4559, H.R. 5061, H.R. 5103, H.R. 5585, H.R. 5690, and H.R. 6121

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Washington

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to New York

#### **Released December 13**

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Tony Snow

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of European Commission President Jose Barroso

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 4377

#### **Released December 14**

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Tony Snow

#### **Released December 15**

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Tony Snow

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 3699

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**Acts Approved  
by the President**

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***Approved December 9***

H.J. Res. 102 / Public Law 109–383  
Making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes

***Approved December 12***

H.R. 2383 / Public Law 109–384  
To redesignate the facility of the Bureau of Reclamation located at 19550 Kelso Road in Byron, California, as the “C.W. ‘Bill’ Jones Pumping Plant”

H.R. 3817 / Public Law 109–385  
Valle Vidal Protection Act of 2005

H.R. 4000 / Public Law 109–386  
To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to revise certain repayment contracts with the Bostwick Irrigation District in Nebraska, the Kansas Bostwick Irrigation District No. 2, the Frenchman-Cambridge Irrigation District, and the Webster Irrigation District No. 4, all a part of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program, and for other purposes

H.R. 4559 / Public Law 109–387  
To provide for the conveyance of certain National Forest System land to the towns of Laona and Wabeno, Wisconsin, and for other purposes

H.R. 5061 / Public Law 109–388  
Paint Bank and Wytheville National Fish Hatcheries Conveyance Act

H.R. 5103 / Public Law 109–389  
To provide for the conveyance of the former Konnarock Lutheran Girls School in Smyth

County, Virginia, which is currently owned by the United States and administered by the Forest Service, to facilitate the restoration and reuse of the property, and for other purposes

H.R. 5585 / Public Law 109–390  
Financial Netting Improvements Act of 2006

H.R. 5690 / Public Law 109–391  
Ouachita National Forest Boundary Adjustment Act of 2006

H.R. 6121 / Public Law 109–392  
To amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize a program relating to the Lake Pontchartrain Basin, and for other purposes

***Approved December 13***

H.R. 4377 / Public Law 109–393  
To extend the time required for construction of a hydroelectric project, and for other purposes

***Approved December 14***

H.R. 4766 / Public Law 109–394  
Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act of 2006

S. 2250 / Public Law 109–395  
Congressional Tribute to Dr. Norman E. Borlaug Act of 2006

***Approved December 15***

H.R. 3699 / Public Law 109–396  
Federal and District of Columbia Government Real Property Act of 2006



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