

Q. Yes. Are you, in fact, troubled by—
The President. Why don't you clarify that for me?

Q. Well, are you—

The President. What aspect of it? That I don't think we ought to fund the troops?

Q. No, sir.

The President. I think we need to fund the troops. I submitted a supplemental last February. Anyway—

Q. My question, sir, is, are you feeling troubled about your standing here today, about perhaps facing a credibility gap with the American people?

The President. No, I'm feeling pretty spirited, pretty good about life, and have made the decision to come before you so I can explain the NIE. And I have said Iran is dangerous, and the NIE doesn't do anything to change my opinion about the danger Iran poses to the world. Quite the contrary. I'm using this NIE as an opportunity to continue to rally our colleagues and allies.

Q. Do you think it—

The President. It makes it—the NIE makes it clear that the strategy we have used in the past is effective. And the reason why we need to make sure that strategy goes forward for the future is because if Iran shows up with a nuclear weapon at some point in time, the world is going to say, what happened to them in 2007? How come they couldn't see the impending danger? What caused them not to understand

that a country that once had a weapons program could reconstitute the weapons program? How come they couldn't see that the important first step in developing a weapon is the capacity to be able to enrich uranium? How come they didn't know that with that capacity, that knowledge could be passed on to a covert program? What blinded them to the realities of the world? And it's not going to happen on my watch, Mark.

And so, kind of, psychology 101 ain't working. It's just not working. I understand the issues; I clearly see the problems. And I'm going to use the NIE to continue to rally the international community for the sake of peace.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 10:01 a.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Mahmud Ahmadi-nejad of Iran; King Abdallah bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia; Prime Minister Stephen Harper of Canada; President Alvaro Uribe Velez of Colombia; and Cable News Network reporter Candy Crowley. Reporters referred to President Hugo Chavez Frias of Venezuela; and President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this news conference.

Statement on Senate Approval of a Free Trade Agreement With Peru December 4, 2007

I commend the Senate for approving the free trade agreement with Peru with strong bipartisan support. This agreement will level the playing field for American exporters and investors and will expand an important market in this hemisphere for U.S. goods and services, which will help

strengthen economic growth and job creation in the United States. Approval of this agreement also signals our firm support for those who share our values of freedom and democracy and expanding opportunity for all.

Today's action by the Senate also marks the approval of the first free trade agreement that fulfills the May 10 bipartisan trade agreement with Congress by incorporating enforceable labor and environmental standards. I look forward to signing this legislation into law and urge Congress to promptly consider and approve our other

pending free trade agreements, starting with Colombia, which would be important to the stability of the region, and including Panama and South Korea.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this statement.

Remarks on Arrival in Omaha, Nebraska *December 5, 2007*

The President. Good morning. I'm pleased to be back in Nebraska.

Senatorial candidate Michael O. Johanns. Welcome back.

The President. I do want to say a couple of words about Iran before I talk about my friend Mike Johanns.

On the way out here, I spoke with my team, who gave me a report on conversations that the Secretary of State and our National Security Adviser have had over the last couple of days with their counterparts in the United Kingdom, in Germany and France and Russia. These countries understand that the Iranian nuclear issue is a problem and continues to be a problem that must be addressed by the international community. A number of them have said so publicly, and I appreciate their comments.

I appreciate the work of our intelligence community in helping us better understand Iran's past and present nuclear activities. Their information is critical in increasing our understanding and helping us develop a sound policy.

It is clear from the latest NIE that the Iranian Government has more to explain about its nuclear intentions and past actions, especially the covert nuclear weapons program pursued until the fall of 2003, which the Iranian regime has yet to acknowledge. The Iranians have a strategic choice to make. They can come clean with

the international community about the scope of their nuclear activities and fully accept the longstanding offer to suspend their enrichment program and come to the table and negotiate, or they can continue on a path of isolation that is not in the best interest of the Iranian people. The choice is up to the Iranian regime.

I'm here also to talk about my friend Mike Johanns. I have gotten to know him well, and there's no doubt in my mind he'll make a great United States Senator from the State of Nebraska. He's an honorable, decent man, and he's a humble man. When given a task, he can get the job done.

People of Nebraska have gotten to know Mike as a result of his leadership when he was the Governor. I got to know Mike as the result of his being a fine leader at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Mike understands farming, and he understands ranching. He understands the issues that the people who work the soil will face. If I were someone living in Nebraska who cared about the agricultural industry, I'd want somebody who knew what he was talking about being my Senator. And Mike Johanns knows what he's talking about when it comes to agricultural matters.

He also understands what he's talking about when it comes to national security matters. He sat in the Cabinet Room with me and other members of my Cabinet, discussing how best to secure the United