

Because also I mentioned, I discussed with the President the impact of the situation in Darfur on the neighboring countries, particularly Chad and the Central African Republic. But also the difficult situation in Somalia——

President Bush. Yes, sir.

President Mbeki. ——and the President, together, we are very keen that, indeed, something must move there. This was a failed state. It's necessary to support transitional government, to restoring a government, and to reunify the country and so on. It's an important thing because the problem—one of the big problems is that as it is, it provides a base for terrorists—find safe haven there and then can spread out to the rest of the continent. It's something that is of shared concern.

But again, of course, I was very, very reassured when the President said he is committed to the success of the WTO negotiations. It's a very important part, in terms of addressing the agenda of the poor

of the world. They need these market-access issues addressed, and so on. I was very, very pleased, indeed, that President said indeed we must work to make sure that WTO negotiating process succeeds.

We—finally, President, I'd like to say I was very pleased that, indeed, you said we shall need to work even—together even more intensely than we have in the past, because with effect from the 1st of January, South Africa, of course, joins the Security Council as a nonpermanent member. As I'm saying, I was very glad that the President said that's going to mean we'll need better interaction so that we could work together, indeed, to help to find solutions to all these wide range of issues that are on the agenda of the Security Council.

But thank you very much, Mr. President.

President Bush. Proud you're back. Thank you, sir. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:12 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Statement on the Death of Jeane J. Kirkpatrick *December 8, 2006*

Laura and I are deeply saddened by the death of Jeane Kirkpatrick. As a professor, author, ambassador, and adviser to Presidents, she influenced the thinking of generations of Americans on the importance of American leadership in advancing the cause of freedom and democracy around the globe. She defended the cause of freedom at a pivotal time in world history, and her courageous service as our United Nations Ambassador inspired her fellow Amer-

icans and lovers of liberty around the world. Jeane's powerful intellect helped America win the cold war. Her insights and teachings will continue to illuminate the path ahead for the United States in the world. We send our condolences to Jeane's family and friends, and on behalf of all Americans, we give thanks for her extraordinary life.

Statement on the National Economy *December 8, 2006*

Today we received a new report that confirms the continued strength of the American economy. The November jobs report showed that 132,000 more Americans found work last month and that job creation in previous months was stronger than first estimated, adding 42,000 jobs to the numbers released last month. The unem-

ployment rate remained low at 4.5 percent. This is good news for American workers, and they are also seeing good news in their paychecks. As we look forward, our goal is to maintain the progrowth policies that have strengthened our economy and will stimulate the creation of good jobs and higher wages.

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

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

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

On Thursday, I had breakfast with Prime Minister Tony Blair of Britain. We discussed the sectarian violence in Iraq and the need to confront extremists inside Iraq and throughout the region. The Prime Minister explains it this way: "The violence is not an accident or a result of faulty planning. It is a deliberate strategy. It is the direct result of outside extremists teaming up with internal extremists—Al Qaida with the Sunni insurgents and Iran with Shi'a militia—to foment hatred and thus throttle, at birth, the possibility of nonsectarian democracy."

The Prime Minister and I also discussed the report I received this week from the Iraq Study Group, chaired by former Secretary of State James Baker and former Congressman Lee Hamilton. Their report provides a straightforward picture of the

grave situation we face in Iraq. The Iraq Study Group's report also explicitly endorses the strategic goal we've set in Iraq: an Iraq that can "govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself."

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

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

The Iraq Study Group understands the urgency of getting it right in Iraq. The