

of Israel or because we misled the American people. And they know the difference between a loyal opposition that points out what is wrong and defeatists who refuse to see that anything is right.

When our soldiers hear politicians in Washington question the mission they are risking their lives to accomplish, it hurts their morale. In a time of war, we have a responsibility to show that whatever our political differences at home, our Nation is united and determined to prevail. And we have a responsibility to our men and women in uniform, who deserve to know that once our politicians vote to send them into harm's way, our support will be with them in good days and in bad days, and we will settle for nothing less than complete victory.

We also have an opportunity this year to show the Iraqi people what responsible debate in democracy looks like. In a free society, there is only one check on political speech, and that's the judgment of the people. So I ask all Americans to hold their elected leaders to account and demand a debate that brings credit to our democracy, not comfort to our adversaries.

Support for the mission in Iraq should not be a partisan matter. VFW members come from all across the country and both sides of the political aisle, yet your position on the war is clear. In a recent resolution, the VFW declared, quote, "It is critical that the United States succeed in Iraq, which will result in stability and security in the region." I appreciate your support for the

mission in Iraq, and so do our troops in the fight. Your lives of service, from the first time you put on the uniform to this day, are a credit to our country and an inspiration to our military. A new generation of soldiers and sailors, airmen, marines, and coastguardsmen is now carrying out an urgent and noble mission, and they're doing so with the same determination and courage as you who came before them.

Some of our finest men and women have given their lives in freedom's cause. Others have returned home with wounds that the best medicine cannot heal. We hold all who sacrificed and their families in our thoughts and our prayers. And I'm going to make you this pledge: We will not waver, we will not weaken, and we will not back down in the cause they served. By their sacrifice, we are laying the foundation of freedom in a troubled part of the world. And by laying that foundation, we're laying the foundation of peace for generations to come.

Thank you for letting me come by today. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:17 a.m. at the Omni Shoreham Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. John P. Abizaid, USA, commander, U.S. Central Command; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks on Signing the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005

January 10, 2006

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks for coming. I appreciate you all being here. In a moment, I'll have the honor of signing

the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act.

Human trafficking is an offense against human dignity, a crime in which human

beings, many of them teenagers and young children, are bought and sold and often sexually abused by violent criminals. Our Nation is determined to fight and end this modern form of slavery. And this bipartisan bill will help expand our efforts to combat this brutal crime that steals innocence and destroys lives.

I want to thank the Members of the United States Congress who have joined me here. I appreciate Senator Sam Brownback, Chris Smith, Deborah Pryce, and Carolyn Maloney for their hard work on this important legislation.

I appreciate the Secretary of State, who has joined us here, and the Attorney General, Al Gonzales, and his wife.

In today's world, too often, human traffickers abuse the trust of children and expose them to the worst of life at a young age. It takes a perverse form of evil to exploit and hurt those vulnerable members of society. Human traffickers operate with greed and without conscience, treating their victims as nothing more than goods and commodities for sale to the highest bidder. Recent years, hundreds of thousands of people around the world have been trafficked against their will across international boundaries, and many have been forced into sexual servitude. Thousands of teenagers and young girls are trafficked into the United States every year. They're held hostage. They're forced to submit to unspeakable evil. America has a particular duty to fight this horror, because human trafficking is an affront to the defining promise of our country.

We're attacking this problem aggressively. Over the past 4 years, the Department of Homeland Security has taken new measures to protect children from sexual predators, as well as pornography and prostitution rings. The Department of Health and Human Services has partnered with faith-based and community organizations to form antitrafficking coalitions in 17 major cities across our country. The Department of Justice has more than tripled the num-

ber of cases brought against these traffickers.

The bill I sign today will help us to continue to investigate and prosecute traffickers and provide new grants to State and local law enforcement. Yet, we cannot put the criminals out of business until we also confront the problem of demand. Those who pay for the chance to sexually abuse children and teenage girls must be held to account. So we'll investigate and prosecute the customers, the unscrupulous adults who prey on the young and the innocent.

We also have a duty to reach out to victims of trafficking, some of whom were smuggled into this country as children. The legislation I sign today will help us provide important new services to these victims, including appointing a guardian for young victims and providing access to residential treatment facilities to help victims get a chance at a better life.

We'll continue to call on other nations to take action against trafficking within their own borders. Three years ago at the United Nations, I asked other governments to pass laws making human trafficking a crime. Since then, many have risen to the challenge. Secretary Rice and I will continue to press the others to rise to the challenge. We are working with the nations of Southeast Asia and others to crack down on sex tourism. America is a compassionate and decent nation, and we will not tolerate an industry that preys on the young and the vulnerable. The trade in human beings continues in our time, and we are called by conscience and compassion to bring this cruel practice to an end.

For those of you who've worked on this bill, thank you very much. For those of you who are involved in this important struggle, I appreciate your efforts, continue to do so. For those of you who are providing the compassionate care to those who've been affected by human trafficking, thank you for your love. And for those of

you in Congress who've worked to make this reality, good work.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:33 p.m. in Room 350 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Ex-

ecutive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Rebecca Turner Gonzales, wife of Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales. H.R. 972, approved January 10, was assigned Public Law No. 109-164.

Statement on Signing the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005

January 10, 2006

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 972, the "Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005." This Act enhances our ability to combat trafficking in persons by extending and improving prosecutorial and diplomatic tools, and also adds new protections for victims.

Section 104(e)(2) purports to require the Secretary of State, prior to voting for a new or reauthorized peacekeeping mission under the auspices of a multilateral organization (or, in an emergency, as far in advance as is practicable), to submit to the Congress a specific report. The executive

branch shall construe this reporting requirement in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority as Commander in Chief and the President's constitutional authority to conduct the Nation's foreign affairs.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
January 10, 2006.

NOTE: H.R. 972, approved January 10, was assigned Public Law No. 109-164.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency Relating to Cuba and of the Emergency Authority Relating to the Regulation of the Anchorage and Movement of Vessels

January 10, 2006

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

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, which states that the emergency declared with respect to the Government of Cuba's destruction of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba on February 24, 1996, as amended and expanded on February 26, 2004, is to continue in effect beyond March 1, 2006.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH