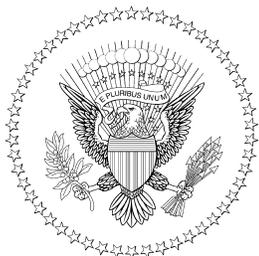


Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



Monday, June 23, 2008
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WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Week Ending Friday, June 20, 2008

**Letter to Congressional Leaders
Reporting on the Deployments of
United States Combat-Equipped
Armed Forces Around the World**

June 13, 2008

*Dear Madam Speaker: (Dear Mr.
President:)*

I am providing this supplemental consolidated report, prepared by my Administration and consistent with the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93-148), as part of my efforts to keep the Congress informed about deployments of combat-equipped U.S. Armed Forces around the world. This supplemental report covers operations in support of the war on terror and in Kosovo.

THE WAR ON TERROR

Since September 24, 2001, I have reported, consistent with Public Law 107-40 and the War Powers Resolution, on the combat operations in Afghanistan against al-Qaida terrorists and their Taliban supporters, which began on October 7, 2001, and the deployment of various combat-equipped and combat-support forces to a number of locations in the Central, Pacific, European, and Southern Command areas of operation in support of those operations and of other operations in our war on terror.

I will direct additional measures as necessary in the exercise of the right of the United States to self-defense and to protect U.S. citizens and interests. Such measures may include short-notice deployments of special operations and other forces for sensitive operations in various locations throughout the world. It is not possible to know at this time the precise scope or the duration of the deployment of U.S. Armed Forces necessary to counter the terrorist threat to the United States.

United States Armed Forces, with the assistance of numerous coalition partners, continue to conduct the U.S. campaign to pursue

al-Qaida terrorists and to eliminate support to al-Qaida. These operations have been successful in seriously degrading al-Qaida's training capabilities. United States Armed Forces, with the assistance of numerous coalition partners, ended the Taliban regime and are actively pursuing and engaging remnant al-Qaida and Taliban fighters in Afghanistan. The total number of U.S. forces in Afghanistan is approximately 31,122, of which approximately 14,276 are assigned to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. The U.N. Security Council authorized ISAF in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1386 of December 20, 2001, and has reaffirmed its authorization since that time, most recently for a 12-month period from October 13, 2007, in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1776 of September 19, 2007. The mission of ISAF under NATO command is to assist the Government of Afghanistan in creating a safe and secure environment that allows for continued reconstruction and the exercise and extension of Afghan authority. Currently, more than 40 nations contribute to ISAF, including all 26 NATO Allies.

The United States continues to detain several hundred al-Qaida and Taliban fighters who are believed to pose a continuing threat to the United States and its interests. The combat-equipped and combat-support forces deployed to Naval Base, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in the U.S. Southern Command area of operations since January 2002 continue to conduct secure detention operations for the enemy combatants at Guantanamo Bay.

The U.N. Security Council authorized a Multinational Force (MNF) in Iraq under unified command in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1511 of October 16, 2003, and reaffirmed its authorization in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1546 of June 8, 2004, U.N. Security Council Resolution 1637 of November 8, 2005, U.N. Security Council Resolution 1723 of November 28, 2006, and U.N. Security Council Resolution 1790 of

December 18, 2007, set to expire on December 31, 2008. Under Resolutions 1546, 1637, 1723, and 1790, the mission of the MNF is to contribute to security and stability in Iraq. These contributions have included assisting in building the capability of the Iraqi security forces and institutions as the Iraqi people drafted and approved a constitution and established a constitutionally elected government. The U.S. contribution to the MNF fluctuates over time, depending on the conditions in theater as determined by the commanders on the ground; the current U.S. contribution to the MNF is approximately 155,230 U.S. military personnel.

In furtherance of our efforts against terrorists who pose a continuing and imminent threat to the United States, its friends and allies, and our forces abroad, the United States continues to work with friends and allies in areas around the globe. These efforts include the deployment of U.S. combat-equipped and combat-support forces to assist in enhancing the counterterrorism capabilities of our friends and allies. United States combat-equipped and combat-support forces continue to be located in the Horn of Africa region.

In addition, the United States continues to conduct maritime interception operations on the high seas in the areas of responsibility of all of the geographic combatant commanders. These maritime operations have the responsibility to stop the movement, arming, or financing of international terrorists.

NATO-LED KOSOVO FORCE (KFOR)

As noted in previous reports regarding U.S. contributions in support of peacekeeping efforts in Kosovo, the U.N. Security Council authorized Member States to establish KFOR in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1244 of June 10, 1999.

The original mission of KFOR was to monitor, verify, and when necessary, to enforce compliance with the Military Technical Agreement between NATO and Serbia (formerly the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), while maintaining a safe and secure environment. Today, KFOR deters renewed hostilities and, with local authorities and international police, contributes to the mainte-

nance of a safe and secure environment that facilitates the work of the United Nations Interim Administrative Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), the European Union (EU)-led International Civilian Office, and the evolving EU Rule of Law Mission (EULEX).

Currently, there are 25 NATO nations contributing to KFOR. Eight non-NATO contributing countries also participate by providing military and other support personnel to KFOR. The U.S. contribution to KFOR is about 1,500 U.S. military personnel, or approximately 9 percent of KFOR's total strength of approximately 16,000 personnel.

The U.S. forces participating in KFOR have been assigned to the eastern region of Kosovo, but also have operated in other areas of the country based on mission requirements. For U.S. KFOR forces, as for KFOR generally, helping to maintain a safe and secure environment remains the principal military task. The KFOR operates under NATO command and control and rules of engagement. The KFOR currently coordinates with and supports UNMIK within means and capabilities and, pending decision by the North Atlantic Council, may offer this same cooperation to EULEX. The KFOR provides a security presence in towns, villages, and the country-side and organizes checkpoints and patrols in key areas to provide security, to protect all elements of the population living in Kosovo, and to instill a feeling of confidence in all ethnic communities throughout Kosovo.

NATO continues periodically to conduct a formal review of KFOR's mission. These reviews provide a basis for assessing current force levels, future requirements, force structure, force reductions, and the eventual withdrawal of KFOR. NATO adopted the Joint Operations Area plan to regionalize and rationalize its force structure in the Balkans.

The UNMIK international police and Kosovo Police Service (KPS) have primary responsibility for public safety and policing throughout Kosovo. The UNMIK international police and KPS also have assumed responsibility for guarding some patrimonial sites and operating border crossings. The KFOR supports these police forces when requested and augments security in particularly

sensitive areas or in response to particular threats as events on the ground dictate. The relationship among UNMIK police, EULEX, KPS, and the Government of Kosovo will likely be adjusted after June 15, 2008, when the constitution of the Republic of Kosovo comes into force.

I have directed the participation of U.S. Armed Forces in all of these operations pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct the foreign relations of the United States and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. Officials of my Administration and I communicate regularly with the leadership and other Members of Congress with regard to these deployments, and we will continue to do so.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 14.

The President's News Conference With President Nicolas Sarkozy of France in Paris, France

June 14, 2008

President Sarkozy. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for coming to work with us on this Saturday morning. I wanted to thank President Bush for his visit to Paris on his European tour. I see there how much importance he attaches to Franco-American relations and the transatlantic relation. And I think everyone should firmly bear in mind the importance of this transatlantic relation between the United States and Europe, especially as we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Marshall plan. This is an opportunity for me to extend the same sort of hospitality, warm hospitality that was extended to me last November when I went to Washington and to Mount Vernon.

It's also an opportunity to continue to pursue this confident, trusting, regular dialog between France and the United States on all issues that we have in common—and there are so many of them. We had an extended

discussion on the international situation on the Middle East, but also on economic and trade matters. We checked that—once again saw that there were many areas of convergence, although perhaps slight differences, and that's only right and normal. Friendship should not prevent France or the United States from expressing independent views. But if there are differences, we can discuss them calmly in a level-headed manner. And this is once again an opportunity for me to say to the American people the deep gratitude of the French people and our friendship.

President Bush. Yesterday I reminded the world, really, Nicolas, that America's first friend was France. And frankly, we wouldn't be where we are today without French support early in our Revolution. You are not only our first friend, you've been a consistent friend. And the meetings here have reconfirmed and strengthened our friendship between our countries and our personal friendship.

I really enjoy being with President Sarkozy. He's an interesting guy. *[Laughter]* He is full of energy. He's full of wisdom. He tells me what's on his mind. And we've had—every time I've met with him, we've had very meaningful discussions. We discussed Afghanistan. And thank you very much for supporting the Paris support conference. It made a big difference for that young democracy. And I do thank the people of France for supporting the women and children and the young democrats in Afghanistan. And thank you too, Nicolas.

We talked about Lebanon, of course. Talked to him about the Holy Land, about our deep desire for there to be two states living side by side in peace—two democracies, a Palestinian democracy and Israel, having a—resolving this conflict which creates so much difficulty for not only the Palestinians and the Israelis but for much of the Middle East.

And we talked about Darfur. And I want to thank you very much for having your troops there in Chad.

We talked about Iran—spent a lot of time talking about Iran. And I will tell you that we both have a mutual desire to prevent the Iranians from gaining the knowledge so that

they could build a weapon. And we do that for the sake of peace and security of the world.

We talked about Doha, the importance of a Doha round. And frankly—and then we spent some time on climate change. We had a meaningful, good discussion. And I thank you very much for the dinner last night. And it's a great pleasure to have been able to meet your wife too. She's a really smart, capable woman, and I can see why you married her. [Laughter] And I can see why she married you too. [Laughter]

Anyway, thanks. It's been a good visit. We'll be glad to take some questions.

President Sarkozy. Thank you, George. Perhaps a first question from the French press.

Syria/Iran/Lebanon

Q. To both of you, what specific, concrete requests do you wish to make or send to the Syrian President, Bashar al-Asad, so that he normalize his relations with the West, and of course, to achieve stability in Lebanon and in the rest of—

President Bush. Well, my message would be, stop fooling around with the Iranians and stop harboring terrorists. Serve as a constructive force in the Middle East to help the advance of a Palestinian state. Make it clear to Hamas that their terror is a—should stop for the sake of peace; and make it clear to their Iranian allies that the West is serious when we talk about stopping them from learning how to enrich, which would be the first—a major step for developing a bomb; and to make it clear to their Iranian allies that Hizballah is a destabilizing force for not only Lebanon but elsewhere.

That would be my message. I'd make it clear to him that there is a better way forward for Syria. And Nicolas and I talked about this subject today.

President Sarkozy. Well, George and I totally agree on the need to guarantee Lebanon's independence. Lebanon is entitled, like any other country anywhere in the world, to its independence and to remain independent. And this is one of the preconditions that I have laid down—the election of a new President for Lebanon. That is exactly what

happened. It was done with the election of General Sleiman.

Second point, we will go through with the process—the procedure of the international tribunal to track down those who assassinated Mr. Rafiq Hariri. But once I have said to Bashar al-Asad to let the Presidential process take—run its course, we would go back—get back into contact with them, and that is exactly what we've done. We have to let Lebanon stand free.

I also share the view of the United States of America on the fact that the Iranian question—and the fact that they might get their hands on a nuclear weapon—is of the essence; it is a major issue. Syria has to peel off, as much as possible, from Iran in its desire to lay its hands on a nuclear weapon. Once that has happened, then the process will continue.

Lastly, I told the President of the United States that we have taken the initiative of convening a summit for the Mediterranean, and to my knowledge, Syria is part of the Mediterranean region—is a Mediterranean country. Now if you go around the Mediterranean region and start picking and choosing and simply inviting those who correspond to exactly our criteria, then we'll probably have a meeting with very few people attending it.

President Bush. I want to call on Bill Plante from CBS, but before I do, I want to say something about one of your colleagues.

America lost a really fine citizen yesterday when Tim Russert passed away. I've had the privilege of being interviewed by Tim Russert. I found him to be a hard-working, thorough, decent man. And Tim Russert loved his country; he loved his family; and he loved his job a lot. And we're going to miss him all, and we send our deepest sympathies to Maureen, his wife, and Luke, his son. I know they're hurting right now, and hopefully the prayers of a lot of Tim's friends and a lot of Americans will help them during this time of difficulty.

Plante.

Iran

Q. Mr. President, Iran's Government spokesman, shortly after the package had

been presented by the Europeans, dismissed it out of hand, saying that if it does not—if it includes suspension of enrichment, it absolutely will not fly. Can you convince the rest of your allies and partners to enforce the sanctions which are envisioned in that package? It seems that many of them are reluctant.

President Bush. That's probably a question you ought to ask the President of France, but let me just give you my impressions of the situation. We have worked hard—"we" being our allies—have worked hard to say to the Iranian people, there is a better way forward for you. You've got a Government that has isolated you. You've got a Government that is creating the conditions so that you can't live a full and hopeful life. And the reason why that's happening is because your Government has defied the demands—the just demands of the free world. In other words, they refuse to abandon their desires to develop the know-how which could lead to a nuclear weapon.

Now, they say, "Well, we want a civilian nuclear power." And as I explained to Nicolas today, I agree, they should have the right to have civilian nuclear power. As a matter of fact, Vladimir Putin delivered that very message to the Iranian regime. He also delivered this message: That because you have been untrustworthy, because you haven't fully disclosed your programs to the IAEA in the past, that we can't trust you to enrich. And therefore, Russia will provide the fuel necessary for the civilian nuclear reactor. And therefore, you don't need to rich [enrich] *.

And so our demands are just and fair. And, Bill, we have been implementing the sanctions through the United Nations. And we're working with our friends and allies. As a matter of fact, much of my discussions on this trip have been dominated by this subject because our allies understand that a nuclear-armed Iran is incredibly destabilizing, and they understand that it would be a major blow to world peace.

And so I'm disappointed that the leaders rejected this generous offer out of hand. It's an indication to the Iranian people that their

leadership is willing to isolate them further. And our view is, we want the Iranian people to flourish and to benefit. We want their economy to be strong so people can grow up in peace and hope. And yet they've got a—this Ahmadi-nejad is obviously—takes a different position from that and—so his policies are what's creating the deprivation inside Iran.

President Sarkozy. Well, I think France's position is well-known. If Iran gets a nuclear bomb, that is totally unacceptable. I mean, that's very clear. It is an unacceptable threat to world stability, especially when you think of the repeated statements made by the President of Iran right now. Anyone is entitled—including Iran—to access to civilian nuclear energy. We will help them to do so if they act in good faith. If the Iranian authorities are in good faith, then they should let inspections run their course. If they have nothing to hide, then they have nothing to hide—let's show it.

And meanwhile, the only solution in order to persuade the Iranians of this is a faultless, seamless sanction system, you see? The door is wide open to access to civilian nuclear technology—straightaway, now. But as far as military nuclear energies—nuclear access is concerned, this is "no" on the part of the international community. And as the President just said, Vladimir Putin has, with us, sung from the same hymn sheet, and our position will not change. The Iranian people—which is a—who are great people and a major civilization—they need economic progress; they need growth; they deserve better than the impasse, the dead-end into which some of their leaders are leading them.

European Union/Lisbon Treaty

Q. President, good morning.

President Sarkozy. Hold it the other way around, madam.

Q. Well, I should actually know what—how to hold a microphone, but thank you. President—to you, Mr. Sarkozy, it would appear that the building and shaping of Europe has been seriously shaken yesterday by the Irish "no." In fact, some have called for the ratification procedure to be suspended. Can this not be the case? And secondly, do you want your Presidency, the French Presidency

* White House correction.

to be one which, as you called for, continues to push Europe forward? And do you not think that the Irish “no” is going to hinder this?

President Sarkozy. Well, it’s going to make things more difficult, but when you’re a head of state and when the bubble—you take over the Presidency of the Union, if you like easy jobs, then you should step down straightaway.

Now, the Irish “no” is a political reality. It’s a fact. It’s happened. But the issue is not whether we like or not. It’s a fact; we have to live with it. The Irish people said what they had to say, and we have to accept that. Now, having said that, we, with Angela Merkel, believe that we have to continue with the ratification process, because at this stage, 18 European states have ratified the treaty. We have to continue doing so, and that is Gordon Brown’s intention, as he explained to me yesterday over the telephone, so that this Irish hiccup not become a major crisis.

So despite that, let’s continue to ratify. But at the same time, we have to put our heads together, all of us. It is no coincidence, it is no surprise to a certain extent—in fact, I spoke yesterday with the Irish *Taoiseach*, the Irish Prime Minister. A lot of Europeans do not understand how we are shaping Europe right now and building Europe, and we have to take account of that. And we have to do so very fast. We have to change our way of building Europe.

The idea of a European construct—it was one of the most wonderful ideas that the founding fathers had some half a century ago. We cannot allow—we shouldn’t sabotage it. But perhaps we should do it differently. Europe was set up to protect, and yet it worries so many Europeans. We can’t not take account of this. We have to do so, and we have to do so now. So I have every intention of taking initiatives. I’m thinking, for instance, of a European immigration policy. I’m thinking of a European response to this endless increase in oil prices. It seems to me that we have a duty to be more effective and look at what the daily lives of our citizens—fellow citizens—look like. And I take the Irish “no” as a call for us to do things differently and do things better.

Now, of course, it’s not going to simplify the work and the task of the French President—Presidency of the European Union, but—

President Bush. Olivier [Olivier Knox, Agence France-Presse]. Tossing a bone to somebody who’s got a French name. [Laughter] Might want to use the mike, Olivier.

Iraq/France-U.S. Relations

Q. Yes, I will. Thank you, Mr. President. *Merci, Monsieur President.* First—

President Bush. Speaks the language too. [Laughter]

Q. Just wait. [Laughter] I’d like to ask you each a question.

President Bush. In the great tradition of David Gregory [NBC News].

Q. Who?

President Bush. Yes, just trying to work him in the news here.

Q. I’d like to ask you a question first, Mr. President. *Et ensuite une au President de la Republique.*

Interpreter. I’m going to question the President of the Republic.

Q. President Bush, Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki says that talks on a status of forces agreement are at an impasse, or a dead-end—not dead, but in trouble. How do you break this impasse, and are the conditions that the United States have set forward in support so far nonnegotiable?

[At this point, the reporter asked a question in French, and it was translated as follows.]

Q. And to you, President, is the Franco-American relationship the privilege, the priority number one relationship in the transatlantic context?

President Bush. Olivier, if I were a betting man, we’ll reach an agreement with the Iraqis. And it’s—you know, of course we’re there at their invitation; this is a sovereign nation. And therefore, we’re working hard with the elected Government of Iraq about, you know, U.S. presence and coalition presence in a way that the elected Government is comfortable.

And it’s interesting to be in—working with a democracy where, you know, people are

trying to prepare the ground to get something passed through Parliament, for example, or the free press is vibrant. But we're going to work hard to accommodate their desires. It's their country.

And at the same time, we believe that a strategic relationship with Iraq is important. It's important for Iraq; it's important for the United States; it's important for the region. And I repeat to you that whatever we agreed to, it will not commit future Presidents to troop levels, nor will it establish permanent bases.

Anyway, we'll see how it goes. And thanks for the question in English. [Laughter]

President Sarkozy. Well, the Americans and the French have had a privileged relationship for two centuries now. I mean, when the United States of America was born, France made a choice. It was not a European choice, because we chose to side with the Americans or the United States of America as opposed to Britain at the time. And in two World Wars, we've been together. We share the same values.

So, yes, it is a privileged relationship, but it's not privileged since I came to be elected; it's been privileged for two centuries now. You can't neglect that. Now, through this—throughout that, we have had ups and downs—hiccups—because two peoples—I'm talking about the French and the American peoples—that actually resemble one another. We express our feelings. The American people can be heard, and likewise for the French people. We have to be careful about this. We have to be mindful of this when we talk to one another in our relations.

I have always seen American leaders—and thank you to President Bush—for accepting European originality and independence and, of course, French originality and independence. And I've always noted that we can talk very frankly when we had points of disagreement. But we have to do so in—as allies and as friends, and be mindful of not hurting one another. We can agree on an issue, on the substance of issue, but we don't have to say so in an unpleasant manner. It so happens that today we have a lot of areas of convergence. But yes, maybe on such and such an issue, we don't totally agree, but it doesn't in any way undermine the basis of what I

have to say, which is that the Americans are our friends and our allies. They know they can count on us.

Might I add that it seems to me that the more you trust somebody, the more trust there is on both sides of the Atlantic, the more leeway we have. We don't ask the United States to apologize to us because they have their own vision of their strategic interests, and they don't ask us to apologize for the fact that we are defending our own strategic interests, precisely because the relationship is a strong one; it is a calm one. And when a relationship is that strong, you accept one's divergences or differences. And that is my whole point. You've got to understand, if you're in a strong relationship, then you have more room for freedom, more room for maneuver. That's what this is all about.

Perhaps one last question?

President Bush. Oh. [Laughter]

President Sarkozy. One more; last.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. You have set the target before leaving the White House that, by the end of this year, you will hopefully achieve an historical peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians. However, in light of what's happening to the fragile position of Ehud Olmert—Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and the continuous process of building illegal settlements in the—eastern Jerusalem and certain parts of the occupied territories, do you think that peace is far away right now in light of those obstacles?

President Bush. Yes. Thank you. First of all, I view the concept of a Palestinian state and the idea of a Palestinian state for Israeli security, as well as Palestinian security and hope, as bigger than the political process. And I fully recognize there's a lot of uncertainty in the Israeli political scene now.

On the other hand, what is not uncertain is that most people—or many people in Israel understand that for their own security, there has to be a Palestinian state with clearly defined borders, a state that doesn't look like Swiss cheese, a resolution of the refugee issue and the security issue, and, of course, issues surrounding Jerusalem.

Most Palestinians want to coexist in peace with Israel. And that peace must be in a state

that is clearly visible, well-defined, and in actuality is a state. And so in other words, the concept—and by the way, this is newly arrived. I'm actually the first President ever to have articulated a two-state solution, two democracies living side by side with peace—in peace. And during my time as President, I've seen a notable shift amongst folks in the Middle East that recognize the importance of having that state.

So my point to you is, is that, you know, it's been a—there's always difficulties in democracies, but the notion is a—of getting this work done is important. And therefore, our diplomacy is to remind all the parties involved that they have now an opportunity to get a state negotiated. And I think it can be done by the end of the year. Condi is very much involved with it on a—you know, a nearly weekly, it seems like, basis. And of course, I'm in touch with the leaders. The Palestinians are discouraged by the settlement activity—all the more reason to get the borders clearly defined as quickly as possible.

I want to thank Nicolas and the EU, for example, for helping build civil society in the Palestinian Territory as well as helping Prime Minister Fayyad with security measures.

I'll also remind you that it's essential that we get a state defined as quickly as possible so that leaders such as President Abbas and Prime Minister Fayyad can say to their people, here's an alternative vision to what's taking place in Gaza. You support us, and you're going to get a state. You support Hamas, and you're going to get Gaza. Take your pick.

And therefore, there it's imperative that we, you know, convince the parties to get this done. Now, I know some say, "All America has got to do is say, 'Do it.'" No, the way it works is, is that the parties have got to come to this agreement. Our job, along with the EU through the Quartet, is to keep the process moving.

And so I'm optimistic. I understand how difficult it is, but difficulty should not cause people to do the right thing. If you believe in your soul something is right, then you have an obligation to work. And in this case, I firmly believe that the establishment of a Palestinian state will bring hope and peace to the Israelis and the Palestinians.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:45 a.m. at Elysee Palace. In his remarks, he referred to Carla Bruni, wife of President Sarkozy; Tim Russert, moderator of NBC's "Meet the Press," who passed away on June 13; Prime Minister Vladimir Putin of Russia, in his former capacity as President of Russia; President Mahmud Ahmadi-nejad of Iran; and Prime Minister Salam Fayyad and President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority. President Sarkozy referred to President Michel Sleiman of Lebanon; Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany; Prime Minister Gordon Brown of the United Kingdom; and Prime Minister Brian Cowen of Ireland. A reporter referred to Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel. President Sarkozy and some reporters spoke in French, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

The President's Radio Address

June 14, 2008

Good morning. This week, I'm traveling in Europe. In the past few days, I have visited Slovenia, Germany, Italy, and the Vatican. I'm spending this Saturday in France, and I will conclude my trip in the United Kingdom.

In my meetings, I've discussed our shared efforts to advance peace and prosperity around the world. America has strong partners in leaders like Italy's Silvio Berlusconi, Germany's Angela Merkel, France's Nicolas Sarkozy, and Britain's Gordon Brown. And together we're pursuing an agenda that is broad and far-reaching.

America and Europe are cooperating to open new opportunities for trade and investment. We're working to tear down regulatory barriers that hurt our businesses and consumers. We're striving to make this the year that the world completes an ambitious Doha trade agreement, which will open up new markets for American goods and services and help alleviate poverty around the world.

America and Europe are cooperating to address the twin challenges of energy security and climate change, while keeping our economies strong. We're working to diversify our energy supplies by developing and financing new clean-energy technologies. And we're working toward an international agreement that commits every major economy to

slow, stop, and eventually reverse the growth of greenhouse gases.

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

America and Europe are cooperating on our most solemn duty, protecting our citizens. Our nations are applying the tools of intelligence, finance, law enforcement, diplomacy, and when necessary, military power to break up terror networks and deny them safe havens. And to protect against the prospect of ballistic missile attacks emanating from the Middle East, we're developing a shared system of missile defense.

We're also working together to ensure that Iran is not allowed to acquire a nuclear weapon. This week, America and our European allies sent a clear and unmistakable message to the regime in Tehran: It must verifiably suspend its enrichment activities or face further isolation and additional sanctions. Together America and Europe are pursuing strong diplomacy with Iran, so that future generations can look back and say that we came together to stop this threat to our people.

In the long run, the most important way we can protect our people is to defeat the terrorists' hateful ideology by spreading the hope of freedom. So America and Europe are working together to advance the vision of two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in security and peace. We're working together to protect the sovereignty of Lebanon's young democracy. And we're working together to strengthen the democratically elected Governments in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In all of these areas, the United States and Europe have agreed that we must take action, and that we must go forward together. The level and breadth of the cooperation between America and our European allies today is unprecedented. And together we're

making the world a safer and more hopeful place.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:15 a.m. on June 13 in Rome, Italy, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m., e.d.t., on June 14. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 13 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. Due to the 6-hour time difference, the radio address was broadcast after the President's news conference in Paris. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Interview With Ned Temko of The Observer in Rome, Italy

June 13, 2008

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

Mr. Temko. You're giving a major speech in Paris in a few hours' time on what you describe as a new era of transatlantic union. And obviously, the picture in Europe is much more encouraging, it would seem, than a few years ago. What's changed, in your view, and what needs to be fixed?

The President. This is the—what's changed is the—we've gone beyond the Iraq period for two reasons. One is that Iraq is—democracy is succeeding. People are beginning to see progress. And therefore, people that—at least governments that felt like they didn't want to participate in the liberation of Iraq have now wanted to participate in the reconstruction of Iraq. And their people are beginning to see some success. Maliki has moved things—Stockholm—and comports himself like a leader would, and he speaks hopefully about the future.

Secondly, that there are a lot of issues that we're focused on that kind of send a signal that cooperation is necessary to change the conditions of the world for the better—cooperation on AIDS, cooperation on malaria, cooperation on trade, hopefully, discussion about climate change, cooperation in Afghanistan. In other words, the agenda is varied, and it's profound.

And my speech basically says that by focusing on these issues and by working together

in a unified way, we can be transformative, just like we were in the past. Europe used to be inward-looking right after World War II—necessarily so—to rebuild. America helped. Now we can be outward-looking as we help others.

I also have a—I'm a believer that liberty is transformative—the power of liberty is universal; that moral relativism must be rejected; and that we've got to have confidence in liberty to help others so that we're more secure ourselves. And that's what the speech is. It's a hopeful speech.

Russia-U.S. Relations

Mr. Temko. And one of the areas of Europe where liberty has been sort of partly transformative is clearly post-Soviet Russia. And you've had very strong personal relationship with Putin. First of all, is your assessment that Putin is still basically in charge? And how important is your personal relationship?

The President. Let me start with the second. My personal relationship is important because we had differences. And therefore, if you work hard to establish a relationship of trust, that you're then able to air out your differences in a way that's respectful of the other person, and at the same time, find common ground.

One area of common ground that has really not been given much attention is Iran. I agreed that the Iranians should have—they have the sovereign right to have civilian nuclear power. Putin obviously believes they should; witness the cooperation on Bushehr. We both agree, however, that they can't be trusted with the knowledge that comes from enrichment. And therefore, Putin suggested to the Iranians that Russia provide the enriched uranium necessary to run their fuel plant. I agree. And as I said yesterday in the press conference, that this really undermines the argument for the Iranians because if, in fact, their only focus is on civilian nuclear power, they readily accept the plant, the fuel, and the offer of Russia to pick up the spent fuel.

So there are areas where we cooperate, and there are areas where we have disagreements. And yet I believe the best foreign policy for the American President is to be in

a position to earn the trust of those where there's not a hundred percent agreement. And by the way, any American President will find out there's never a hundred percent agreement, even with your closest friends.

Mr. Temko. I'm sure that's right. [*Laughter*]

The President. And so the first part of the question—yes, look, I think it's—I went to Sochi. Putin introduced me to Medvedev. And he, in not only his body language, but in his words to me—that Medvedev is going to be in charge of foreign policy. And their relationship is being sorted out, and the world is fascinated to watch what's happening. I think it's—I'll take him for his word, and then we'll watch and see what happens.

Religious Freedom

Mr. Temko. How concerned are you about issues like human rights in Russia? And what degree of influence does any outside country—even the United States or—

The President. Oh, I think it matters. I think it matters when people speak up, whether it be in Russia or China or anywhere else. In Russia's case, there was—early on in my Presidency, I remember talking to Vladimir Putin on behalf of the Catholic Church, where there were concerns about the Church being able to have a robust presence.

Vladimir Putin is sensitive to religious issues. He's a religious guy himself. He has a beautiful little Orthodox church on his own property, which he proudly showed me and Laura one time. He made sure I met some of the Jewish community when I was there in Russia. And so he is sensitive to religious liberty, more so than some other countries.

Natural Resources/Global Foreign Policy

Mr. Temko. And is Western leverage reduced by the fact that Russia has a good chunk of the world's natural energy resources?

The President. I think it certainly changes the equation on a lot of foreign policy. It's interesting to watch the European Union wrestle with energy independence. Early in my Presidency, nations were saying they were going to get rid of nuclear power. And

I questioned them quietly, on an individual basis, about that decision, because if you get rid of one source of power, you have to find another source of power, unless, of course, you don't care whether your economy grows. Most leaders end up caring whether their economy grows.

So I predicted to some of these leaders that there would be an issue in terms of having a sole source supplier, particularly of natural gas from Russia. And now there's great consternation within the EU. And my only point is, is that this energy issue complicates a lot of foreign policy issues, including that between the EU and Russia, as well as that between the United States and Venezuela, or the world and Iran. And the question is, what do you do about it?

Energy Policy

Mr. Temko. Well, that was going to be my next question.

The President. What we need to do about it in the United States is to get this Democratically controlled Congress to allow us to explore for oil and gas. We did an energy study when I first became President that predicted it would be an issue if we did not explore for oil and gas. And what people don't understand is hydrocarbons are necessary as we transition to a new era, based upon new technologies. But new technologies don't arrive overnight. I mean, they just don't suddenly appear. It takes time and money to develop these technologies. The world is in the process of doing that. The United States is spending a lot of money on research, both privately and publicly. Japan is as well.

And yet we forgot the notion of transitioning. And so we don't explore in ANWR; we don't explore for oil shale; we don't explore off the coast of America, and we should be.

Oil Prices/Upcoming Middle East Oil Summit

Mr. Temko. In terms of the oil price, which is obsessing most of the world now, is there anything individual governments can do, in your view?

The President. There's no magic wand. It took us awhile to get to where we are; it's going to take us awhile to get out of it.

And the truth of the matter is that there's either got to be more supply or less demand. And demand doesn't decline overnight, although patterns and habits are beginning to change in the United States. You notice some of these car manufacturers are now announcing they're going to be manufacturing smaller automobiles.

I think that people have got to recognize that, I mean, our policy in America has been robust on the development of new technologies and weak on finding enough hydrocarbons so that we can become less dependent on foreign sources of oil.

Mr. Temko. In terms of the short term, fixing the oil price—

The President. You mean the magic wand?

Mr. Temko. Yes.

The President. No, there's not one.

Mr. Temko. And in terms of these conferences, I notice there's going to be a conference in Jeddah, and your national security staff—

The President. That would be Hadley, the spokesman.

Mr. Temko. Yes, indeed—not unreasonably said that you would want to know what such a conference—

The President. I was asked this at a press conference last night. I said it's an interesting idea. Of course, I'm going to go home and take a look at what it all means and I'll decide who's going to attend on our behalf. But if I might repeat, the solution to the price of hydrocarbons is either more hydrocarbons or less usage of hydrocarbons.

During my trips to the Middle East—I've got great relations with the leaders there, and I talked to King Abdallah about increasing the supply of oil, on the theory that if you harm your consumers with high price, they will find other ways to power their economies as quickly as possible. And secondly, he should not want to see kind of a worldwide contraction as a result of consumers spending money on energy that ends up overseas, as opposed to spending money on opportunities in their respective economies.

So I think people, if they take a sober look at the world's supply, there's just not a lot relative to demand.

One of the things that could help is that if some countries, big consumers of hydrocarbons stop subsidizing their populations so that there is a response to price on the demand side.

Iran

Mr. Temko. Iran has been very much on the agenda again, all this week—

The President. Yes, it is. It should be.

Mr. Temko. —and should be. Ahmadi-nejad has all but said no to the latest incentive package. If that stands, what's the next step in your view?

The President. More sanctions. The next step is for the Europeans and the United States and Russia and China to understand diplomacy only works if there are consequences. And sometimes the world tends to focus on the process as opposed to the results. And I have tried during my Presidency to say, we need to focus on the results, and for diplomacy to be consequential there has to be a statement that says to the Iranians: Here's your way forward; if you choose not to, there will be a consequence. And the consequence in this case, in the diplomatic channel, is sanctions that are effective. So we will work with our partners on implementation of the sanctions thus far in place through the U.N., and work with them on additional sanctions, including through the U.N. process, as well as through the financial process.

Mr. Temko. What's at stake here? Sorry, go on.

The President. On the theory that there are people inside Iran who, one, are suffering as a result of the decisions their Government made; but secondly, leaders inside of Iran who are sick and tired of the isolation brought about by this regime. In 2003, the Iranians had agreed to verifiably suspend; we had agreed to say, there's a way forward, working with our European partners. In other words, there was a—looked like a successful way forward for both sides of this debate. Then Ahmadi-nejad gets elected, changes the tone and changes the policy.

And so my only point there is that—and this is the point I make to our partners—is that the Iranians had adopted a different attitude during my Presidency—in other words, in the relatively near past—and that's

not to say they can't do it again. And now is the time. And the consequences of Iran having a nuclear weapon are substantial. They're substantial in the Middle East. If the people in the Middle East do not think that the United States and Europe, for example, are going to work to provide security, they will find their own ways to secure themselves. And what the Middle East does not need is a nuclear arms race. It does not need the instability that comes from an innate fear that the West is not strong enough or willing enough to take on the problem.

Situation in the Middle East

Mr. Temko. So there's a lot at stake here, in your view.

The President. In my judgment, it's the international issue that faces all of us. And therefore, success in Iraq is important; it has consequences for the Iranian issue. It is important for us to have security agreements with our friends. We, the United States, has security agreements with UAE, for example. When you go to the Middle East and you sit in my seat and listen, yes, there's concern about the Palestinian state. But the dialog has shifted dramatically from solve the Palestinian state and you've solved the problems in the Middle East, to now solve the Iranian issue and you solve the problems in the Middle East.

Iran

Mr. Temko. Let's assume that Ahmadi-nejad does not respond to this latest package, that there are additional sanctions. You clearly feel very strongly about this issue.

The President. That's why I put all options on the table.

Mr. Temko. And there are other options, obviously. What happens if at the end of the year, you have tougher sanctions, but you still have no resolution?

The President. I don't want to speculate on that. My hope is, is that let's get the tough sanctions in place. That's the task.

Mr. Temko. But there's always an alternative on the table; there has to be.

The President. Oh, yes, absolutely.

Mr. Temko. And you—

The President. And alternatives not just for the United States, alternatives for a lot

of other countries, some of which the world needs to think about as we head into this arena. We don't want a nuclear arms race in the Middle East. That's an alternative.

U.S. Foreign Policy

Mr. Temko. But you would be willing to hand over a status quo which was slightly improved, i.e. tougher sanctions?

The President. Actually it's not status quo because there's a multilateral forum in place that will enable Presidents to more likely deal with this issue.

I have made it clear that it's difficult for the United States to achieve an issue in a one-on-one situation with people like Ahmadi-nejad or Kim Jong Il. I have changed the foreign policy of the United States to make it more multilateral because I understand that diplomacy without consequences is ineffective. And the only way to achieve consequences through diplomacy is for there to be a universal application, in this case, of sanctions. Unilateral sanctions don't work.

You know, I tell my partners, we're asking you to sanction; I know you're sitting there saying to yourself, "Well, it's easy for him to say because they've already sanctioned." And the question facing countries is, does money trump effective diplomacy for the sake of peace and security?

Progress in Iraq

Mr. Temko. Iraq, you mentioned. Post-surge, are things heading in the right direction, in your view?

The President. Absolutely.

Mr. Temko. And how is—

The President. Violence is down. And as a result of violence being down, the economy is growing and political reconciliation is taking place. And the lesson learned in this post-conflict period in both Iraq and Afghanistan is, you got to have security.

I gave a speech at the Air Force Academy that said it's a different set of issues that we face now than we faced 60 years ago in post-conflict. First of all, the conflicts took longer to resolve in World War II. And yet the reconstruction was done in relative peace and security. Here it took little time to accomplish the initial military objective, and recon-

struction had to be done in the face of a lot of violence.

And in 2006, it became apparent that our strategy of training and encouraging the Iraqis to take the lead was not working; sectarian violence was severe. As you know, I made the decision to send 30,000 more in because we recognized that—and had belief that security would yield this kind of evolution of democracy, and it is. The number of laws they passed, the Iraqi Parliament have passed, have been—I would say it certainly exceeded expectations. And they passed their budgets faster than we have passed our budgets.

British and U.S. Troop Levels in Iraq

Mr. Temko. I'm sure that's true. [*Laughter*]

The British Government, Gordon Brown had said yesterday, I think, that he will announce sometime in the coming weeks future plans for British deployment in Iraq. British officers have acknowledged that in the recent fighting in Basra, the American military role was crucial to making sure that there was a response. Is there not a concern that, whatever the justifications for a British withdrawal, that a British pullout of troops could have an effect either on American deployment or on the situation as a whole? Or are you relaxed about it?

The President. I'm, first of all, appreciative of the fact that Gordon Brown is constantly in dialog with us about what he and his military are thinking. Secondly, we ourselves are bringing out troops based upon return on success. And thirdly, I am confident that he, like me, will listen to our commanders to make sure that the sacrifices that have gone forward won't be unraveled by drawdowns that may not be warranted at this point in time. I'm looking forward to discussing with him.

We've had some discussions. He was going to be at 3,500, I think, if I'm not mistaken; he's now at 5,000.

National Security Adviser Stephen J. Hadley. I think he's at 4,200.

The President. Forty-two-hundred, I don't know, whatever, but it's—

Mr. Temko. But it did roll back on an—

The President. It's greater than he thought, in other words—

Mr. Temko. Yes, that's right.

The President. In other words, the Government took a look and said, "Well, maybe we ought to leave more troops in." My only point is, is that timetables—you say, timetable for withdrawal, and our answer is, there should be no definitive timetable; there ought to be obviously a desire to reduce our presence, but it's got to be based upon success.

All I can tell you is, from my perspective, the British response has been that way. They've said, we're going to have—we think we'll be at 3,500, but then adjusted their plans based upon the conditions.

Iraq/President's Decisionmaking

Mr. Temko. Weapons of mass destruction in Iraq obviously is—

The President. Still looking for them.

Mr. Temko. Still looking for them, exactly. [Laughter]

The President. That was a huge disappointment.

Mr. Temko. And the obvious question your critics ask, particularly in Britain, is if we'd known at the time there weren't any WMD, would there have been this war?

The President. Well, you know, that's one of those great hypotheticals that we didn't know. Now having said that, I still strongly defend the decision. The world is better off without Saddam Hussein in power. But Presidents don't get to do re-dos; they don't get to do look-backs, ifs. All I can tell you is, is that we thought for certain there was weapons of mass destruction, as did the nations that voted for 1441.

See, the interesting thing about history is that—short-term, kind of momentary history, is that people forget what life was like at the moment that this decision was made. One, people forget that we tried to solve this problem diplomatically. You might remember, there was a great debate: Will Bush go to the United Nations, or will they move without trying to solve this problem diplomatically? Well, we did go to the United Nations; I insisted we go to the United Nations. And we worked diligently from the summer of 2002 until March of 2003 to see if we

couldn't have solved this. We went back to the United Nations for a resolution.

Mr. Temko. For a second resolution, yes.

The President. And in the meantime, we're working with our allies and friends. We didn't realize, nor did anybody else, that Saddam Hussein felt like he needed to play like he had weapons of mass destruction. It may have been, however, that in his mind all this was just a bluff. After all, there had been 17 United Nations Security Council resolutions, the world wasn't serious, which leads me back to the point that when the world says something, it better have—it better mean what it says, otherwise people who are destabilizing just don't take it seriously. "Who cares?" they say.

And so, I was asked in Germany—one of the guys said, "You making any mistakes?" Of course. I said, one of the mistakes was my language made it look like that I was anxious for war; that because of my language, I didn't understand the consequences. Well, of course I understand the consequences. And I understand better than anybody that the Commander in Chief has got an obligation to comfort those who have lost a loved one because of his decision. And then the man went on and said, "Well, was it a mistake to get rid of Saddam Hussein?" The answer is absolutely not.

President's Decisionmaking

Mr. Temko. You very movingly described in one interview this week that—how difficult it is to put young American men and women in harm's way and how much time and energy you've tried to devote to doing what you can, obviously, to comfort the families of someone who has been killed—

The President. And making sure they understand that the sacrifice won't go in vain. Nothing worse than a politician making decisions based upon the last Gallup Poll when people's lives are at stake, or where they have made a sacrifice. And I tell these folks—and they want to know—look, there's a lot of them, and I haven't visited with all the families. But I will tell you this: Many, many families look at me trying to determine whether or not, one, I believed that it was necessary; and two, whether or not I'm going to let their son or daughter kind of lie in an empty grave

when it comes to the sacrifice they made. They want to know whether or not the President—if he believes it was necessary, whether or not he's going to see this thing through, regardless of what they're screaming on the TV sets.

President's Image Abroad

Mr. Temko. You're flying into Britain where your public awaits you, and you know there's a tough public there sometimes. One of the questions—

The President. Do I care? Only to the extent that it affects people's view of my—the citizens I represent. Do I care about my personal standing? Not really.

Iraqi Civilians/U.S. Troop Casualties/ Freedom Agenda

Mr. Temko. One of the questions, of course, they ask, is, do you feel a sense of personal pain—

The President. Course I do.

Mr. Temko. —over the Iraqi civilians who have—

The President. I feel a sense of pain for those who were tortured by Saddam Hussein, by the parents who watched their daughters raped by Saddam Hussein, by those innocent civilians who have been killed by inadvertent allied action, by those who have been bombed by suicide bombers. I feel a sense of pain for death. I feel a sense of pain for the families of our troops. I read about it every night. Or I used to read about it every night; the violence has changed.

But I get a report every day about whether or not the U.S. has suffered casualties. And when I get those reports, I think about those mothers and fathers. And I meet with a lot of families—a lot—in order to be able to—it's my duty to try to console and comfort. And many times, the comforter in chief ends up being comforted, by the way, by the families, the strength of the families.

This is a volunteer army, and these kids are in this fight because they want to be in the fight and they believe in it. And yet these poor parents are looking at—oftentimes looking at negativity, just people quick to report the ugly and the negative. But it's hard to report on the schools that are opening or the

clinics that are opening or the playgrounds that are filling up, the society is coming back.

I have great faith in the power of liberty. First of all, I wasn't surprised when people went to vote in defiance of the killers. I was pleased, but not surprised, because I believe in the universality of freedom. I don't believe it is a Western value. And I say to people, I am concerned about the comfortable isolating themselves and saying, who cares whether somebody over there lives in a free society?

And I'll say in my speech, moral relativism must be challenged, this notion that it doesn't matter what forms of government are—I think it does matter. I think it also matters, along these lines, that when I talk about freedom, it's just not freedom from tyranny, it's freedom from HIV/AIDS; it's freedom from malaria; it's freedom from hunger—for two reasons. One, it's in our national interests that we defeat hopelessness. The only way a suicide bomber can recruit is when he finds somebody hopeless. And secondly, it's in our moral interests. A nation is a better nation when it feeds the hungry and takes care of the diseased.

And therefore, when I go to the G-8, my message to the G-8 is, yes, we'll talk about the environment, and that's important. But George W. Bush is going to be talking about those people who are needlessly dying because of mosquito bites. And I expect them to honor their obligations. We came to the G-8 last year, and I said, "Why don't you match what the United States of America does; we're putting up \$30 billion for HIV/AIDS, \$1.6 billion for malaria. And why don't you match us?" And they said, "Okay."

And so we're going to go to the G-8 and we're going to sit down and say, "Have we matched?" Because there are people needlessly dying today. And we'll come up with a good solution for greenhouse gases by getting China and India at the table. And it's going to take time to evolve, but I'm going to remind people we can act today to save lives for the good of the world.

Press Secretary Dana Perino. Okay, we're about 25 minutes.

The President. That means shorten my answers.

Former Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom

Mr. Temko. No, no, I'll shorten my questions. [Laughter]

Just three very brief questions. First of all, your relationship with Tony Blair—I'm struck, in your last question, that you seem to share with him a genuine passion for ideas and that politics matter. How would you describe your relationship with Blair?

The President. I would say, first of all, it's a relationship forged by fire. We share—as you can tell, I have this idealistic streak, and so does Blair. But we also understand that this idealism is a practical response to the world. See, this is an—he understands, like I understand, this is an ideological struggle. These acts are not isolated acts of lawlessness. We're in a war.

A lot of people hope this wasn't the war—you know, just kind of dismiss it as, oh, there's some irritated guys, you know, just kind of making some moves. We viewed it as an ideological struggle that requires response through good intelligence, sometimes military, obviously, sometimes law enforcement, all aiming to dismantle and protect our people—dismantle the cells and protect our people, but that ultimately freedom has to defeat the ideology of hate.

Mr. Temko. Was Tony Blair your poodle, to use the—

The President. You know, look, this is the convenient—one of the great things about Western press is that they oftentimes retreat to the convenient rather than trying to, you know, probe the depths of a relationship or the depths of somebody's feelings or the basis of philosophy. And so it's convenient. It's convenient to say, you know, “war monger,” “religious zealot,” “poodle,” I mean, these are just words that people love to toss around foolishly.

President's Legacy

Mr. Temko. How do you think and how do you hope that you and Blair—but particularly yourself—how would you hope that the achievement—what's your greatest achievement or your greatest pride as President? And what's your greatest regret?

The President. Well, first of all, just so you know, I'm not going to be around to see

it. There's no such thing as objective short-term history. It takes a while for history to have its—you know, to be able to have enough time to look back to see why decisions were made and what their consequences were.

So, you know, I'd hope it'd be somebody who would use the influence of the United States to help transform societies by working on disease and hunger and freedom. And the liberation of 50 million people from the clutches of barbaric regimes is noteworthy, at the minimum.

President's Beliefs

Mr. Temko. Does this job take its toll on you? I mean, can you—

The President. My spirits are pretty high. I mean, I'm—you got to believe, you know? You got to have a set of beliefs that are the foundation for your very being. Otherwise these currents and tides and 24-hour news and politics will kind of leave you adrift. And I tell people that when I get home, I'm going to look in that mirror and say, I didn't sacrifice my core beliefs to satisfy critics or satisfy pundits or, you know—

President's Future

Mr. Temko. And what next—a foundation, a book?

The President. Yes, I'm going to think about that, yes—writing a book. I'm going to build a Presidential library with a freedom institute at SMU—Southern Methodist University—all aimed at promoting the universal values that need to be defended. I'm very worried about isolationism and protectionism. The world has gone through these “isms” before. And you watch and see, the protectionist debate is mounting in the United States; it's mounting in Europe, certainly. It was much easier to kind of blame the economic woes on external forces, and therefore, the response would be, okay, let's quit trade, let's make sure our jobs aren't going elsewhere, and that's—some of those concerns are legitimate.

On the other hand, it is a forerunner of isolationism, and, you know, I remind people that we've been through a period of isolationism and protectionism right before World War II. And, by the way, curiously

enough, at that period of time, there was nativism as well. And I find it interesting that the immigration debate is now pretty pronounced around. And so I'm going to set up a—this isn't, like, you know, a headquarters for the Republican Party.

And, by the way, just so you know, the foreign policy I've just outlined for you is—you know, it's not a hundred percent received amongst conservative thinkers in the United States either.

NBC's "The West Wing"

Mr. Temko. Yes, I know, yes. Do we have 90 seconds?

Ms. Perino. Yes.

Mr. Temko. Okay, so—

Ms. Perino. I would say 90 seconds.

Mr. Temko. Ninety seconds, okay. Just one very quick—this is going to seem slightly flippant, but you're going to the greatest fan club of The West Wing television show in the world on Sunday. Since you're the only person who can review that program from experience—

The President. I've never watched it.

Mr. Temko. You're kidding. Why not?

The President. Because I don't watch network TV. I read.

Mr. Temko. You read. Okay. And then the—

The President. I seriously don't watch TV. You know, I watch sports, but I'd much rather read books. And I do. I read a lot. I may even read yours. [*Laughter*]

Progress in Iraq

Mr. Temko. And then the last question—

The President. But I won't be able to find it because it's written by—so-called written by the other guy. [*Laughter*]

Q. Certainly true. Last question, which comes back to Iraq again. Gordon Brown—and I thought your question on the pain you feel personally was quite clear and absolutely strong. Gordon Brown a couple weeks ago phoned a voter who was upset about Iraq, and apologized on behalf of the Government, not for the war, which he still thinks was the right thing, but for the kind of suffering of the Iraqi people. Do you think that's a wise thing to do?

The President. I think the Iraqi people—yes, some have suffered, no question. But they're living in a free society. Everybody is going to have to handle their own internal business the way they want to. I'm not going to second-guess one way or the other. But my view is, is that when you talk to Iraqis, they're thrilled with the idea of living in a free society. Do they like the fact that violence is still there? No. But every society reaches a level of violence that's tolerable.

And has that reached Iraq? I don't know yet. But I do know life is improving. I do know they live under a Government that they helped elect, or they elected. And there's still a lot of work to be done, don't get me wrong, but—and, you know, the thing that people ought to focus on is the courage of the Iraqis. They put up with a lot of violence, Muslims killing Muslims. But first of all, there have been some accidents, but nobody can claim that the United States or Great Britain are intentionally killing innocent people. We're not. As a matter of fact, warfare has changed a lot.

Mr. Temko. But the existence of the war has led to the deaths of innocent people, and the fact is—

The President. It has, but before the war, hundreds of thousands were discovered in mass graves.

Freedom Agenda

Mr. Temko. So on balance, you have—

The President. Freedom trumps tyranny every time. And it's hard for people to see that. It's hard for people sitting afar to say, "Isn't that beautiful, somebody lives in a free society?" And my point is, is that I think it's important for those of us who do live in free societies to understand that others want to live in free societies. And it takes time and sacrifice and effort to get that done. But one of the lessons of history is, is free societies yield of peace.

I remind people, 60 years ago isn't all that long. And to say that Europe would be whole, free, and at peace prior to the end of World War II would have been, you know, you would have been viewed as a hopeless idealist. Well, I'm making the point that I—when I gave my speech at the Knesset, if you read what I said, here's what 60 years from now

the world can look like, and I believe will look like, unless we all retreat. It's not worth it, you know. And my point is, it's working.

Mr. Temko. Good. Thank you very much. And thank you for taking so much time.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 9:45 a.m. at the Villa Taverna. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq; Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and President Dmitriy A. Medvedev of Russia; King Abdallah bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia; President Mahmud Ahmadi-nejad of Iran; Chairman Kim Jong Il of North Korea; and Prime Minister Gordon Brown of the United Kingdom. This transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 15. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks to Reporters in Paris

June 15, 2008

Midwest Flooding/Father's Day

Laura and I had the joy of worshiping here in Paris.

My thoughts and prayers go out to those who are suffering from the floods in our country. I know there's a lot of people hurting right now, and I hope they're able to find some strength in knowing that there is love from a higher being.

I also want to wish all the fathers in America happy Father's Day. So Dad, if you're listening, happy Father's Day.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:13 p.m. at the American Cathedral of the Holy Trinity.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Gordon Brown of the United Kingdom in London, England

June 16, 2008

Prime Minister Brown. I'm delighted to welcome President Bush and the First Lady back to London. And his visit today is an opportunity to celebrate the historic partnership of shared purpose that unites the United Kingdom and the United States of America. We both share a great love of history and about how we have forged the ideas of de-

mocracy and liberty over centuries. And the special partnership that President Bush and I both agree today is a partnership not just of governments but of peoples, is driven forward not simply by mutual interests but by our shared values. Both countries founded upon liberty, our histories forged through democracy. Our shared values expressed by a commitment to opportunity for all, putting into practice what Churchill called the joint inheritance of the English-speaking world.

So let me thank President Bush for being a true friend of Britain and for the importance he attaches to enhancing our transatlantic partnership, from the work we do in Afghanistan and Iraq to every part of the world. And let me thank him for the steadfastness and the resolution that he has shown in rooting out terrorism in all parts of the world; in working for a Middle East peace settlement; in bringing hope to Africa; in working for a free trade world where, in spite of today's current difficulties with oil and food prices, there is and should be a wider and deeper prosperity in future for all.

Now, in our substantive and wide-ranging talks last night and this morning, the President and I have discussed a number of central issues. We have discussed Iran's nuclear ambitions. We have discussed Iraq and Afghanistan, where our forces are working side by side. We have discussed the criminal cabal that now threatens to make a mockery of free and fair elections in Zimbabwe. We have discussed what we can do about democracy in Burma.

We have resolved, first of all, as we did some years ago, that it is in the British national interest to confront the Taliban in Afghanistan, or Afghanistan would come to us. And so today Britain will announce additional troops for Afghanistan, bringing our numbers in Afghanistan to the highest level. And let me thank our troops and the troops of America and 42 other countries who are in Afghanistan as I thank our forces in Iraq for their courage and for their professionalism. And let me acknowledge the bravery of the five members of the 2d Paratroop Regiment, British men who have in the last few days sacrificed their lives for freedom.

Eighteen months ago, the Taliban boasted that they and their paid foreign fighters

would drive our forces out of southern Helmand. Now most agree that security is on the way to being transformed. Last week in Paris, a total of 80 countries pledged 20 billions, with nearly a billion from the United Kingdom, to support the Afghan National Development Strategy.

Our aim is to generate progress where the fourth poorest country in the world, laid low by decades of conflict, can as a democracy enjoy peaceful social and economic development, with our forces, over time, moving from a direct combat role to train and support Afghanistan's own Army and police.

In Iraq, there is still work to be done, and Britain is playing and will continue to play its part. Where we have over 4,000 troops in Basra, we will continue the shared policy of Iraqis taking more control over their own affairs, moving from combat to overwatch in Basra. Our policy is showing success as we continue the task we have set ourselves: strong and well-trained Iraqi forces capable of securing the peace; firm commitments to new local government elections soon; and speeding up the social and economic development of Iraq so that people have a stake in the future.

Our message today to the Iranian people is that you do not have to choose the path of confrontation. The latest rounds of talks with the Iranians took place over the weekend. Once again, we put our enhanced offer on the table, including political and economic partnership and help with nuclear technology for civilian use. We await the Iranian response, and we'll do everything possible to maintain the dialog. But we are also clear that if Iran continues to ignore united resolutions, to ignore our offers of partnership, we have no choice but to intensify sanctions. And so today Britain will urge Europe and Europe will agree to take further sanctions against Iran.

First of all, we will take action today that will freeze the overseas assets of the biggest bank in Iran, the Bank Melli.

And second, action will start today for a new phase of sanctions on oil and gas. And I will repeat that we will take any necessary actions so that Iran is aware of the choice it has to make: to start to play its part as

a full and respected member of the international community or face further isolation.

We discussed the deteriorating situation in Zimbabwe. In recent weeks, under Robert Mugabe's increasingly desperate and criminal regime, Zimbabwe has seen 53 killings, 2,000 beatings, the displacement of 30,000 people, the arrest and detention of opposition leaders, including Morgan Tsvangirai, and this is wholly unacceptable. Mugabe must not be allowed to steal the election that is now less than 2 weeks away. And that is why we call for Zimbabwe to accept a United Nations human rights envoy to visit Zimbabwe now and to accept the international monitors from all parts of the world who are available to ensure that this is a free and fair election.

We agreed that at the G-8 in Japan, the United Kingdom and the U.S.A. would propose a plan to recruit and train health workers for the poorest countries. To save the lives of mothers who needlessly die in childbirth, we are developing proposals to tackle the diseases that bring needless death and suffering, including malaria, AIDS, and neglected tropical diseases. And we agreed also to work together to ensure G-8 commitment to scale up funding on education and get the remaining 72 million children who do not go to school today into school.

The world oil prices trebled in recent months. In the right of this, I welcome Saudi Arabia's initiative to host a producer-consumer summit in Jeddah on the 22d of June. And we will all work together to ensure an enhanced dialog between oil producers and consumers.

And the President and I also agreed that over the next few weeks, we need to press hard to achieve a world trade deal. Both of us are ensured that this could unlock new opportunities for the world economy. It would also help reduce high global food prices.

Finally, we go from here to Northern Ireland. The United States has played an essential role in securing peace in Northern Ireland and helping the people of Northern Ireland move away from conflict to, potentially, a new prosperity. And I want to thank President Bush for his personal efforts to speed up the Northern Ireland peace process and

to make sure that there is investment in Northern Ireland, not just from the rest of the United Kingdom but from America.

And I thank him for his work to ensure that the recent investment conference in Northern Ireland was a huge success. And there will be further announcements of jobs in Northern Ireland today. America has played a huge role in this peace process, and President Bush is to be thanked by all the people of the United Kingdom for what he has done.

So, Mr. President, I thank you again for your friendship, for your leadership, for your commitment to us continuing to work together to solve the challenges facing the world. I'm pleased you're here. I value the gains we've made together, and I look forward to our continued friendship.

President Bush. Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister. And I thank you very much for your friendship. Thank you for your hospitality. This is—this has been a good trip. By the way, some are speculating this is my last trip. Let them speculate. Who knows? [*Laughter*] But it's been a—we had a great dinner last night. I want to thank you and Sarah. And thanks for calling together the historians. It's a—you know, Great Britain has produced great historians. And I am—I love reading a lot of their works, and it was so kind of you to have them over. And the food was good too. [*Laughter*]

And also, we had a great visit yesterday. Laura and I went to see Her Majesty the Queen. And I thank her for her hospitality. And then yesterday at the Embassy, thanks to our Ambassador, I had the opportunity to speak to some of your soldiers. And I was—listened to their stories of courage and bravery and sacrifice, and it was so—really touching. And I really appreciate the British people supporting the people who wear the uniform. And I am looking forward to going to Northern Ireland this evening. You've taken the lead. We're just pleased to help. And hopefully this visit will help keep the process moving.

First thing about Gordon Brown, he's tough on terror. And I appreciate it, and so should the people of Great Britain and the world. He fully understands that while some want to say that the terrorist threat is gone

or there's nothing to worry about, it is something to worry about. And he was—you were tested early in your Prime Ministership. You dealt with the challenge. And I appreciate your continued focus and your understanding that we've got to work together to protect our people and your understanding that freedom is transformative, and the ultimate way to succeed against these extremists who use murder as a way to achieve their political objectives is to marginalize them through the advance of liberty.

And that's what we're doing in places like Afghanistan and Iraq. And it is tough work. It's hard to take a society that had been ravished by brutality and convince people to take the risk necessary to work for civil society and freedom for women and to educate their children. But I believe it's necessary work for the sake of peace and for our security. And I believe it's in the moral interests of comfortable nations to help others realize the blessings of liberty. Oh, for some that sounds like hopeless idealism. For those of us involved with making public policy necessary to protect our people, it is the only realistic way to guarantee the peace for our people.

And so you've been strong on Afghanistan and Iraq, and I appreciate it. But more importantly, the people of Afghanistan and Iraq appreciate it. The march to democracy is never smooth. We've had our own history. America is viewed as a great democracy. Just remember, many of our citizens were enslaved for a long period of time before we finally got it right.

But it's in our interests to help these folks. It's in our interests little girls go to school in Afghanistan. It's in our interests that there be free elections in Iraq. And it's in our interests that we help these governments survive. And it's taken sacrifice from our people; I understand that. The fundamental question history is going to look back on is, did we understand the duty that we've been called to do to protect ourselves and help others? And this Prime Minister has understood the duty.

No, I know there's a lot of discussion here in the British press about, well, you know, is there going to be enough troops or not enough troops and all that business. Is he

trying to distance this, that, and the other? It's just typical. But I just want to remind you that he has left more troops in Iraq than initially anticipated. And, like me—we'll be making our decisions based upon the conditions on the ground, the recommendation of our commanders, without an artificial timetable set by politics.

I thank you for your troop announcement today in Afghanistan as well. Then you issued a strong statement on Iran. It was a clear statement, and it was a strong statement, and it was a necessary statement, because the free world has an obligation to work together in concert to prevent the Iranians from having the know-how to develop a nuclear weapon. And now is the time to work together to get it done, and I appreciate your statement.

Hopefully the Iranian leadership will take a different position than the one they've taken in the past, which is basically, who cares what the free world says; we're going to—we'll go our own way. And now has faced—they face serious isolation, and the people who are suffering are the Iranian people. We have no qualms with the Iranian people. As a matter of fact, we want the Iranian people to thrive. It's in our interests that there be a hopeful society. It's their Government who has denied them their rightful place in the world.

And so I want to thank you very much for working hard to, you know, to help keep this coalition together to provide pressure necessary so we can solve the problem diplomatically. That's my first choice. Iranians must understand all options are on the table, however.

Thank you for your strong words on Zimbabwe. And I—you know, you obviously are emotional on the subject. And I don't blame you, because the people of Zimbabwe have suffered under Mugabe leadership. And we will work with you to ensure these good folks have free and fair elections to the extent—best extent possible, which obviously Mr. Mugabe does not want to have.

We talked about Darfur. We talked about Burma. I strongly support your health care worker initiative. I'm looking forward to going to the G-8 to articulate that. And we expect the people of the G-8—the leaders of the G-8 countries to fulfill their obliga-

tions, because last year we met, and we had a—we discussed a lot of issues, including HIV/AIDS and malaria on the continent of Africa. And they all came forth and said, "We'll match the United States." Except most nations haven't matched the United States to date except for Great Britain. You know, they haven't done their part in matching the United States.

And so my message at the G-8 is: Looking forward to working with you; thanks for coming to the meeting; just remember, there are people needlessly dying on the continent of Africa today. And we expect you to be more than pledge-makers; we expect you to be checkwriters for humanitarian reasons.

We did talk about energy and Doha. I'm concerned about Doha. I'm concerned that while we're making some progress on the agricultural side, that nations such as Brazil and India and China are not making corresponding openings on manufacturing and service—and the service sector on their part. And in order to have a successful round, which I believe is essential, and so does Gordon—to fight off protectionism and to help poor nations develop, that now is the time to get a Doha round completed. And in order to do so, there has to be more movement on the manufacturing and service sector so there can be a fair and equitable deal.

Finally, we talked about global climate change. And I briefed Gordon on our strategy for the major economies meeting to hopefully reach an international goal for 2050 that will have intermediate strategies that are binding on each nation within the U.N. framework. And the reason why I believe this is the right approach to take—that unless China and India are a part of a binding international agreement—and the United States—then we will not have effective policy in dealing with climate change. It might make us all feel good, but the results won't be satisfactory. And so hopefully in Seoul, South Korea, coming up, there will be a major economy meeting agreement on a long-term goal with binding commitments.

Mr. Prime Minister, all in all, it's been a great meeting. Thank you for the conversation, and thank you for your friendship.

Prime Minister Brown. Thank you. Questions.

**British and U.S. Troop Levels in Iraq/
Afghanistan**

Q. Nick Robinson, BBC News.

President Bush. Who? Can you say his name again, please? [Laughter]

Q. Good to have you here.

President Bush. Yes. Missed the hat. [Laughter]

Q. Prime Minister, isn't it time to withdraw British troops from Iraq in order to send them where the military really needs them, to Afghanistan, or are you too worried about his reaction if you do?

Mr. President, are you prepared—

President Bush. We miss you, Nick. We miss you, buddy.

Q. Are you prepared to see British troops withdrawn from Iraq while you're still in office, or are you concerned about the symbolic significance of that?

Prime Minister Brown. Can I just say that in Iraq, there is a job to be done, and we will continue to do the job. And there's going to be no artificial timetable. And the reason is that we are making progress—making progress in the Iraqis themselves being trained up to run their own armed forces and, of course, to be the police men and women in their areas. And we're making progress also because we hope local government elections will happen later this year. We hope to return the airport that we are responsible for in Basra to civilian use as well. And most of all, in the next stage, we want to see the economic and social development of Basra and the southern part of Iraq proceed so that people have a stake in the future.

So, yes, we are moving from what we call combat to overwatch, and that's been announced many months ago. Yes, as a result of what happened in Basra a few months ago, we have kept higher the level of troops that are necessary, but, yes, also, we have a job that's still to be done. And that job is to train up the forces; that job is to speed up economic and social development; and that job is to have local government elections so that Iraqis can take control of their own democracy. And I'm determined that we continue to do that job.

And that will happen not at the cost of lesser troops for Afghanistan, but with more troops going to Afghanistan. The Defense

Secretary will announce later this afternoon that we will send more troops to Afghanistan. The reason is that we want to help the Afghans train up their own Army and their own police forces. And the reason is, we want to have better equipment in Iraq—in Afghanistan in future. And therefore, there's going to be a reconfiguration of our troops. There will be some coming out and some more going in, and that—an overall increase in the numbers so that we will have the highest level of troops in Afghanistan. You cannot trade numbers between the two countries.

There is a job to do in Iraq, and I've described it. And there is a job to do in Afghanistan, and we will continue to do it. And the fact that 43 countries are helping us in Afghanistan and 80 countries are supporting the economic and social development of Afghanistan shows how in this country, which is one of the poorest in the world, we are trying to make progress more quickly. So the announcement will come later today from the Defense Secretary.

President Bush. We're withdrawing troops. We anticipate the 30,000 surge troops will be coming home by July—more or less 30,000. And so the plan is, bring them home based upon success. That's what we expect the British Prime Minister to do. That's what I'm doing—that as the Iraqis are trained up, as they're taking more responsibility, as the security situations decline, as the economy is improved, as political reconciliation is taking place, we can bring more troops home. That's the whole purpose of the strategy. And so, give the Iraqis more responsibility. Let them take more—be in more charge of their own security and their own Government, and that's what's happening.

And so, yes, I mean—look, the key thing for me is that I have—you know, is that Gordon shares with me his plans. He listens to—and he talks to his commanders, and he picks up the phone and says, “Here's what we're thinking.” So there's no surprises. And as I said yesterday on TV here, I have no problem with how Gordon Brown is dealing with Iraq. He's been a good partner and—but, as I told you, we're bringing ours home too.

War on Terror in Afghanistan/Oil Supply

Q. Mr. President, I'd like to ask you about recent events along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. Do you back President Karzai when he says he may send his troops into Pakistan to take care of some of the militants who are launching attacks on his territory? And do you think that the agreements that the new Government of Pakistan is pursuing with some of the militant tribes in that area amount to the sort of appeasement that you talked about in your speech last month?

And, Mr. Prime Minister, I'd like to ask you about the meeting—upcoming meeting in Saudi Arabia. What do you expect to come out of that meeting? And do you think it would be helpful if your friend there, standing there, Mr. Bush, were to see you in Jeddah at that meeting?

President Bush. Our strategy is to deny safe haven to extremists who would do harm to innocent people. And that's the strategy of Afghanistan. It needs to be the strategy of Pakistan. It's in all our interests to prevent those who murder innocent people to achieve political objectives to gain safe haven.

And so we'd look forward to working—I mean, one thing that can happen is, there can be, you know, more dialog between the Pak Government and the Afghan Government. Now, there was—in the past, they had a jirga amongst tribal leaders in the region on both—from both sides of the border that made a difference. And I think that would be a good idea to restart the jirga process.

I know there needs to be dialog between the intel services between the respective countries. And I know there needs to be better cooperation, and there needs to be trilateral cooperation on the border—trilateral being Pak, Afghan, and coalition border patrols—to prevent people from coming back and forth across the border.

And there's a lot of common ground. I repeat: It is in no one's interest that extremists have a safe haven from which to operate. And I'm, you know—I mean—and obviously, it's a testy situation there. And if I'm the President of a country and people are coming from one country to another—allegedly coming from one country to another—to kill innocent civilians on my side, I'd be concerned

about it. But we can help. We can help calm the situation down and develop a strategy that will prevent these extremists from, you know, from developing safe haven and having freedom of movement.

Prime Minister Brown. Can I say, I'm traveling to Jeddah next Sunday at the invitation of the King of Saudi Arabia. And I want a long-term dialog, and this is part of a process, not an event, between oil producers and oil consumers. I think there is a view developing that the price of oil is increasingly dependent not just on today's demand and supply factors but on what people perceive as demand outstripping supply next year, in the medium term, and in the long term.

And I want to tell the King of Saudi Arabia and others who are there that the world will build more nuclear power. And I have suggested that on present trends, it would be about 1,000 nuclear power stations over the next 30 years. The world will increase its use of renewables. The world will increase its use of coal. It will lessen its dependence on oil, and that the world is determined to make a more efficient use of oil.

And I think this dialog between producers and consumers is absolutely essential. President Bush has just been in Saudi Arabia. I have not been there recently. I want to go and talk to the King and talk to others there about what I believe should be a process whereby we understand what are the pressures on demand in future years, as well as we understand the pressures on supply. And I believe that that long-term debate about the future can have an effect on today's markets.

Now, that's what the debate is about. And that is part of a process that I hope will continue, if necessary, with a meeting in London later and with further meetings, so that there is a genuine dialog between producers and consumers about what is the most worrying situation in the world at the moment, and that is the trebling of the price of oil.

President's Decisionmaking/Freedom Agenda/Lisbon Treaty

Q. Mr. President, in his last major speech, Tony Blair said on Iraq, "Hand on heart, I did what I thought was right. But if I got it wrong, I'm sorry." Is it possible you got

it wrong? Would you share, at this point, those slightly more reflective sentiments? And in particular, should you, in retrospect, perhaps have concentrated a little more on Afghanistan?

And could I ask the Prime Minister, is the Lisbon Treaty dead in the water now? And if so, what happens next for Europe?

President Bush. History will judge the tactics. History will judge whether or not, you know, more troops were needed earlier, troops could have been positioned here better or not. Removing Saddam Hussein was not wrong. It was the right thing to do. It was the right thing to do for our security, right thing to do for peace, and the right thing to do for 25 million Iraqis.

And now the fundamental question is, will we have the willpower and the patience to help the Iraqis develop a democracy in the heart of the Middle East? It's a democracy that's not going to look like America. It's not going to look like Great Britain. But it's a democracy that will have government responsive to the people. People say, "Was that worth it? Is it necessary?" Absolutely, it's necessary, if you believe we're in an ideological war being—the theaters of which right now—the most notable theaters are Afghanistan and Iraq.

The strategic implications of a free Iraq are significant for our future. For example, a free Iraq will make it easier to deal with the Iranian issue. A free Iraq will send a clear signal to reformers and dissidents, would-be journalists throughout the Middle East that a free society is available for you as well. And the question facing the Western World is, will we fall prey to the argument that stability is more important than forms of government, that what appears to be stable and peaceful—is that more important than how people live their lives, what kind of government? You just heard the Prime Minister speak eloquently about Zimbabwe. The lesson there is, forms of government matter.

Freedom has had a transformative effect in Europe, in the Far East. And the fundamental question is, will we work to see it have a transformative effect in the Middle East? Now, there are many doubters. I understand that, because there is some who say that perhaps freedom is not universal. Maybe

it's only Western people that can self-govern. Maybe it's only, you know, white-guy Methodists who are capable of self-government. I reject that notion. I think that's the ultimate form of political elitism, and I believe an accurate reading of history says that freedom can bring peace we want. And it'll bring peace to the Middle East, unless of course we become isolationist, unless of course we lose our confidence, unless of course we quit.

And so, yes, I'm sure there's—people will say, they could have done things better here and there. But I'm absolutely confident that the decision to remove Saddam Hussein was the right decision.

Prime Minister Brown. And can I just emphasize, the passion for freedom, I think, is a universal value, and I believe that Iraq is a democracy today because of the action that we have taken. And our next task is to make sure that all Iraqis feel that they have an economic stake as well as a democratic stake in the future of the country. And that's why the work continues.

On Europe, I'll meet Brian Cowen, the *Taoiseach* of Ireland, when I'm in Belfast later today. The legal position on the European treaty is very clear, that all 27 members must sign and, therefore, ratify the treaty before it comes into force. It is for each member to decide its own process for doing so. And we will continue our process of debating this in the House of Lords and then royal assent during the course of this week.

I think a short period of reflection is necessary for the Irish to put forward their proposals about how they will deal with this, and we look forward to the Irish coming to the European Council on Thursday with a view of what should be done. I believe that when David Miliband makes a statement to the House this afternoon following a meeting of the European foreign ministers, he will be able to say that all the European Union members believe that Ireland should be given this time to reflect on what they need to do and then make their proposals about how the situation can be resolved.

Iran/North Korea/Six-Party Talks

Q. Good morning, Mr. President, Prime Minister. I'd like to ask you both about Iran. President Bush, you've talked about it at

every stop. A similar process, it seems, that is deterring North Korea from its nuclear ambitions has basically allowed North Korea to make progress toward nuclear weapons. At what point are you willing to draw a line here with Iran, and isn't Iran seemingly learning a lesson from the North Korea experience?

President Bush. Ed [Ed Chen, Bloomberg News], I just strongly disagree with your premise that the six-party talks has encouraged Iran to develop nuclear weapons. I don't know why you have even come to that conclusion because the facts are, the six-party talks is the only way to send a message to the North Koreans that the world isn't going to tolerate them having a weapon.

I mean, in other words, they are—we'll see what they disclose, but we hopefully are in the process of disabling and dismantling their plutonium manufacturing. We're hopefully in the process of getting them to disclose what they have manufactured and eventually turning it over. We're hopefully in the process of disclosing their proliferation activities, and it's a six-party process. I mean, the only way, in my judgment, to diplomatically solve these kinds of problems with nations like Iran and North Korea, nontransparent nations, is through a multilateral process where there's more than one nation sending the same message to the leaders of these respective countries.

And so I disagree with your premise. As a matter of fact, the Iranians must understand that when we come together and speak with one voice, we're serious. That's why the Prime Minister's statement was so powerful, and that's the lesson that the North Koreans are hearing. And so it's—I said the other day that, you know, one of the things that I will leave behind is a multilateralism to deal with tyrants, so problems can be solved diplomatically.

And the difficulty, of course, is that sometimes economics and money trumps national security interests. So you go around asking nations—by the way, it's not a problem for Great Britain—so you say to your partners, don't sell goods; you know, let's send a focused message, all aiming to create the conditions so that somebody rational shows up. In other words, people hopefully are sick of

isolation in their respective countries, and they show up and say, we're tired of this; there's a better way forward.

And in order for that to be effective, Ed, there has to be more than one voice. So if I were the North Koreans and I were looking at Iran, or the Iranians looking at North Korea, I'd say, uh-oh, there are coalitions coming together that are bound tightly—more tightly than ever in order to send us a focused message.

And, you know, let me just say one thing about the Iranian demand for civilian nuclear power. It's a justifiable demand. You just heard the Prime Minister talk about the spread of civilian nuclear power, which I support—starting in my own country, by the way. We need to be building civilian nuclear powerplants.

And so when the Iranians say, "We have a sovereign right to have one," the answer is, you bet. You have a sovereign right; absolutely. But you don't have the trust of those of us who have watched you carefully when it comes to enriching uranium because you have declared that you want to destroy democracies in the neighborhood, for example. Therefore—and this is the Russian proposal, by the way—therefore, we'll provide fuel for you, and we'll collect the fuel after you've used it so you can have your nuclear—civilian nuclear power, which undermines what the Iranians are saying, and that is, we must enrich in order to have civilian nuclear power. You don't need to enrich to have civilian nuclear power. The Russian proposal is what we support. This proposal wouldn't have happened had there not been a multilateral process.

And so what these nations need to see is, we're serious about solving these problems. And the United States spends a lot of time working with our partners to get them solved.

Thank you very much.

Prime Minister Brown. Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11 a.m. in the Locarno Treaty Room of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Sarah Brown, wife of Prime Minister Brown; Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom; and President Robert

Mugabe of Zimbabwe. Prime Minister Brown referred to Secretary of State for Defense Desmond Browne and Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs David Miliband of the United Kingdom; King Abdallah bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia; and Prime Minister Brian Cowen of Ireland. Reporters referred to President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan; and former Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom.

**Remarks Following a Meeting With
First Minister Peter Robinson and
Deputy First Minister Martin
McGuinness of Northern Ireland in
Belfast, Northern Ireland**

June 16, 2008

President Bush. Mr. First Minister, Mr. Deputy Minister, thank you for your hospitality. I'm excited to be here in Northern Ireland. And one of the reasons why is because I'm impressed by the progress that is being made toward peace and reconciliation. As a matter of fact, the world is impressed by the progress being made toward peace and reconciliation. And that obviously takes a commitment by leadership. And I want to thank you all for giving me time to hear your thoughts and to visit with you.

We talked about a lot of issues. We talked about the devolution of police and justice. We talked about the successful investment conference that took place here. And I want to thank my fellow citizens for coming, and I want to thank those from around the world who are paying attention to Northern Ireland. The truth of the matter is this, is, you know, people who have come here and looked at the Government, looked at the situation and gotten to know the people realize this is a good place to invest. And ultimately, investment is going to help Northern Ireland realize its full potential.

And then finally, I was able to thank the leaders for their work in helping others reconcile their differences. The interesting thing about the progress being made here in Northern Ireland is that it's attracted the attention of societies around the world that wonder whether reconciliation is possible for them. And Martin was telling me about his talks with some of the Iraqi leaders, about his—sharing his stories about how folks can

reconcile. Northern Ireland is a success story. Obviously there's more work to be done, but the progress made to date has been unimaginable 10 years ago.

And I want to congratulate you, thank you for serving your communities. And I wish you all the very best as you continue your journey.

First Minister Robinson. Thank you very much, indeed. Can I say that I'm delighted that President Bush, of his own choice, has recognized that Belfast is one of the major cities of Europe and has included it in this tour. It is a personal commitment that the President has shown towards Northern Ireland. And we are really grateful, not just for him coming today but for the work that has been done by the President and his ambassadors over the previous years, and particularly the work that has been done most recently for the investment conference.

The endorsement of the President for our investment conference goes a long way, and it lets people throughout the world know that Northern Ireland truly is open for business.

Deputy First Minister McGuinness. Can I say, just to echo what Peter has said, that this is an opportunity for us to express our thanks and appreciation for the tremendous work that has been done, in terms of the United States of America, and what is now undoubtedly one of the most successful peace processes in the world today. Beginning with the work of President Clinton, the contribution of Senator George Mitchell, the envoys that were sent by President Bush, such as Richard Haass and Mitchell Reiss and now Paula Dobriansky, all of whom have played a very important role in contributing to our process, which I do believe is, as the President has identified, a role model for how other conflicts can be resolved in other parts of the world.

And really we're having a tremendous amount of interest in our work. We've had two delegations of Iraqi Parliamentarians to Parliament Buildings here in Belfast, just a few yards up the road. And there is no doubt whatsoever that other places that have suffered from conflict are anxious to learn from our experiences. We don't believe that we have got all of the answers, but what we can

certainly do is outlay our experiences for others to consider.

We also are very appreciative of the width of support that has been put behind the economic investment conference by the President and by Paula Dobriansky as Ambassador. And we're very hopeful in the time ahead. And, in fact, I think we're confident that jobs, much needed jobs, will flow from that. And I think providing good jobs, a decent standard of living, facing up to the economic difficulties that are—people have to endure is a very important part of the workload which Peter and I, as First and Deputy First Minister, need to take forward in the time ahead.

President Bush. Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:14 p.m. at Stormont Castle. In his remarks, Deputy First Minister McGuinness referred to former Senator George J. Mitchell; former Special Envoys for Northern Ireland Richard N. Haass and Mitchell B. Reiss; and Ambassador Paula J. Dobriansky, the President's Special Envoy to Northern Ireland.

Remarks Following a Briefing on Flooding in the Midwest

June 17, 2008

I've just assembled my—many people in my domestic policy team to discuss the current flooding in the Midwest. First, our hearts and thoughts go to those who lost life. And of course, we're concerned about those whose—who've lost their homes or lost their businesses.

I've been briefed by Secretary Chertoff and Secretary Schafer and Director Paulison about the response. First task at hand is to deal with the flood waters, to anticipate where the flooding may next occur, and to work with the State and local authorities to deal with the response.

For example, in the case of Iowa, one of the issues was the need for fresh drinking water—or drinking water, and so Director Paulison informed me that we've provided about 2 million liters of drinking water. When I was overseas, I spoke to the Governor, and he said, "Listen, I—the Federal—we need Federal help on drinking water."

So I sent the word to David, and he responded well.

My only point to you is, is that we're in constant contact with people on the ground to help make sure that we save lives. Now that the water is beginning to recede, the question is, how do we help with the recovery? And Secretary Chertoff briefed me on plans, particularly when it comes to housing. A lot of people are going to be wondering, is there short-term help for housing? And there is, and we'll provide that help.

And secondly, what's going to happen in the long term to the homes? And so Michael's going to set up a housing task force, similar to the kind we set up in California for the wildfires, to work with State and local authorities to have an orderly strategy to help people get back in their homes.

I fully understand people are upset when they lose their home. A person's home is their most valued possession. And we want to work with State and local folks to have a clear strategy to help people find—get back into a place they—that—where they can live.

Secondly, we're worried about farmers and ranchers. The country that's being affected by these floods has got a lot of farm country, a lot of people raising livestock. And the Secretary of Agriculture has briefed me on the conditions—and we're still assessing how widespread the damage is on the farmlands—and assures me that his team's in place to help farmers and ranchers with the Federal aid available.

And finally, Director Nussle's here from the Budget Office. We've got what we called a Disaster Relief Fund. There's enough money in that fund to take care of this disaster, but what we're concerned about is future disasters this year. And therefore, we're going to work with the Congress—Jim Nussle is going to go up to work with Congress to get enough money in the upcoming supplemental to make sure that fund is—has got enough money to deal with a potential disaster—another disaster this year.

Congress doesn't need to worry about working with the White House on this, because we think the supplemental is the way to go. What they do need to worry about is making sure that there is enough, but not

too much, money in the fund, so we can say we have done our job.

I want to thank the members of my administration for working hard on this issue. I want to thank the Governors in the affected States for being so compassionate in caring for their citizens. I want to thank the folks at the local level for loving a neighbor like they'd like to be loved themselves.

This Thursday, I'm going to take our team down there to meet with the folks in Iowa. And I, unfortunately, have been to too many disasters as President. But one thing I've always learned is that the American citizen can overcome these disasters. And life, while it may seem dim at this point in time, can always be better because of the resiliency and care of our citizens.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:21 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Agriculture Edward T. Schafer; R. David Paulison, Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency; Gov. Chet Culver of Iowa; and James A. Nussle, Director, Office of Management and Budget.

Remarks Following a Briefing on the Security Situation in Afghanistan

June 17, 2008

The President. It's been my privilege to have served with two really fine Americans, General Dan McNeill and Maureen McNeill. I've gotten to know the General well. He's a tough, no-nonsense patriot who was our commander in Afghanistan. I want to thank you very much for the briefing you just gave me about the issues that we face, your optimism about success.

I was telling the Secretary and the General, I just—about my trip to Europe, where I was pleased with the strong commitments of our allies to helping us succeed in Afghanistan. They know that what happens in Afghanistan matters to their own internal security.

They fully understand as well that helping young girls go to school and helping moms raise their babies in a—you know, in a better environment, helping rebuild this society

after years of tyranny is in all our interests. And it's also a moral duty we have.

And so I'm pleased, Mr. Secretary, that your hard work in working with the allies is paying off.

And, General, I know you're moving on, but the country thanks you for what you did. The world is better off because of your service. I'm proud to have you here.

Gen. Dan K. McNeill. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Yes, sir. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:44 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Dan K. McNeill, USA, former Commander, NATO International Security Assistance Force, Afghanistan, and his wife, Maureen; and Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates.

Remarks at a Reception for Black Music Month

June 17, 2008

Thanks for coming. Please be seated. Thank you. Welcome to the White House. I really appreciate you coming to celebrate Black Music Month. Music has been a part of this house since its beginning. Some of our Presidents themselves were skilled musicians. Some were not. [Laughter] As a matter of fact, after the Temptations came here a couple of months ago, I was so inspired that I thought I would take up singing. [Laughter] Laura said, "You might just stick with practicing your speaking." [Laughter] So thanks for giving me a chance to do it today. And thanks for coming. We're going to have a pretty special day here at the White House.

I want to thank my friend Alphonso Jackson and Marcia. It's good to see you. Appreciate you being here.

Rod Paige, former Secretary of the Education, celebrating his 75th birthday today. Yes. You're looking good, Rodney.

Dr. Dorothy Height—honored you're here, Dr. Height. Proud to be with you. Roslyn Brock, vice chairman of the NAACP—Roslyn—yes, good to see you, Roslyn. Thanks for coming. Marc Morial, president and CEO of the National Urban League—proud to have you here, Marc, thanks for coming.

John Styll, president and CEO of the Gospel Music Association—thanks, John. Dr. Bobby Jones, television host—where are you, Bobby? There you are, Bobby. Dyana Williams, cofounder and president of the International Association of African American Music—Dyana, thank you for coming—and everybody else. [*Laughter*]

As we honor black music in America, our thoughts turn to one of its legends, Bo Diddley. Bo was one of the pioneers of rock and roll. And during his more than five decades as a singer, songwriter, and performer, he changed the face of music; he really did. We mourn his loss, yet we know this: that his memory will live on the songs and the joy he brought to millions, including a little fellow like me. So all of us here today send our thoughts and prayers to Bo Diddley's family.

Over the years, the White House has been home to many memorable events in black music. I suspect that 30 years from now, when a President is speaking, he's going to say, this is going to be one of the memorable events. In 1882, President Chester A. Arthur invited to the White House the first black choir ever to perform here, the Jubilee Singers from Fisk University in Tennessee. Of course, during those days they had trouble finding a place to stay. But they were welcomed warmly here at the White House, just like everybody here is welcomed warmly at the White House. Their music was so powerful that it moved President Arthur to tears.

In the ensuing decades, other Presidents followed this example, recognizing the contributions of black musicians when many other Americans would not. Benjamin Harrison welcomed the daughter of a former slave, an opera singer named Sisseretta Jones. President Franklin Roosevelt called on the talented Maria [Marian]^{*} Anderson to sing "Ave Maria" for the King and Queen of England.

In 1979, President Jimmy Carter welcomed the legendary Chuck Berry in his first official celebration of Black Music Month at the White House. Ever the performer, Chuck Berry changed the lyrics in one of his famous songs from "Oh Carol" to "Oh Amy,"

in honor of the little girl sitting on the White House lawn. The day's finale came when the entire audience rose to its feet, swaying and clapping to the gospel song "Jesus is the Answer."

For this year's Black Music Month, we return to the theme of gospel music. The gospel music tradition was born from great pain. Slaves sang spirituals to communicate with one another in the fields, and songs of faith helped black Americans endure the injustice of segregation. Today, gospel is more than an anchor for black culture and history; it's a source of inspiration for the whole Nation.

Gospel has influenced some of the legends of other forms of American music. Louis Armstrong once said that when he sang in church, his heart went into every song. Aretha Franklin wowed crowds in her dad's church in Detroit. Elvis Presley listened to gospel music after rock concerts to calm his mind. And Bob Dylan won a Grammy for his song—for his album of gospel hymns.

Today, gospel music continues to provide strength for our communities, and it is making the "good news" sound sweeter than ever. I know you're looking forward to three great gospel performers we have in store. So I'd like to now turn the podium over to the founder of Gospel Today magazine, our outstanding emcee this evening, Teresa Hairston.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:01 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Alphonso R. Jackson and his wife, Marcia; civil rights leader Dorothy I. Height; and Amy Lynn Carter, daughter of former President Jimmy Carter.

Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and President Dmitriy A. Medvedev of Russia on the Fourth Meeting of the Global Initiative To Combat Nuclear Terrorism
June 17, 2008

We are pleased to be working closely together with our Global Initiative Partners to combat nuclear terrorism. That so many nations have joined the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism demonstrates a

^{*} White House correction.

true commitment to defeat this threat to our peace and security.

The Russian Federation and the United States launched the Global Initiative on July 15, 2006 and we can now call more than 70 nations Global Initiative partners. We will continue to stand upon the principles at the heart of this Initiative, attract others to our ranks and realize our goal of making this a truly global effort. Gathering as partners in Madrid is an important reminder to one another of the commitments we have to each of our citizens to see clearly the concrete steps we can take together to prevent nuclear terrorism and ensure our peace and security.

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

Message to the Congress on the Designation of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the United States International Trade Commission

June 17, 2008

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with the provisions of 19 U.S.C. 1330(c)(1), this is to notify the Congress that I have designated Shara L. Aranoff as Chairman and Daniel Pearson as Vice Chairman of the United States International Trade Commission, effective June 17, 2008.

George W. Bush

The White House,
June 17, 2008.

Remarks on Energy

June 18, 2008

Good morning. I want to thank Secretary Kempthorne and Secretary Bodman for joining me here. For many Americans, there is no more pressing concern than the price of gasoline. Truckers and farmers, small-business owners have been hit especially hard. Every American who drives to work, purchases food, or ships a product has felt the effect. And families across our country are looking to Washington for a response.

High oil prices are at the root of high gasoline prices; behind those prices is the basic

law of supply and demand. In recent years, the world's demand for oil has grown dramatically. Meanwhile, the supply of oil has grown much more slowly. As a result, oil prices have risen sharply, and that increase has been reflected at American gasoline pumps. Now much of the oil consumed in America comes from abroad—that's what's changed dramatically over the last couple of decades. Some of that energy comes from unstable regions and unfriendly regimes. This makes us more vulnerable to supply shocks and price spikes beyond our control, and that puts both our economy and our security at risk.

In the long run, the solution is to reduce demand for oil by promoting alternative energy technologies. My administration has worked with Congress to invest in gas-saving technologies like advanced batteries and hydrogen fuel cells. We've mandated a large expansion in the use of alternative fuels. We've raised fuel efficiency standards to ambitious new levels. With all these steps, we are bringing America closer to the day when we can end our addiction to oil, which will allow us to become better stewards of the environment.

In the short run, the American economy will continue to rely largely on oil. And that means we need to increase supply, especially here at home. So my administration has repeatedly called on Congress to expand domestic oil production. Unfortunately, Democrats on Capitol Hill have rejected virtually every proposal, and now Americans are paying the price at the pump for this obstruction. Congress must face a hard reality: Unless Members are willing to accept gas prices at today's painful levels—or even higher—our Nation must produce more oil. And we must start now. So this morning, I ask Democratic congressional leaders to move forward with four steps to expand American oil and gasoline production.

First, we should expand American oil production by increasing access to the Outer Continental Shelf, or OCS. Experts believe that the OCS could produce about 18 billion barrels of oil. That would be enough to match America's current oil production for almost 10 years. The problem is that Congress has restricted access to key parts of the OCS

since the early 1980s. Since then, advances in technology have made it possible to conduct oil exploration in the OCS that is out of sight, protects coral reefs and habitats, and protects against oil spills. With these advances—and a dramatic increase in oil prices—congressional restrictions on OCS exploration have become outdated and counterproductive.

Republicans in Congress have proposed several promising bills that would lift the legislative ban on oil exploration in the OCS. I call on the House and the Senate to pass good legislation as soon as possible. This legislation give—could get—should give the States the option of opening up OCS resources off their shores, provide a way for the Federal Government and States to share new leasing revenues, and ensure that our environment is protected. There's also an executive prohibition on exploration in the OCS. When Congress lifts the legislative ban, I will lift the executive prohibition.

Second, we should expand oil production by tapping into the extraordinary potential of oil shale. Oil shale is a type of rock that can produce oil when exposed to heat or other process. One major deposit—the Green River Basin of Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming—there lies the equivalent of about 800 billion barrels of recoverable oil. That's more than three times larger than the proven oil reserves of Saudi Arabia. And it can be fully recovered—and if it can be fully recovered, it would be equal to more than a century's worth of currently projected oil imports.

For many years, the high cost of extracting oil from shale exceeded the benefit. But today the calculus is changing. Companies have invested in technology to make oil shale production more affordable and efficient. And while the cost of extracting oil from shale is still more than the cost of traditional production, it is also less than the current market price of oil. This makes oil shale a highly promising resource.

Unfortunately, Democrats in Congress are standing in the way of further development. In last year's omnibus spending bill, Democratic leaders inserted a provision blocking oil shale leasing on Federal lands. That provision can be taken out as easily as it was

slipped in, and Congress should do so immediately.

Third, we should expand American oil production by permitting exploration in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, or ANWR. When ANWR was created in 1980, Congress specifically reserved a portion for energy development. In 1995, Congress passed legislation allowing oil production in the small fraction of ANWR's 19 million acres. With a drilling footprint of less than 2,000 acres—less than one-tenth of 1 percent of this distant Alaskan terrain—America could produce an estimated 10 billion barrels of oil. That is roughly the equivalent of two decades of imported oil from Saudi Arabia. Yet my predecessor vetoed this bill.

In the years since, the price of oil has increased seven-fold and the price of American gasoline has more than tripled. Meanwhile, scientists have developed innovative techniques to reach ANWR's oil with virtually no impact on the land or local wildlife. I urge Members of Congress to allow this remote region to bring enormous benefits to the American people.

And finally, we need to expand and enhance our refining capacity. Refineries are the critical link between crude oil and the gasoline and diesel fuel that drivers put in their tanks. With recent changes in the make-up of our fuel supply, upgrades in our refining capacity are urgently needed. Yet it has been nearly 30 years since our Nation built a new refinery, and lawsuits and red tape have made it extremely costly to expand or modify existing refineries. The result is that America now imports millions of barrels of fully refined gasoline from abroad. This imposes needless costs on American consumers. It deprives American workers of good jobs. And it needs to change.

So today I'm proposing measures to expedite the refining—refinery permitting process. Under the reformed process that I propose, challenges to refineries and other energy project permits must be brought before the DC Circuit Court of Appeals within 60 days of the issuance of a permit decision. Congress should also empower the Secretary of Energy to establish binding deadlines for

permit decisions, and to ensure that the various levels of approval required in the refining—refinery permitting process are handled in a timely way.

With these four steps, we will take pressure off gas prices over time by expanding the amount of American-made oil and gasoline. We will strengthen our national security by reducing our reliance on foreign oil. We will benefit American workers by keeping our Nation competitive in the global economy, and by creating good jobs in construction and engineering and refine—refining, maintenance, and many other areas.

The proposals I've outlined will take years to have their full impact. There is no excuse for delay—as a matter of fact, it's a reason to move swiftly. I know the Democratic leaders have opposed some of these policies in the past. Now that their opposition has helped drive gas prices to record levels, I ask them to reconsider their positions. If congressional leaders leave for the Fourth of July recess without taking action, they will need to explain why \$4 a gallon gasoline is not enough incentive for them to act. And Americans will rightly ask how high oil—how high gas prices have to rise before the Democratic-controlled Congress will do something about it.

I know this is a trying time for our families, but our country has faced similar strains before and we've overcome them together. And we can do that again. With faith in the innovative spirit of our people and a commitment to results in Washington, we will meet the energy challenges we face and keep our economy the strongest, most vibrant, and most hopeful in the world.

Thank you for your time.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Sergei Stanishev of Bulgaria

June 18, 2008

President Bush. Mr. Prime Minister, welcome to the Oval Office. It was about a year

ago that I had the great pleasure of visiting your beautiful country, and I want to thank you for the warm hospitality you showed. And thank you for giving me a chance to welcome you here to the Oval Office. We had a very extensive conversation.

Prime Minister Stanishev. Indeed.

President Bush. And that's what you'd expect among friends.

First, I want to congratulate you and thank you and the Government for the role you have played in the Western Balkans. You've been a constructive force for stability, a constructive force for hope. You've projected a hopeful future and—for the people in Kosovo and Serbia. And I want to thank you for that. It's really important that there be leadership in the neighborhood, and you've provided it.

Secondly, I want to thank you very much for your nation's strong contributions to helping others realize the blessings of liberty, whether it be in Afghanistan or Iraq. I fully understand how difficult these issues can be. On the other hand, you understand how hopeful the world can be when people live in free societies. So I want to thank you and I want to thank the people of your country for the sacrifices that you have made.

Thirdly, we talked about our—a mutual concern, and that's energy. How do we get more energy on the market? How do we help others—our respective countries and others realize the blessings of additional energy supply? I mean, we're in a world that is—where supply has exceeded—where demand has exceeded supply. There's high prices. Both our countries—the people in our countries are wondering, what do we intend to do about it?

And so we had a good discussion about the diversification of energy supply. I really appreciate the Prime Minister's discussion about nuclear power. Prime Minister, we're trying to expand nuclear power here in the United States of America because it's clean, it's renewable, and it'll help us become less dependent on hydrocarbons.

We talked about two other issues that are of importance to the Prime Minister and the people of his country. First, we talked about visas. I fully understand the concerns of your people when it comes to visas. People say,

on the one—we're helping; we're part of a very important coalition; we're allies, and yet we don't get treated the same as other people within the EU.

Prime Minister Stanishev. It was a good breakthrough.

President Bush. And today, because of the Prime Minister's hard work, there has been a breakthrough on the visa waiver, as an important step toward achieving the same status as other countries in the EU. And I want to congratulate you on that. Thank you for your hard work, and thank you for your care about the people of your country.

Finally, I applauded the Prime Minister for his and his Government's work on dealing with corruption. I reminded the Prime Minister that all of us have got a responsibility to deal with corruption. When we find corrupt officials in the United States, we expect them to be—within the rule of law—be dealt with. And that's what you're doing. And the people who ultimately benefit from that decision are the people of your country. I mean, they—I know they appreciate your tough stand. Nobody wants to have a government where it looks like a few benefit at the cost of many.

And so your tough stance have made a big difference. I'm proud that you're here. I want to thank you for it. You're a good, young, strong leader, and that's said from an old guy.

Prime Minister Stanishev. Thank you.

President Bush. Welcome.

Prime Minister Stanishev. Thank you.

President Bush. Yes.

Prime Minister Stanishev. Well, thank you, Mr. President, for the good words about Bulgaria, indeed. And my assessment is that our relations have reached the level of strategic partnership. And I see no contradiction in this with our good behavior and our contributions to the European Union.

President Bush. That's right.

Prime Minister Stanishev. I think Bulgaria proved in the last several years that we can be good contributors of stability for NATO, we can be active in the European Union, and we can develop our excellent relations with the United States—because it is amazing that in 18 years, our countries have reached this level of trust, confidence. And from this point of view, I appreciate your

very strong leadership role in the support of the reform process in Bulgaria.

President Bush. Yes, sir.

Prime Minister Stanishev. It is never easy. It requires a lot of efforts, persistence. Results do not always come overnight, but they develop. And everyone who comes to Bulgaria after several years of absence is saying the country has made great progress. And the United States have always been very helpful in this process.

I must say that we see our role in the region as a country which is bridging and guaranteeing stability both for the Western Balkans and for the broader Black Sea area, which are very important, because without stability in the Balkans, without European perspective and NATO perspective for these countries, we cannot speak about real prosperity and democracy in the region. The region has many wounds from the war in former Yugoslavia, and they have to be healed. And the international presence is very important and the European perspective as well.

And we also see the importance of the Black Sea area, both politically, from the point of view of security issues and from the point of view of energy issues. And I appreciate the dialog which we had on diversification of energy supply, on nuclear energy. Bulgaria will be developing our nuclear facilities, not only the new ones, but there are many other projects where American companies can participate in nuclear issues, but also in thermal powerplants, many other energy projects, because we want to be, indeed, a hub of energy stability in the region. We want to be enough independent. We want to be exporter of energy.

We are good partners in Afghanistan, in Iraq, in Kosovo. And Bulgaria really is not simply a beneficiary of our membership in NATO or the European Union, but we are a contributor because we know our responsibilities. And we shall not give up from these responsibilities because there are many challenges around the world. We have to overcome them together with our friends and partners.

I thank you very much for this support and for the American experts who worked on this

declaration on visa waiver. You, Mr. President, were the first to say that this is not a normal situation, when two nations have such confidence, when we have 200,000 Bulgarians living in the United States, more and more Americans coming to Bulgaria, to have this obstacle for normal human contacts. There is a way to go; there is work to do. But we shall do it together, and I believe that the sooner we achieve—make our business, the better for the citizens of the two countries.

And finally, thank you also for the supporting the reforms in the fight against organized crime and corruption. Bulgaria is a nation which became member of the European Union, which is modernizing. Our economic growth is excellent. Our performances in economy are good. And we see the reforms in fight against organized crime and corruption, the judiciary reform, as a very important further precondition for our economic growth and for the development of the nation.

And I remember that last year, you supported the establishment of the new State Agency for National Security. I can say with satisfaction that it is already operational. It works excellently with American services, and it has operations which are bringing concrete fruits. But there is work to do.

President Bush. Thank you for coming.
Prime Minister Stanishev. Thank you, Mr. President.

President Bush. Yes. Thank you. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:48 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval the “Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008”

June 18, 2008

To the House of Representatives:

I am returning herewith without my approval H.R. 6124, the “Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008.”

The bill that I vetoed on May 21, 2008, H.R. 2419, which became Public Law 110–234, did not include the title III provisions

that are in this bill. In passing H.R. 6124, the Congress had an opportunity to improve on H.R. 2419 by modifying certain objectionable, onerous, and fiscally imprudent provisions. Unfortunately, the Congress chose to send me the same unacceptable farm bill provisions in H.R. 6124, merely adding title III. I am returning this bill for the same reasons as stated in my veto message of May 21, 2008, on H.R. 2419.

For a year and a half, I have consistently asked that the Congress pass a good farm bill that I can sign. Regrettably, the Congress has failed to do so. At a time of high food prices and record farm income, this bill lacks program reform and fiscal discipline. It continues subsidies for the wealthy and increases farm bill spending by more than \$20 billion, while using budget gimmicks to hide much of the increase. It is inconsistent with our objectives in international trade negotiations, which include securing greater market access for American farmers and ranchers. It would needlessly expand the size and scope of government. Americans sent us to Washington to achieve results and be good stewards of their hard-earned taxpayer dollars. This bill violates that fundamental commitment.

In January 2007, my Administration put forward a fiscally responsible farm bill proposal that would improve the safety net for farmers and move current programs toward more market-oriented policies. The bill before me today fails to achieve these important goals.

At a time when net farm income is projected to increase by more than \$28 billion in 1 year, the American taxpayer should not be forced to subsidize that group of farmers who have adjusted gross incomes of up to \$1.5 million. When commodity prices are at record highs, it is irresponsible to increase government subsidy rates for 15 crops, subsidize additional crops, and provide payments that further distort markets. Instead of better targeting farm programs, this bill eliminates the existing payment limit on marketing loan subsidies.

Now is also not the time to create a new uncapped revenue guarantee that could cost billions of dollars more than advertised. This is on top of a farm bill that is anticipated to cost more than \$600 billion over 10 years.

In addition, this bill would force many businesses to prepay their taxes in order to finance the additional spending.

This legislation is also filled with earmarks and other ill-considered provisions. Most notably, H.R. 6124 provides: \$175 million to address water issues for desert lakes; \$250 million for a 400,000-acre land purchase from a private owner; funding and authority for the noncompetitive sale of National Forest land to a ski resort; and \$382 million earmarked for a specific watershed. These earmarks, and the expansion of Davis-Bacon Act prevailing wage requirements, have no place in the farm bill. Rural and urban Americans alike are frustrated with excessive government spending and the funneling of taxpayer funds for pet projects. This bill will only add to that frustration.

The bill also contains a wide range of other objectionable provisions, including one that restricts our ability to redirect food aid dollars for emergency use at a time of great need globally. The bill does not include the requested authority to buy food in the developing world to save lives. Additionally, provisions in the bill raise serious constitutional concerns. For all the reasons outlined above, I must veto H.R. 6124.

I veto this bill fully aware that it is rare for a stand-alone farm bill not to receive the President's signature, but my action today is not without precedent. In 1956, President Eisenhower stood firmly on principle, citing high crop subsidies and too much government control of farm programs among the reasons for his veto. President Eisenhower wrote in his veto message, "Bad as some provisions of this bill are, I would have signed it if in total it could be interpreted as sound and good for farmers and the nation." For similar reasons, I am vetoing the bill before me today.

George W. Bush

The White House,
June 18, 2008.

Remarks at the President's Dinner *June 18, 2008*

Thank you very much. Thank you for the warm welcome. Good evening. I appreciate

that kind introduction, Jeb, and I thank you for bringing Melissa too.

It's my honor to be with you. I can't thank you enough for coming to support our candidates running for the United States House, the United States Senate, and for the White House.

I appreciate my friends from the Congress who are here. I especially want to pay tribute to Senator Mitch McConnell, Senate Republican leader; Congressman John Boehner, House Republican leader; Senator John Ensign, the chairman of the NRSC, who, by the way, brought his son, Michael; Congressman Tom Cole, chairman of the NRCC, a man who deserves a lot of credit, along with Jeb, for tonight's success; my friend from the State of Utah, Senator Orrin Hatch. I thank the RNC chairman, Mike Duncan; all those here at the head table for their leadership in making this an incredibly successful event.

Most of all I want to thank you all for coming, for giving of your time and your money to help us achieve a big victory in November of 2008.

This is my eighth President's Dinner—also known as my last dinner before mandatory retirement. [*Laughter*] I can't say for sure what I'm going to be doing next year. I suspect I'll be in Crawford, watching the Rangers on TV. But I know what you'll be doing. You'll be holding this dinner in honor of a new guest: President John McCain.

I know John McCain well. I have worked with him, and I have run against him. Take it from me: It's better to have him on your side. [*Laughter*]

The stakes in this election are high. I know the pressures of the Oval Office: the daily intelligence briefings, the unexpected challenges, and the tough decisions that can only be made at the President's desk. In trying times, America needs a President who has been tested and will not flinch. We need a President who has the experience and judgment to do what is right, even when it is not easy. We need a President who knows what it takes to defeat our enemies. And this year, there is only one man who has shown those qualities of leadership, and that man is John McCain.

Sending John to the White House is a great goal, but it's not our only goal. As President, he's going to need strong conservative allies on Capitol Hill. And that means we need to put the House and the Senate back where they belong, into Republican hands. And I appreciate you coming tonight to see that is exactly what happens.

You know, this election season is just beginning. The real campaign will be in the fall. And the American people will take the measure of the candidates running and their vision for the future. And when they do, they're going to find some big differences between our parties.

On issues that matter the most, from taxes and spending to confirming good judges and building a culture of life to protecting our people and winning the war on terror, the American people will have a clear choice. And after the speeches and the debates and when the American people focus on what matters to their future, they're going to send Republican candidates to the House, Republican candidates to the Senate, and John McCain to the White House.

This November, the American people are going to have a clear choice when it comes to taxes and spending. Republicans believe American families can spend their money far better than the Federal Government can. We've restrained spending in Washington. We delivered the largest tax cuts since Ronald Reagan was the President of the United States. We cut taxes for married couples. We cut taxes for families with children. We cut taxes for small businesses. We cut taxes on dividends and capital gains. We put the death tax on the road to extinction. We eliminated income taxes for nearly 5 million families in the lowest tax bracket. And as a result, the American people have more money in their pocket, and that is the way it should be.

Our opponents take a different view. The Democratically controlled Congress refuses to make the tax relief permanent. And when tax relief expires, every income tax rate in America will go up. The marriage penalty will return in full force. The child tax credit will be cut in half. Taxes on capital gains and dividends will increase significantly. The death tax will return to life. A typical family of four

with an income of \$40,000 will face a tax increase of more than \$2,000.

At a time when the American people are struggling with high food [prices]*, high gas prices, and economic uncertainty, the absolute last thing they need is a tax increase. And in order to make sure that doesn't happen, the American people need to elect a Congress and a President that will make the tax relief permanent.

Now, there's a reason why the Democrats want to raise taxes. They need more money to pay for all the new spending they have in mind. When the Democrats campaigned in 2006, they promised fiscal responsibility. But when they took control of the Congress, they tried to go on a spending spree and stick the American people with the tab. Over the past 17 months, Democrats in Congress have routinely filed legislation with excessive spending. But there was an important thing that stood between them and the American people paying more in taxes, and it's called a veto pen.

You know, when it comes to taxes and spending, our opponents offer a lot of soothing words. But keep this in mind: While their talk may be cheap, their agenda isn't. And here's the bottom line: If you want a bigger tax bill and bigger government, put the Democrats in charge of both the White House and Capitol Hill. But if you want to keep your taxes low and stop wasteful spending, elect John McCain and a Republican Congress.

This November, the American people will have a clear choice when it comes to confirming good judges and building a culture of life. Republicans aspire to build a society where every human being is welcomed in life and protected in law. We've funded crisis pregnancy programs and supported parental notification laws. We outlawed the cruel practice of partial birth abortion. We defended this good law all the way to the Supreme Court, and we won.

This victory shows how important it is to put good judges on the bench. Republicans have a clear view of the role of the courts in our democracy. We believe that unelected judges should strictly interpret the law and

* White House correction.

not legislate from the bench. I've nominated and Congress has confirmed good judges, including the two newest members of the Supreme Court, Justice Sam Alito and Chief Justice John Roberts.

And our opponents have a different view. There's no clearer illustration of their differences in our judicial philosophies than this: John McCain voted to confirm these eminently qualified Supreme Court Justices; his opponent voted against them.

We received a fresh reminder of the importance of the courts last week. A bare majority of five Supreme Court Justices overturned a bipartisan law that the United States Congress passed and I signed to deliver justice to detainees at Guantanamo Bay. With this decision, hardened terrorists—hardened foreign terrorists now enjoy certain legal rights previously reserved for American citizens. This is precisely the kind of judicial activism that frustrates the American people. And the best way to change it is to put Republicans in charge in the Senate and John McCain in the White House.

This November, the American people will have a clear choice when it comes to protecting our country and winning the war on terror. Republicans believe that our most solemn duty is to protect the American people. Since September the 11th, 2001, we have worked day and night to stop another attack on our homeland.

Here at home, we've strengthened our defenses, reformed our intelligence community, and launched a new program to monitor terrorist communications. Around the world, we have gone on the offense against the terrorists. We've advanced freedom as the great alternative to the ideology of hatred and violence. In a time of war, we need a President who understands that we must defeat the enemy overseas so we do not have to face them here at home, and that man is John McCain.

In Afghanistan, we destroyed Al Qaida training camps and removed the Taliban from power. And today, we're helping a democratic society take root, ensuring that Afghanistan will never again be a safe haven for the terrorists planning an attack on America.

And in Iraq, we removed the dangerous regime of Saddam Hussein. Removing Saddam Hussein was the right decision at the time, and it is the right decision today. Early last year, when the situation in Iraq was deteriorating, we launched what's called the surge. And since the surge, violence in Iraq has dropped. Civilian deaths and sectarian killings are down, and political and economic progress is taking place. A democracy is taking root where the tyrant once ruled.

In Iraq and Afghanistan and around the world, our men and women in uniform are performing with skill and honor. And our country needs a Commander in Chief who will respect and fully support the United States military, and that man is John McCain.

The war on terror is the great challenge of our time. And on this vital issue, the Democratic Party has repeatedly shown it would take America down the wrong path. Democratic leaders in Congress have yet to renew a surveillance law that our intelligence professionals say is critical to protecting America. They tried to shut down a CIA program for questioning terrorists, a program that has saved American lives. They've repeatedly delayed funding for our troops in the field.

On Iraq, the Democrats declared the surge a failure before it began. And now that the surge has turned the situation around, they still call for retreat. The other side talks a lot about hope, and that sums up their Iraq policy pretty well. They want to retreat from Iraq, and hope nothing bad happens. But wishful thinking is no way to fight a war and to protect the American people. Leaving Iraq before the job is done would embolden our enemies and endanger our citizens. The only path to victory is to support the Iraqi people, support our commanders, support our troops, support Republicans for Congress, and elect John McCain as the next Commander in Chief.

Over the next few months of this campaign, you're going to hear a lot of talk about change. Democrats say they're the party of change. There was a time when they believed that low taxes were the path to growth and opportunity, but they've changed. There was a time when they believed in commonsense American values, but they have changed.

There was a time when they believed that America should pay any price and bear any burden in the defense of liberty, but they have changed. These days, if you want to know how a Democrat in Congress is going to vote tomorrow, just visit the web site of MoveOn.org today.

This is change all right, but it's not the kind of change the American people want. Americans want change that makes their life better and our country safer, and that requires changing the party in control of the United States Congress. So with your efforts and with your hard work, I am confident that the American people will send Republicans to Congress—and to send our friend John McCain to the White House.

This is the final time I'm going to speak to this event. And when I ran for President 8 years ago, as Jeb mentioned, I promised to uphold the dignity and honor of this office. And to the best of my ability, I have tried to live up to that promise. Next January, I will leave with confidence in our country's course and the proud work we have done together.

We've worked together to make our country safer and to spread prosperity throughout our land. I've been strengthened by your support and lifted up by your prayers. I've also been blessed to share these years with a strong and loving family, including a fabulous woman named Laura Bush. I believe she's the finest First Lady in our Nation's history. Just don't tell mother. [*Laughter*] And in this job, I have had no finer example of character, decency, and integrity than the first man to be called President George Bush.

This isn't a farewell speech, because we've got a lot to do this year. I want you to know my energy is up; my spirits are high; and I am going to finish this job strong. So with confidence in our vision, strong belief in our philosophy, faith in our values, let us go forward, reclaim the Congress, and elect John McCain as President in 2008.

God bless you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:29 p.m. at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Jeb Hensarling, chairman, 2008 President's Dinner, and his wife, Melissa.

Notice—Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Risk of Nuclear Proliferation Created by the Accumulation of Weapons-Usable Fissile Material in the Territory of the Russian Federation

June 18, 2008

On June 21, 2000, President Clinton issued Executive Order 13159 (the “order”) blocking property and interests in property of the Government of the Russian Federation that are in the United States, that hereafter come within the United States, or that are or hereafter come within the possession or control of United States persons that are directly related to the implementation of the Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Russian Federation Concerning the Disposition of Highly Enriched Uranium Extracted from Nuclear Weapons, dated February 18, 1993, and related contracts and agreements (collectively, the “HEU Agreements”). The HEU Agreements allow for the downblending of highly enriched uranium derived from nuclear weapons to low enriched uranium for peaceful commercial purposes. The order invoked the authority, *inter alia*, of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) and declared a national emergency to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States posed by the risk of nuclear proliferation created by the accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation.

The national emergency declared on June 21, 2000, must continue beyond June 21, 2008, to provide continued protection from attachment, judgment, decree, lien, execution, garnishment, or other judicial process for the property and interests in property of the Government of the Russian Federation that are directly related to the implementation of the HEU Agreements and subject to U.S. jurisdiction. Therefore, in accordance

with section 202 (d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing for 1 year the national emergency with respect to the risk of nuclear proliferation created by the accumulation of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation. This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

George W. Bush

The White House,
June 18, 2008.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:26 a.m., June 19, 2008]

NOTE: This notice was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 19, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on June 20.

**Message to the Congress on
Continuation of the National
Emergency With Respect to the Risk
of Nuclear Proliferation Created by
the Accumulation of Weapons-
Usable Fissile Material in the
Territory of the Russian Federation**
June 18, 2008

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the emergency declared in Executive Order 13159 of June 21, 2000, with respect to the risk of nuclear proliferation created by the accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation is to continue beyond June 21, 2008.

It remains a major national security goal of the United States to ensure that fissile material removed from Russian nuclear weapons pursuant to various arms control and dis-

armament agreements is dedicated to peaceful uses, subject to transparency measures, and protected from diversion to activities of proliferation concern. The accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to the risk of nuclear proliferation created by the accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation and maintain in force these emergency authorities to respond to this threat.

George W. Bush

The White House,
June 18, 2008.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 19.

**Remarks on Presenting the
Presidential Medal of Freedom**
June 19, 2008

The President. Welcome to the White House for what is going to be a joyous occasion. Mr. Vice President, Justice Scalia, members of my Cabinet and administration, Members of Congress, Medal of Freedom recipients and their families and friends: Thanks for coming. Laura and I are honored to welcome you here.

The Medal of Freedom is the highest civil honor a President can bestow. The award recognizes outstanding individuals who have been leaders in their chosen fields, have led lives of vision and character, and have made especially meritorious contributions to our Nation and the world. Today we add the names of six remarkable Americans to that select list.

The story of our first recipient begins in a poor neighborhood in the heart of Detroit. This was an environment where many young people lost themselves to poverty and crime and violence. For a time, young Ben Carson was headed down that same path. Yet through his reliance on faith and family, he

turned his life into a sharply different direction. Today, Dr. Carson is one of the world's leading neurosurgeons. He is renowned for his successful efforts to separate conjoined twins and his expertise in controlling brain seizures. He has worked to be a motivating influence on young people. He and his wife, Candy, have started an organization that offers college scholarships to students across America. The child of Detroit who once saw a grim future became a scholar, a healer, and a leader.

Ben would be the first to tell you that his remarkable story would not be possible without the support of a woman who raised him and is at his side today. Some moms are simply forces of nature who never take no for an answer. [Laughter] I understand. [Laughter] Ben Carson's mom had a life filled with challenges. She was married at the age of 13 and, ultimately, to—was left to raise her two sons alone. She made their education a high priority. Every week, the boys would have to check out library books and write reports on them. She would hand them back with check marks, as though she had reviewed them, never letting on that she couldn't read them. Even in the toughest times, she always encouraged her children's dreams. She never allowed them to see themselves as victims. She never, ever gave up. We're so thrilled you're here. Sonya Carson, welcome to the White House.

Ben has said that one of his role models is Booker T. Washington, who inspired millions and who was one of the first African American leaders ever to visit this house as a guest of a President. He walked on this very floor a little more than a century ago. Today, Ben Carson follows in his footsteps in more ways than one. He's lived true to the words that was once uttered by this great man: "Character, not circumstances, makes the man." Ben, you demonstrate that character every day through the life you lead, the care you provide, and the family that you put at the center of your life. Murray, B.J., and Rhoeyce, I know how proud your dad is of each of you. I'm delighted that you have a chance to see how proud our Nation is of him.

For his skills as a surgeon, high moral standards, and dedication to helping others,

I am proud to bestow the Presidential Medal of Freedom on Dr. Benjamin S. Carson, Sr. [Applause] The bestowing part will take place a little later, Ben. [Laughter]

Three decades ago, a mysterious and terrifying plague began to take the lives of people across the world. Before this malady even had a name, it had a fierce opponent in Dr. Anthony Fauci. As the Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases for more than 23 years, Tony Fauci has led the fight against HIV and AIDS. He was also a leading architect and champion of the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, which over the past 5 years, has reached millions of people, preventing HIV infections in infants and easing suffering and bringing dying communities back to life.

The man who would lead the fight against this dreaded disease came from an Italian American family in Brooklyn. Even as a boy, Tony was distinguished by his courage. In a neighborhood full of Brooklyn Dodgers fans, he rooted for the Yankees. [Laughter] Tony earned a full scholarship to Regis High School, a Jesuit school in Manhattan. And he still quotes what he learned from Jesuit teaching: "Precision of thought; economy of expression." And now you know why he never ran for public office. [Laughter]

Those who know Tony do admit one flaw. Sometimes he forgets to stop working. He regularly puts in 80-hour weeks. And from time to time, he's even found notes on his windshield left by his coworkers that say things like, "Go home. You're making me feel guilty." [Laughter] A friend once commented that Tony was so obsessed with work that his wife must be a pretty patient woman. The truth of the matter is, she's very busy herself. Christine Grady is a renowned bioethicist. And together they raised three talented daughters: Jennifer, Megan, and Alison. And I hope each of you know that for all Tony has accomplished, he considers you to be one of his—not one of his—his most important achievement. Your love and support have strengthened him as he works to save lives across the world.

For his determined and aggressive efforts to help others live longer and healthier lives, I'm proud to award the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Dr. Anthony S. Fauci.

When Tom Lantos was 16 years old, Nazi troops occupied his hometown of Budapest. During that bitter occupation, young Tom was active in the resistance. He twice was sent to a Nazi labor camp; both times he escaped. Tom and his wife, Annette, survived the Holocaust. Others in their family did not.

Their experiences amid Nazi terror shaped the rest of their lives. After they left Hungary and made California their home, Tom put his name on the ballot for a seat in the House of Representatives and became the only survivor of the Holocaust ever elected to Congress. One of his early acts was to establish the Congressional Human Rights Council [Caucus]^{*}. Annette served as the Caucus's director. Tom earned the respect from both sides of the aisle, and he rose to become the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee. One colleague put it this way: "Tom was at the forefront of virtually every human rights battle over nearly three decades in the Congress."

On Capitol Hill, Tom displayed the energy and enthusiasm of people half his age. When he was in his seventies, he said that he was at the midpoint of his congressional career. [Laughter] When he was diagnosed with a fatal form of cancer, he responded with typical grace. As he announced his decision to retire from the job he loved, his words were not of despair but of gratitude for a nation that had given him so much. "Only in America," he said, "could a penniless survivor of the Holocaust receive an education, raise a family, and have the privilege of serving in the Congress." That dying servant of the people then said this: "I will never be able to express fully my profoundly felt gratitude to this great country."

America is equally grateful to Tom Lantos. We miss his powerful voice and his strong Hungarian accent. [Laughter] We miss his generosity of spirit. And we miss his vigorous defense of human rights and his powerful witness for the cause of human freedom.

For a lifetime of leadership, for his commitment to liberty, and for his devoted service to his adopted nation, I am proud to award the Presidential Medal of Freedom, posthumously, to Tom Lantos. And proud

that his loving wife, Annette, will receive the award on behalf of his family.

One of my great privileges as the President has been to meet so many outstanding Americans who volunteer to serve our Nation in uniform. I've been inspired by their valor, selflessness, and complete integrity. I found all those qualities in abundance in General Pete Pace. As Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Pete Pace was a skilled and trusted adviser in a time of war. He helped transform our military into a more efficient and effective force in America's defense.

General Pace experienced the blessings America offers at an early age. He was born in Brooklyn to an Italian immigrant father who sometimes worked two or three jobs at a time to make ends meet. He was raised by a mom who instilled in him the sustaining power of faith. Together his parents raised four children; each went on to great achievements in their chosen fields. That childhood gave young Pete Pace an early glimpse of what he would later call "the incredible benefits that our Nation bestows on those who come to our shores."

Pete Pace attended the Naval Academy and, as a young marine, soon found his way to Vietnam. At the age of 22, he took command of a platoon engaged in heavy fighting against the enemy during the Tet offensive. Pete quickly won the respect and the trust of his unit and formed a bond with all those who served with him. That bond only strengthened throughout his military career.

He was the first marine to serve as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. And he performed his duties with a keen intellect, a sharp wit, and a passionate devotion to our country. He won the admiration of all who knew him. And that includes a soldier in Afghanistan who came up to General Pace last year during his farewell visit to that country and said simply: "Sir, thanks for your service. We'll take it from here."

On his final day in uniform, General Pace took a quiet journey to the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial. He searched the names engraved in the sleek granite and then found a spot where he placed his four stars that had adorned his uniform. Along with those stars he attached notes addressed to the men who

^{*} White House correction.

died under his first command some four decades ago. The notes said: “These are yours, not mine. With love and respect, your platoon leader, Pete Pace.” General Pace ended his military career the same way that he began it, with love for his country and devotion to his fellow marines.

For his selfless service to his country and for always putting the interests of our men and women in uniform first, I am proud to award the Presidential Medal of Freedom to General Pete Pace.

When Donna Shalala was 10 years old, a tornado struck her house and her neighborhood near Cleveland. Her parents searched throughout the house for young Donna, but couldn’t find her anywhere. She was finally spotted down the road, standing in the middle of the road directing traffic. *[Laughter]* Even at a young age, she was ready to take charge. *[Laughter]*

Donna was always an enthusiastic participant in life. She once played on the girls’ softball team coached by George Steinbrenner. *[Laughter]* She also joined the Peace Corps and was stationed in the Middle East. I really wonder which one of those two experiences was more challenging. *[Laughter]*

In 1993, President Clinton nominated Donna as the Nation’s Secretary of Health and Human Services. She served for a full two terms, longer than any other person who held that position. During her tenure, she developed a reputation for fairness and a willingness to hear both sides of an issue. Former Republican Governor who worked closely with Donna called her cooperative and pragmatic. The late Texas columnist Molly Ivins once called her “almost disgustingly cheerful.” *[Laughter]* I knew Molly; that’s a high compliment. *[Laughter]*

As a college president, Donna has demonstrated her commitment to education. And as Cochair of the Dole-Shalala Commission on Care for America’s Returning Wounded Warriors, she has worked to ensure that we provide the best possible care for America’s veterans, especially those who have borne the scars of battle. I came to know Donna in the course of the Commission’s work. She believes deeply that our Nation has no more important responsibility than to make sure

that we provide our veterans with all the love and care and support they deserve. Donna, you helped America move closer to realizing that noble goal, and your country is deeply grateful.

For her efforts to help more Americans live lives of purpose and dignity, I am proud to award the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Donna Edna Shalala.

Few men have played roles in as many memorable moments in recent American history as Laurence Silberman. He was a senior official in the Justice Department in the aftermath of Watergate and helped to restore America’s confidence in the Department. As Ambassador to Yugoslavia, he was a vigorous representative of America’s values behind the Iron Curtain. He was a fierce advocate for the “peace through strength” policies that helped win the cold war.

As a Federal judge on the DC circuit—often called the second-highest court in the land—Judge Silberman has been a passionate defender of judicial restraint. He writes opinions that one colleague has described as always cutting to the heart of the matter—sometimes to the jugular. *[Laughter]* His questioning is crisp and incisive, and at least one lawyer who was subjected to his inquiries actually fainted. *[Laughter]* Judge Silberman was a particularly important influence on two other members of that court: Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas. When each was nominated to the Supreme Court, Judge Silberman, in typical fashion, was not sad to see them go. That’s because when Scalia left the court, Judge Silberman gained seniority, and when Thomas left the court, Judge Silberman gained his furniture. *[Laughter]*

In a new and dangerous era for our country, Larry Silberman has continued to answer the call to service. He served with distinction on the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court of Review. He took a year off from the Federal bench to serve as Cochairman of a bipartisan commission on intelligence reform. And in all his work, he’s remained a clear-eyed guardian of the Constitution. He continues to leave his distinctive mark in the opinions he issues and the generations of bright and talented lawyers he has trained.

For his resolute service to the Nation and his stalwart efforts to advance the cause of ordered liberty, I am proud to bestow the Presidential Medal of Freedom on Laurence H. Silberman.

My congratulations to each of the recipients. And now the military aide will read the citations for the Presidential Medals of Freedom.

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

The President. In honor of these distinguished men and women, Laura and I invite you to stay for a reception in the State Dining Room. Please enjoy yourselves. Congratulations. May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:45 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to George M. Steinbrenner III, chairperson, New York Yankees baseball team; and former Gov. Tommy G. Thompson of Wisconsin.

Remarks in a Briefing on Flooding in the Midwest in Cedar Rapids, Iowa June 19, 2008

The President. Our job is to come down here—and I want to thank the Senator and Congressman and members of the Cabinet—just to listen to what you got on your mind. Obviously, to the extent that we can help immediately, we want to help, and then plan for recovery.

I know a lot of farmers and cattlemen are hurting right now, along with the city people. The other thing I think is just very important is that—and the Senator and Governor have made it clear—that as we worry about Cedar Rapids, we also got to worry about the little towns. A lot of folks are wondering whether or not the government hears about them too. And I can assure you that I know the Governor cares deeply about it, and so do we.

Paulison, who is the head of FEMA, tells me that there are 600 FEMA people moving around the State, and that ought to help the people in the smaller communities know that somebody is there to listen to them and care about them.

Our hearts and prayers are—from around the Nation go out to people here. It's a tough time for you.

Mayor Kathleen “Kay” Halloran of Cedar Rapids, IA. It is.

The President. The good news is, the people in Iowa are tough-minded people. I mean, you'll come back better. Sometimes it's hard to see it when you're this close to the deal.

Mayor Halloran. Well—and it's going to take time.

The President. A lot of people aren't getting much sleep these days, but—[laughter]. You're exhausted; I understand that.

But we want to—Congress passed a—about to pass a big chunk of disaster money, which will put—help put people's mind at ease, and that will—we're going to help people—going to help you recover.

Anyway, thanks for letting me come by and see you.

Governor Chet Culver of Iowa. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Yes.

Governor Culver. If I could, just very quickly, I want to thank the President on behalf of the people of Iowa—

The President. Get those cameras back in here. [Laughter]

Governor Culver. And I want to make sure they get in trouble. [Laughter]. But I also want to thank this incredible team, all of these people in this room, just an amazing team. All the people standing up here, thank you. And we will rebuild this State and this city, and it will be even better and even stronger as a result. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:01 p.m. in the Lynn County Training and Response Center at Kirkwood Community College. In his remarks, he referred to Senator Thomas R. Harkin and Representative Dave Loebsack of Iowa. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks to Reporters in Iowa City, Iowa June 19, 2008

The President. Let me thank the mayor, thank the Governor. Mr. Congressman, thanks for flying down from Washington with

us, and Senator Harkin, thanks for being here.

Senator Tom Harkin. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. You know, these are tough times for the people of Iowa City and Cedar Rapids and a lot of other communities in Iowa. Some of them are, you know, real tiny communities. And this—obviously, as you can see here, they're still going through a recovery phase. The mayor was telling me that she had the—part of the city evacuated and now some folks are able to come back in.

I brought a lot of Federal officials with me because it's really important that as the rebuilding phase begins, there's a coordinated effort between the Federal Government and the State and the local governments. And Michael Chertoff is going to be handling the coordinating effort with the Governor. And the Governor will make sure that the affected communities are represented as well.

We passed a—or the Congress is contemplating passing a supplemental, and a big chunk of that supplemental will be disaster relief money. And I want to thank the Members of Congress—hope we can get that done quickly.

Representative David Loebsack. It will get done.

The President. The—one of the things that happens in a disaster such as this is that citizens from around the country want to know how they can help. They see the picture of this kind of flooding on TV and they know that people are hurting and they want to know how they can participate in helping the rebuilding. Well, one way that the people can do is they can go on their computers and dial up volunteer.org [volunteer.gov]^{*}.

And, you know, if you want to try to figure out how to send something, you can—there will be ways to—ways to direct your compassion. If you want to give money, there are organizations that could use your contributions; organizations such as the Red Cross. And I'm—again, I'll repeat to you: volunteer.gov—I think I might have said “org”; I meant “gov.”

^{*} White House correction.

And I really again want to congratulate the local folks here for really showing great compassion and working hard and hugging people and giving people hope. And, Governor, you've been out front. You and your first lady are working hard, and the mayor has been very much engaged in helping people deal with the initial response. And now we all got to come together and help people deal with the rebuilding of Iowa.

Anyway, thank you for your hospitality. I'm sorry we're going through this. I tell people that oftentimes you get dealt a hand you didn't expect to have to play, and the question is not whether you're going to get dealt the hand; the question is, how do you play it? And I'm confident the people of Iowa will play it really well.

Anyway, thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Regenia Bailey of Iowa City, IA; and Gov. Chet Culver of Iowa and his wife, Mari.

Message on the Observance of Juneteenth

June 19, 2008

I send greetings to those celebrating Juneteenth.

On Juneteenth, we commemorate the arrival of Major General Gordon Granger in Galveston, Texas, and his declaration that slavery had been abolished and the blessings of liberty were finally extended to African Americans.

On this occasion, we recognize the many contributions that African Americans have made to our great Nation and honor the legacy of diversity that America has embraced. Today is an opportunity to recommit ourselves to confronting injustice wherever we find it and upholding the dignity of all people. By doing so, we protect the freedom and democratic ideals that will keep America strong for generations to come.

Laura and I send our best wishes on this memorable occasion.

George W. Bush

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

Remarks at a Celebration of American Jazz

June 19, 2008

Welcome to the East Room of the White House. I welcome members of my Cabinet and my administration; a music lover, Senator Orrin Hatch from the great State of Utah; distinguished guests. We're so pleased you're here to celebrate a great American art form, jazz. And we hope you're jazz lovers, because you're going to hear some good music tonight.

The story of jazz mirrors the story of our Nation. This proud musical tradition was born of the songs brought here by African slaves. Decades later, it absorbed the waltzes that accompanied immigrants from Europe. Over time, jazz helped break down barriers of prejudice between blacks and whites and even defined an age that brought new liberty to America's women.

In a twist of history, the music that came to America in chains ultimately helped America spread freedom abroad. In 1956, the State Department sent American jazz musician Dizzy Gillespie around the world on a mission to trumpet American values. He was in Turkey when word came that a group of Cypriot students stoned the U.S. Embassy in Athens. And so he was sent to the Greek capital to soothe anti-American hostility with a jazz performance. The concert atmosphere was tense. The students stormed the stage. People were nervous, until the students put Dizzy Gillespie on their shoulders, and shouted "Dizzy! Dizzy! Dizzy!" [*Laughter*]

With its spontaneity and energy and innovation, jazz expresses the best of America's character. And through it—its role in fostering freedom and equality, jazz reflects the best of America's ideals. Tonight this magnificent art form will be brought to life by some jazz masters. Grammy award winning guitarist Earl Klugh will play for us after dinner. And before dinner, we're honored to hear from saxophonist Davey Yarborough, vocalist Esther Williams from the Washington Jazz Arts Institute.

Before Davey and Esther take the stage, please join me in a toast to American jazz, but more importantly, to the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:36 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks on Congressional Action on the Legislative Agenda

June 20, 2008

Good morning. This week, Congress moved forward on two important issues affecting the national security of our country.

Yesterday the House passed a responsible war funding bill that will provide vital resources to our men and women on the frontlines in the war on terror. This legislation gives our troops the funds they need to prevail without tying the hands of our commanders in the field or imposing artificial timetables for withdrawal.

The bill also supports our military families by passing an expansion of the GI bill that makes it easier for our troops to transfer unused education benefits to their spouses and their children. I want to thank the Members of Congress for their action on this legislation, and I urge the Senate to pass it as soon as possible.

Members of the House and Senate also reached a bipartisan agreement yesterday on legislation to allow our intelligence professionals to quickly and effectively monitor the plans of terrorists abroad, while protecting the liberties of Americans here at home.

My Director of National Intelligence and the Attorney General tells me that this is a good bill. It will help our intelligence professionals learn our enemies' plans for new attacks. It ensures that those companies whose assistance is necessary to protect the country will themselves be protected from liability for past or future cooperation with the Government.

The enemy who attacked us on September the 11th is determined to strike this country again. It's vital that our intelligence community has the ability to learn who the terrorists are talking to, what they're saying, and what they are planning.

I encourage the House of Representatives to pass this bill today, and I ask the Senate

to take it up quickly so our intelligence professionals can better protect Americans from harm.

I'm pleased with the bipartisan cooperation on both these bills, and I thank the Members for their efforts.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:11 a.m. from the Oval Office Patio at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Attorney General Michael B. Mukasey.

Memorandum on Waiving the Prohibition on the Use of Economic Support Funds With Respect to Various Parties to the Rome Statute Establishing the International Criminal Court

June 20, 2008

Presidential Determination No. 2008-21

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Waiving the Prohibition on the Use of Economic Support Funds with Respect to Various Parties to the Rome Statute Establishing the International Criminal Court

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 574 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2006 (Public Law 109-102), as carried forward by the Revised Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2007 (Public Law 110-5), I hereby:

- Determine that it is important to the national interests of the United States to waive the prohibition of aforementioned section 574(a) with respect to Bolivia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Ecuador, Kenya, Mali, Mexico, Namibia, Niger, Paraguay, Peru, Samoa, South Africa, and Tanzania; and
- Waive the prohibition of aforementioned section 574(a) with respect to these countries.

You are authorized and directed to report this determination to the Congress and to ar-

range for its publication in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

Memorandum on Unexpected Urgent Refugee and Migration Needs Related to Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and the Western Hemisphere

June 20, 2008

Presidential Determination No. 2008-22

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Unexpected Urgent Refugee and Migration Needs Related to Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and the Western Hemisphere

By the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including sections 2 and 4(a)(1) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962 (the "Act"), as amended, (22 U.S.C. 2601 and 2603), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code:

(1) I hereby determine, pursuant to section 2(c)(1) of the Act, that it is important to the national interest to furnish assistance under the Act in an amount not to exceed \$32.8 million from the United States Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance Fund for the purpose of meeting unexpected and urgent refugee and migration needs, including by contributions to international, governmental, and nongovernmental organizations, and payment of administrative expenses of the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration of the Department of State, related to humanitarian needs in Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and the Western Hemisphere; and

(2) the functions of the President in relation to this memorandum under section 2(d) of the Act, and of establishing terms and conditions under section 2(c)(1) of the Act, are assigned to you, and you may further assign such functions to your subordinates, consistent with applicable law.

You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

**Letter to Congressional Leaders
Transmitting a Report on North
Atlantic Treaty Organization
Enlargement**

June 20, 2008

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Pursuant to section 3(2)(E)(ii) of the Resolution of Ratification to the Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic adopted on April 30, 1998, I am pleased to submit the enclosed report.

In doing so, I reiterate with appreciation the bipartisan support that the Congress has shown for NATO's next round of enlargement.

As provided in the Resolution, for each of the two current NATO invitees (Albania and Croatia) as well as for Macedonia (in the event an invitation is issued by the Alliance before the signing of accession protocols), the enclosed report includes:

- (I) updated information contained in the report required under clause (i) with respect to that country; and
- (II) an analysis of that country's ability to meet the full range of the financial burdens of NATO membership, and the likely impact upon the military effectiveness of NATO of the country invited for accession talks, if the country were to be admitted to NATO.

This report is in both classified and unclassified forms, as provided in the Resolution.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Robert C. Byrd, chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Carl Levin, chairman, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Joseph R. Biden, Jr., chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; David R. Obey, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations; Ike Skelton, chairman, House Committee on Armed Services; and Howard L. Berman, chairman, House Committee on Foreign Affairs.

**Digest of Other
White House Announcements**

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

June 14

In the morning, at the U.S. Ambassador's residence in Paris, France, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Elysee Palace.

In the afternoon, the President and President Nicolas Sarkozy of France returned to the U.S. Ambassador's residence, where they were joined by Mrs. Bush. They all then attended the unveiling of the Flamme de la Liberte statue. Later, he visited the Suresnes American Cemetery and Memorial, where he participated in a wreath-laying ceremony.

Later in the afternoon, the President visited Mont Valerien, where he participated in a wreath-laying ceremony. He then returned to the U.S. Ambassador's residence, where he met with U.S. Embassy staff and their families.

In the evening, the President had a telephone conversation with Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff and Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator R. David Paulison in which he was briefed on the flooding in the Midwest. Later, he and Mrs. Bush attended entertainment and a dinner hosted by U.S. Ambassador to France Craig Roberts Stapleton and his wife, Dorothy Walker Stapleton.

The President declared a major disaster in Wisconsin and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding beginning on June 5 and continuing.

June 15

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Windsor Castle in Windsor, England, where they met with Queen Elizabeth II and her husband, Prince Philip, Duke

of Edinburgh. Later, they traveled to Winfield House, the U.S. Ambassador's residence in London, England. Then, in the Yellow Room, they participated in an interview with Adam Boulton of Sky News.

Later in the afternoon, in the Green Room, the President and Mrs. Bush attended a reception with British military personnel.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to 10 Downing Street, the Prime Minister's residence, where, in the State Dining Room, they had dinner with Prime Minister Gordon Brown of the United Kingdom and his wife, Sarah. Later, they returned to Winfield House.

June 16

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Family Dining Room, he had breakfast with Quartet Representative in the Middle East Tony Blair. He then traveled to 10 Downing Street, the Prime Minister's residence.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to the U.S. Embassy, where he was joined by Mrs. Bush. They then met with U.S. Embassy staff and their families.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Winfield House, where, in the Yellow Room, he met with Conservative Party Leader and Opposition Leader David Cameron of the United Kingdom. Later, he and Mrs. Bush traveled to Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Later in the afternoon, the President traveled to Stormont Castle. Later, he traveled to the Lough View Integrated Primary School, where he was joined by Mrs. Bush. They then toured the school. Later, they returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

June 17

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to St. Albans School, where they attended the wake for Tim Russert, moderator of NBC's "Meet the Press," who passed away on June 13. They then returned to the White House.

The White House announced that the President will welcome Prime Minister

Nguyen Tan Dung of Vietnam to the White House on June 24.

June 18

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President Levy Patrick Mwanawasa of Zambia to discuss the situation in Zimbabwe. Later, he had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in Room 350 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building, the President met with the Chinese delegation to the U.S.-China Strategic Economic Dialogue.

The President announced his intention to nominate J.V. Schwan to be Commissioner of the U.S. International Trade Commission.

The President announced his intention to designate Shara L. Aranoff as Chairman of the U.S. International Trade Commission.

The President announced his intention to designate Daniel Pearson as Vice Chairman of the U.S. International Trade Commission.

June 19

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Cedar Rapids, IA, where he participated in a briefing on the flooding in the Midwest.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Iowa City, IA. While en route aboard Marine One, he took an aerial tour of the areas damaged by flooding. Later, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

The President declared a major disaster in West Virginia and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, flooding, mudslides, and landslides from June 3–7.

The President announced his intention to nominate J. Patrick Rowan to be Assistant Attorney General (National Security Division) at the Department of Justice.

The President announced his intention to nominate Brent R. Orrell to be Assistant Secretary of Labor (Employment and Training).

The President announced his intention to nominate Richard G. Olson, Jr., to be Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates.

The President announced his intention to nominate Diane Barone and Mary E. Curtis

to be members of the National Institute for Literacy Advisory Board.

June 20

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Fort Myers, FL, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Josh Kelchner. He then traveled to Naples, FL, arriving in the afternoon.

Later in the afternoon, at a private residence, the President attended a Lincoln and Mario Diaz-Balart Florida Victory Committee luncheon. Later, he traveled to Raleigh, NC, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Nick Marriam. Then, at a private residence, he attended a Pat McCrory for Governor reception.

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

The President declared a major disaster in Nebraska and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding beginning on May 22 and continuing.

**Nominations
Submitted to the Senate**

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

Submitted June 16

Michele Jeanne Sison,
of Maryland, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Lebanon.

James Christopher Swan,
of California, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Djibouti.

Submitted June 18

J.V. Schwan,
of Virginia, to be a member of the U.S. International Trade Commission for a term expiring June 16, 2017, vice Deanna Tanner Okur, term expired.

Submitted June 19

Diane Barone,
of Nevada, to be a member of the National Institute for Literacy Advisory Board for a term expiring January 30, 2011, vice Donald D. Deshler, term expired.

Mary E. Curtis,
of Massachusetts, to be a member of the National Institute for Literacy Advisory Board for a term expiring November 25, 2011, vice Carmel Borders, term expiring.

Gregory G. Garre,
of Maryland, to be Solicitor General of the United States, vice Paul D. Clement, resigned.

Richard G. Olson, Jr.,
of New Mexico, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the United Arab Emirates.

Michael O'Neill,
of Maryland, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Columbia, vice Gladys Kessler, retired.

Brent R. Orrell,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor, vice Emily Stover DeRocco.

Jeffrey Adam Rosen,
of Virginia, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Columbia, vice Thomas F. Hogan, retired.

J. Patrick Rowan,
of Maryland, to be an Assistant Attorney General, vice Kenneth L. Wainstein.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released June 14

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Wisconsin

Released June 15

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

Released June 16

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

Released June 17

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Press Secretary Tony Fratto

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 6081

Released June 18

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Press Secretary Tony Fratto

Fact sheet: Reducing Gas Prices and Foreign Oil Dependence

Text of a policy memorandum on American made energy

Released June 19

Transcript of a press gaggle by Deputy Press Secretary Scott M. Stanzel, Office of Man-

agement and Budget Director James A. Nussle, and Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator R. David Paulison

Statement by the Press Secretary on House of Representatives action on military personnel and family benefits legislation

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to West Virginia

Text of the citations for recipients of the Presidential Medal of Freedom

Released June 20

Transcript of a press gaggle by Deputy Press Secretary Tony Fratto

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S. 2420

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Nebraska

Acts Approved by the President

Approved June 17

H.R. 6081 / Public Law 110–245
Heroes Earnings Assistance and Relief Tax Act of 2008

Passed June 18, over the President's veto

H.R. 6124 / Public Law 110–246
Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008

Approved June 20

S. 2420 / Public Law 110–247
Federal Food Donation Act of 2008