

the people of Afghanistan, the newly liberated Afghanistan. And I know we're all proud of the men and women who have helped liberate that country—the men and women who wear our uniform who helped liberate that country and continue to make the sacrifices necessary.

I thank you for giving me a chance to come and talk about a strategy for success, a strategy that is part of our efforts to make sure that a generation of Americans, beyond our generation, will look back and say: "They did their duty to protect the homeland, and as a result, we can live in peace."

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:05 a.m. at the Mayflower Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Christopher DeMuth, president, American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research; Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq; Lt. Gen. Karl W. Eikenberry, USA, commander, Combined Forces Command—Afghanistan; President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan; Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates; and Afghan security officer Jamal "Rambo" Udin. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on Congressional Action on Fiscal Year 2007 Appropriations Legislation

February 15, 2007

I am pleased that the final bill for the Fiscal Year 2007 appropriations process complies with the overall spending limits that I set. That means for the third year in a row, domestic discretionary spending will be below inflation. However, I remain concerned that the bill, in many cases, reflects the wrong spending priorities. In particular, the bill shifts funding needed for our Armed Forces to unrequested domestic programs. The Congress should work to address these priorities without adding to the deficit.

I am pleased this legislation makes progress on earmarks, but there is more to do. As the Congress takes up the 2008 budget, it should continue to take steps to improve transparency for all earmarks, provide the option of an up-or-down vote for each earmark, and reduce the number and cost of earmarks by at least half.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.J. Res. 20, which was assigned Public Law No. 110–5.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Martin Torrijos Espino of Panama

February 16, 2007

President Bush. *Senor Presidente, bienvenidos a la Casa Blanca.* I'm glad you're here.

President Torrijos Espino. Thank you, President.

President Bush. I always enjoy my discussions with you. You're a visionary leader