

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:22 p.m. at the Windsor Hotel Toya Resort and Spa. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda of Japan.

Remarks on Intelligence Reform Legislation

July 9, 2008

Today the United States Congress passed a vital piece of legislation that will make it easier for this administration and future administrations to protect the American people. This vital intelligence bill will allow our national security professionals to quickly and effectively monitor the plans of terrorists outside the United States, while respecting the liberties of the American people.

This legislation is critical to America's safety; it is long overdue. Months ago, my administration set out key criteria that this intelligence legislation would have to have before I would sign it into law. The Attorney General and Director of National Intelligence report that the bill Congress passed today meets these criteria, and therefore, I will soon sign the bill into law.

This bill will help our intelligence professionals learn who the terrorists are talking to, what they're saying, and what they're planning. It will ensure that those companies whose assistance is necessary to protect the country will, themselves, be protected from lawsuits for past or future cooperation with the Government. It will uphold our most solemn obligation as officials of the Federal Government to protect the American people.

I want to thank the members of my administration who worked hard to get this legislation passed. I thank the Democratic and Republican leadership in the Congress for their efforts, particularly House Majority Leader Hoyer, House Republican Whip Blunt, Senators Bond and Rockefeller, Congressmen Hoekstra, Reyes, and Smith.

This legislation shows that even in an election year, we can come together and get important pieces of legislation passed.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:01 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Attorney General Michael B.

Mukasey. Due to the 13-hour time difference, these remarks were made after those to the White House press pool in Toyako, Japan.

Remarks on Signing the FISA Amendments Act of 2008

July 10, 2008

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thank you. Welcome to the Rose Garden. Today I'm pleased to sign landmark legislation that is vital to the security of our people. The bill will allow our intelligence professionals to quickly and effectively monitor the communications of terrorists abroad, while respecting the liberties of Americans here at home. The bill I sign today will help us meet our most solemn responsibility: to stop new attacks and to protect our people.

Members of my administration have made a vigorous case for this important law. I want to thank them, and I also want to thank the Members of the House and the Senate who've worked incredibly hard to get this legislation done. Mr. Vice President, welcome.

Respect the Members of the Senate and the House who've joined us—Senate Republican Whip Jon Kyl; John Boehner, House Republican leader; Roy Blunt, House Republican whip. I do want to pay special tribute to Congressman Steny Hoyer, House majority leader, for his hard work on this bill. I thank so very much Senator Jay Rockefeller, chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, and Senator Kit Bond, vice chairman, for joining us. I appreciate the hard work of Congressman Silvestre Reyes, chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and Congressman Pete Hoekstra, ranking member. I also welcome Congressman Lamar Smith, ranking member of the House Judiciary. I thank all the other Members of the House and Senate who've joined us; appreciate your very good work.

I welcome Attorney General Michael Mukasey, as well as Admiral Mike McConnell, Director of National Intelligence. Appreciate other members of the administration who have joined us. I want to thank the congressional staff who are here and all the supporters of this piece of legislation.

Almost 7 years have passed since that September morning when nearly 3,000 men, women, and children were murdered in our midst. The attack changed our country forever. We realized America was at—a nation at war against a ruthless and persistent enemy. We realized that these violent extremists would spare no effort to kill again. And in the aftermath of 9/11, few would have imagined that we would be standing here 7 years later without another attack on American soil.

The fact that the terrorists have failed to strike our shores again does not mean that our enemies have given up. To the contrary, since 9/11, they've plotted a number of attacks on our homeland. Like Members standing up here, I receive briefings on the very real and very dangerous threats that America continues to face.

One of the important lessons learned after 9/11 was that America's intelligence professionals lacked some of the tools they needed to monitor the communications of terrorists abroad. It's essential that our intelligence community know who our enemies are talking to, what they're saying, and what they're planning. Last year, Congress passed temporary legislation that helped our intelligence community monitor these communications.

The legislation I am signing today will ensure that our intelligence community professionals have the tools they need to protect our country in the years to come. The DNI and the Attorney General both report that, once enacted, this law will provide vital assistance to our intelligence officials in their work to thwart terrorist plots. This law will ensure that those companies whose assistance is necessary to protect the country will themselves be protected from lawsuits from past or future cooperation with the government. This law will protect the liberties of our citizens while maintaining the vital flow of intelligence. This law will play a critical role in helping to prevent another attack on our soil.

Protecting America from another attack is the most important responsibility of the Federal Government, the most solemn obligation that a President undertakes. When I first addressed the Congress after 9/11, I carried a badge by the mother of a police officer who

died in the World Trade Center. I pledged to her, to the families of the victims, and to the American people that I would never forget the wound that was inflicted on our country. I vowed to do everything in my power to prevent another attack on our Nation. I believe this legislation is going to help keep that promise. And I thank the Members who have joined us. And now it's my honor to sign the bill.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:17 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. H.R. 6304, approved July 10, was assigned Public Law No. 110-261.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Economic Advisers

July 11, 2008

I want to thank the members of my economic team for assembling here at the Department of Energy. Secretary Bodman, thank you for hosting us. First of all, Secretary Paulson came by this morning to brief me on the financial markets. Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae are very important institutions. You spent a fair amount of time discussing these institutions. He assured me that he and Ben Bernanke will be working this issue very hard.

Secondly, he did inform us that 112 million stimulus payments have gone out, and I congratulate you and your Department for doing your job. We've so far spent about \$91 billion in tax relief, which has had a positive effect on retail sales. The problem, of course, is that gasoline prices are up, which has affected the people here in our country. And one of the main reasons why gasoline prices are up is because crude oil prices are up. And one reason crude oil prices are up is because demand is outstripping supply.

And therefore, what can we do about it? And that ought to be the question the United States Congress asks. And one way to deal with supply problems is to increase supply here in America. And one of the things we just went through at the briefing from Secretary Bodman and Secretary Kempthorne about the vast potential of crude oil reserves on offshore lands, as well as in Alaska, as well as in the oil shale in the western part of our