

We recognize that all nations have an interest and responsibility in protecting those rights and freedoms.

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: This memorandum and its attached annex were released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 14.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Military Leaders *June 14, 2007*

It's been my honor to receive General Dempsey and his wife here to the Oval Office to thank both of them for their service to the country. General Dempsey has just come out of Iraq, where he is working with the Iraqi troops to prepare for—to prepare them for the day when they will be responsible for the security of their country. He explained to me the progress that has been made over the years that he has been there. Obviously, we have still more work to do.

But I—my main purpose of inviting the general here is to hear his summary, but to thank him. It's an extraordinary country where people volunteer to go into combat zones to protect the security of the United States of America. No more important mis-

sion for our military than Iraq and Afghanistan.

And General Dempsey and his family have been very much involved in this war on terror. And we appreciate you and thank you and wish you all the best in your next assignment.

Thanks for being here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:22 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Participating in the meeting were Vice President Dick Cheney; Gen. Peter Pace, USMC, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Lt. Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, USA, former commander, Multi-National Security Transition Command—Iraq, and his wife Deanie.

Remarks to the Associated Builders and Contractors *June 14, 2007*

Thank you all. Thank you. Thanks for coming. I'm proud to be with you, glad to be back with the Associated Builders and Contractors. I appreciate your organization. I didn't realize you were founded in 1950, about the same time a piano nearly fell through the roof at the White House—[laughter]—thereby causing Harry Truman to decide to renovate it. And for that, Laura and I are very grateful. [Laughter]

I am grateful for your organization as well. I thank you for being builders, doers,

and dreamers. I thank you for being people who are willing to take a risk to help build our Nation and, at the same time, employ people. I want to talk to you today about how to keep the entrepreneurial spirit strong, how to keep this economy growing, and our need to protect the American people from harm. And I appreciate you giving me a chance to come and do so.

David Meyer, thank you, and I thank your board for inviting me. Joining us today is one of my finest Secretaries, Secretary