

teleconference were Capt. Brent Kennedy, USA, Capt. David J. Smith, USA, Capt. Stephen N. Pratt, USA, Capt. David Williams, USA, M. Sgt. Corine Lombardo, USA, 1st Lt. Gregg A. Murphy, USA, S. Sgt. David

Smith-Barry, USA, Sfc. Jerry R. Munoz, USA, Sgt. Dustin Giesbrecht, USA, and Sgt. Ronald E. Long, Jr., USA, 42d Infantry Division; and Sgt. Maj. Akeel Shaker Nassir, 4th Iraqi Army Division.

## Remarks After Signing the Book of Condolences at the Embassy of Pakistan

*October 14, 2005*

Mr. Ambassador, thank you for having us. I'm here to express the condolences of the American people to those who suffered mightily as a result of the earthquake that struck your country. There's been a lot of loss of life, and Americans pray for those families who have lost a loved one.

There's been a lot of damage, and we want to help in any way we can. I told the Ambassador that—reminded him what I told President Musharraf—I said when I spoke to him, I said, "Pakistan is a friend, and America will help." We've moved a

lot of military equipment in there. We're helping with humanitarian aid as well. And so not only will we offer our prayers, but we'll offer our help and help the people and help the Government, help this great nation get back on its feet.

Thank you for having us.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:46 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Pakistan's Ambassador to the U.S. Jehangir Karamat; and President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan.

## The President's Radio Address

*October 15, 2005*

Good morning. This weekend is a momentous time in the history of the Middle East. After choosing their leaders in free elections in January, the Iraqi people have gone to the polls to vote on a democratic constitution. This Constitution is the result of months of debate and compromise by representatives of Iraq's diverse ethnic and religious communities. These leaders came together to produce a document that protects fundamental freedoms and lays the foundation for a lasting democracy. Earlier this week, the Iraqi people embraced changes to the text that have led to its endorsement by some Sunni leaders as well

as Kurdish and Shi'a leaders. Now the people of Iraq will have the final say.

By casting their ballots, the Iraqi people deal a severe blow to the terrorists and send a clear message to the world: Iraqis will decide the future of their country through peaceful elections, not violent insurgency. And by their courageous example, they're charting a new course for the entire Middle East.

This weekend's election is a critical step forward in Iraq's march toward democracy, and with each step the Iraqi people take, Al Qaida's vision for the region becomes more remote. As Iraqis prepared for this

election, the world learned of a letter written by a leading terrorist explaining why Iraq is the central front in their war on civilization. Al Qaida's number-two leader, a man named Zawahiri, wrote to his chief deputy in Iraq, the terrorist Zarqawi. We intercepted this letter, and we have released it to the public. In it, Zawahiri lays out why Al Qaida views Iraq as "the place for the greatest battle" of our day.

He says that establishing Al Qaida's dominion over Iraq is the first step towards their larger goal of imposing Islamic radicalism across the broader Middle East. Zawahiri writes, and I quote, "The jihad in Iraq requires several incremental goals. The first stage: Expel the Americans from Iraq. The second stage: Establish an Islamic authority over as much territory as you can, to spread its power in Iraq. The third stage: Extend the jihad wave to the secular countries neighboring Iraq," end quote.

This letter shows that Al Qaida intends to make Iraq a terrorist haven and a staging ground for attacks against other nations, including the United States. The letter makes equally clear that the terrorists have a problem: Their campaign of murder and mayhem is turning the people against them. The letter warns Zarqawi that, quote, "Many of your Muslim admirers amongst the common folk are wondering about your attacks on the Shi'a," end quote. Even Al Qaida recognizes that with every random bombing and every funeral of a child, the Muslim world sees the terrorists for what they really are, murderers at war with the Iraqi people.

These terrorists are driven by an ideology that exploits Islam to serve a violent political vision: the establishment of a totalitarian empire that denies political and religious freedom. This is why the terrorists have fought to prevent and disrupt this weekend's elections. They understand that

the act of voting is a rejection of them and their distorted vision of Islam. Simply by coming out to vote, the Iraqi people have shown that they want to live in freedom, and they will not accept a return to tyranny and terror.

The terrorists know their only chance for success is to break our will and force us to retreat. The Al Qaida letter points to Vietnam as a model. Zawahiri says, quote, "The aftermath of the collapse of American power in Vietnam and how they ran and left their agents is noteworthy," end quote. Al Qaida believes that America can be made to run again. They are gravely mistaken. America will not run, and we will not forget our responsibilities.

In Iraq, we have brought down a murderous regime. We have stood by the Iraqi people through two elections, and we will stand by them until they have established a free nation that can govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself. When we do, Iraq will be an ally in the war on terror and a partner for peace and moderation in the Muslim world. And because America stood firm in this important fight, our children and grandchildren will be safer and more secure.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:50 a.m. on October 14 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 15. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 14 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his address, the President referred to Ayman Al-Zawahiri, founder of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and senior Al Qaida associate; and senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

## Remarks on the Vote Approving the Iraqi Constitution October 16, 2005

On behalf of the American people, I'd like to congratulate the people of Iraq for the successful completion of a vote on their draft constitution. By all indications, the turnout was greater than the turnout from the last January election, which is good news. By all indications, the Sunnis participated in greater numbers in this election than last time. And that's good news. After all, the purpose of a democracy is to make sure everybody is—participates in the process.

I'm also pleased, from the initial indications, that the level of violence was considerably less than the last election. That's a tribute to the Iraqis—forces who we've trained as well as coalition forces that worked hard to make sure that democracy could move forward in Iraq.

This is a very positive day for the Iraqis and as well for world peace. Democracies are peaceful countries. The vote today in Iraq stands in stark contrast to the attitudes and philosophy and strategy of Al Qaida

and its terrorist friends and killers. We believe and the Iraqis believe the best way forward is through the democratic process. Al Qaida wants to use their violent ways to stop the march of democracy because democracy is the exact opposite of what they believe is right.

We're making progress toward peace. We're making progress toward an ally that will join us in the war on terror, that will prevent Al Qaida from establishing safe haven in Iraq, and a country that will serve as an example for others who aspire to live in freedom.

So, again, I congratulate the Iraqi people. I thank you for meeting this milestone. Thank you for doing what is right, to set the foundation for peace for future generations to come.

Appreciate it. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:47 p.m. on the South Grounds at the White House.

## Remarks Following Discussions With President Georgi Purvanov of Bulgaria and an Exchange With Reporters October 17, 2005

*President Bush.* We'll have opening statements, two questions a side. Welcome, Mr. President.

Mr. President, your country is a strategic ally. It's been my honor to welcome you to the Oval Office, and thank you for a wide-ranging discussion on a lot of important topics.

Bulgaria has been a valued partner in NATO. Your country has been a strong example for democracy. You understand, like I understand, that the march of democracy

will lead to world peace. I want to thank you for being a part of a vast coalition that helped liberate 50 million people. We discussed important bilateral issues.

And I want to thank you again for coming. Thank you for your leadership, and thank you for your friendship.

*President Purvanov.* Thank you, Mr. President. Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to say how pleased I am with the discussions we just had with Mr. President. I am delighted that we had a chance to