

school bus had just passed over the Mississippi River when the bridge below them gave way. The bus dropped more than 20 feet and came to rest on the guardrail of the collapsed bridge span. A staff member named Jeremy Hernandez quickly swung into action. He broke open the back door and helped evacuate the terrified children to safety. The mother of one of the children on board credited Jeremy's presence of mind with helping spare her daughter from tragedy. She put it this way: "I don't know what he was thinking, but it must have been something really good."

Our country is fortunate to have brave and selfless citizens like Jeremy, and all those who risked their own safety to aid in the rescue. This is a difficult time for the community in Minneapolis, but the people there are decent and resilient, and

they will get through these painful hours. As they do, they know that all of America stands with them, and that we will do all we can to help them recover and rebuild.

May God bless those who are hurting in Minneapolis, and may God bless our wonderful country. Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:50 a.m. on August 3 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 4. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 3. In his address, the President referred to Gov. Timothy J. Pawlenty of Minnesota; and Mayor R.T. Rybak of Minneapolis, MN. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

## Remarks Following a Tour of the Interstate 35W Bridge Damage in Minneapolis, Minnesota

*August 4, 2007*

On behalf of the citizens of America, I bring prayers from the American people to those who suffered loss of life as a result of the collapse of the 35W bridge here in the Twin Cities. I bring the prayers of those who wonder about whether they'll ever see a loved one again.

First, I want to thank the Governor and the mayor and the Senators, Members of the Congress for working in a coordinated way to respond to this tragedy. I have met with the chief of police and the sheriff, rescue workers, people who represent men and women who are working as hard as they possibly can to save life and to find life, to go under these murky waters to find the facts.

And it's going to take a while, but I have been impressed by not only their determination but have been impressed by their compassion. I have met people that

were on the bridge; I met a man who was on the bridge when it collapsed. His instinct was to run to a schoolbus of screaming children and to help bring them to safety.

We have an amazing country, where people's instinct, first instinct, is to help save life. There's—a lot of people's first instincts here in the Twin Cities was to save the lives of somebody who was hurting. And I know the people of this community thank those—their fellow citizens who did that.

I'm here with the Secretary of Transportation because our message to the Twin Cities is, we want to get this bridge rebuilt as quick as possible; that we understand this is a main artery of life here; that people count on this bridge and this highway system to get to work. There's a lot of paperwork involved with government. One of our jobs is to work with the

Governor and the mayor and the Senators and the Members of the Congress to cut through that paperwork and to see if we can't get this bridge rebuilt in a way that not only expedites the flow of traffic but in a way that can stand the test of time.

I make no promises on a timetable. I do promise that Mary Peters, the Secretary of Transportation, is going to be in charge of this project. I do promise she's going to listen to the local authorities to find out what the folks here need. I do promise that when she sees roadblocks and hurdles in the way of getting the job done, she'll do everything she can to eliminate them.

Out of these tragedies can come a better life. And I, having visited with the people here, believe that not only are they committed to a better life, not only are they

committed to turning something ugly into something good, but it's going to happen.

So I'm proud to be with you. Thank you for your leadership. God bless the people of this part of the world. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:40 a.m. at the Lower Street Anthony Falls Lock and Dam, St. Paul District. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Timothy J. Pawlenty of Minnesota; Mayor R.T. Rybak of Minneapolis, MN; Sens. Norm Coleman and Amy Klobuchar; Timothy Dolan, chief, Minneapolis Police Department, MN; Richard W. Stanek, sheriff, Hennepin County, MN; and Gary Babineau, a truckdriver from Blaine, MN, who helped rescue schoolchildren trapped by the bridge collapse.

## Statement on Senate Passage of Intelligence Reform Legislation *August 4, 2007*

Last night the United States Senate passed legislation to give our intelligence professionals the legal tools and authority they need to keep America safe. I appreciate the hard work they did to find common ground to pass this critical bill. Today the House of Representatives has an oppor-

tunity to consider that bill, pass it, and send it to me for my signature. Protecting America is our most solemn obligation, and I urge the House to pass this bill without delay.

NOTE: The statement referred to S. 1927.

## Statement on House of Representatives Passage of Intelligence Reform Legislation *August 4, 2007*

Tonight the House joined the Senate in passing legislation that will close a critical gap in our intelligence collection, and I appreciate their efforts to complete the legislation before the August recess. The Director of National Intelligence, Mike McConnell, has assured me that this bill gives him what he needs to continue to protect the

country, and therefore, I will sign this legislation as soon as it gets to my desk.

I also want to remind Congress that our work on reforming the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act is not complete. When Congress returns in September, we need to work together on additional reforms, including the important issue of providing