

from many strongholds in Iraq. Today, violence is at the lowest level since March of 2004. As a result of this progress—some of our troops are coming home as result of our policy of—called return on success. We welcome them home. And with this legislation we send a clear message to all that are serving on the frontline that our Nation continues to support them.

We also owe a debt of gratitude to our Nation's military families. They endure sleepless nights and the daily struggle of caring for children while a loved one is serving far from home. We have a responsibility to provide for them. So I'm pleased that the bill I sign today includes an expansion of the GI bill. This legislation will make it easier for our troops to transfer unused education benefits to their spouses and children. It will help us to recruit and reward the best military on the face of the Earth. It will help us to meet our responsibilities to those who support our troops every day, America's great military families.

The bill also includes agreed-upon funding for other critical national priorities. This bill includes \$465 million for the Merida Initiative, a partnership with Mexico and nations in Central America to crack down on violent drug-trafficking gangs. The bill includes nearly \$2.7 billion to help ensure that any State facing a disaster, like the recent flooding and tornadoes in the Midwest, has access to needed resources. This bill includes a measured expansion of un-

employment insurance benefits with a reasonable work requirement. And this bill holds overall discretionary spending within the sensible limits that I requested.

The bill is a result of close collaboration between my administration and members of both parties on Capitol Hill. I appreciate the hard work of my Cabinet, especially the leaders of Defense and State and Veterans Affairs, the Office of National Drug Control Policy, as well as OMB. I want to thank House and Senate leadership and leaders of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees. I am particularly grateful to Congressmen Boehner, Hoyer, Obey, and Lewis. And I want to thank Members who worked hard for the GI bill expansion, especially Senators Webb and Warner, Graham, Burr, and McCain.

This bill shows the American people that even in an election year, Republicans and Democrats can come together to stand behind our troops and their families.

Thank you for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:48 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Veterans Affairs James B. Peake; and James A. Nussle, Director, Office of Management and Budget. H.R. 2642, approved June 30, was assigned Public Law No. 110-252. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks at Opening Day of 2008 White House Tee-Ball June 30, 2008

The President. Menudo, thank you. Yes, we're glad you're here. Opening day 2008, tee-ball on the South Lawn. I'm proud to be joined by the commissioner for the day, Roberto Clemente, Jr. *Bienvenido.*

Roberto Clemente, Jr. Gracias, gracias.

The President. Si. Roberto, I don't know if you know this or not, but we've got a special right field porch this year. This is an addition—we might just call that Clemente porch. After all, we did retire your dad's number this year.

Mr. Clemente. Thank you.

The President. I'm so proud to welcome, from Manati, Puerto Rico, the Little Angels. We're glad you're here; and from Camden, New Jersey, the mighty Red Sox; first base coach, Jose Rijo—he could deliver that fast ball in the best of times—now with the Washington Nationals. Third base coach, Carlos Gutierrez, Secretary of Commerce; Carlos, glad you're here. Congressman Rob Andrews—Congressman, thanks for coming. We're sure proud you're here.

Today we're very lucky to have our game called by Natalie Morales.

Natalie Morales. Thank you.

The President. Natalie, *bienvenidos*. Thank you for coming.

Ms. Morales. *Gracias*.

The President. Natalie happens to work for NBC's "Today" show. We really appreciate you coming.

Ms. Morales. That's right. Thank you, sir, for having me.

The President. No problem.

Boy Scout Troop 457 from Rockville, Maryland, is with us today. Thanks for coming. Steve Keener, president of Little League America, we're glad you're here, Steve. Thanks for coming back. Appreciate you supporting baseball throughout America.

Laura and I are thrilled also to be joined today by our first pitch kind of semi-thrower-outers. [*Laughter*] Angel Macias is with us. For those of you who follow Little League baseball, you might remember, in 1957, *es verdad*?

Angel Macias. Right.

The President. *Si*. He threw a perfect game for Monterrey, Mexico, in the Little League World Series, and Mexico went on to win the world series. And we're so glad you're here. Welcome to the White House.

And standing with you is Jake T. Austin, who happens—who's going to be playing Angel in the movie—

Jake T. Austin. Yes, I play Angel Macias in the movie.

The President. And what's the movie?

Mr. Austin. The movie is called "The Perfect Game," and it's coming out in 2008, this year.

The President. —2008, yes. You probably recommend we all go see it.

Mr. Austin. We'd greatly appreciate it. [*Laughter*]

The President. Yes. Well, Laura was suggesting, Jake T., that we actually have a showing here at the White House.

Mr. Austin. Great.

The President. Yes, see, he's for that.

Before we get started, I do want the players to join me in the Little League Pledge. Are you ready?

[*At this point, the pledge was recited.*]

Play ball!

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:23 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to entertainers Menudo, who sang the national anthem; sports broadcaster Roberto Clemente, Jr.; and Jose Rijo, special assistant to the general manager, Washington Nationals. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Extending and Terminating Generalized System of Preferences Benefits

June 30, 2008

Dear Madam Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In accordance with section 502(f) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the “1974 Act”), I am notifying the Congress of my intent to (a) designate the Republic of Serbia (Serbia) and the Republic of Montenegro (Montenegro) as separate beneficiary developing countries under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP); and (b) terminate the designation of Trinidad and Tobago as a beneficiary developing country under the GSP.

In Proclamation 7912 of June 29, 2005, I designated Serbia and Montenegro as a beneficiary developing country for purposes of the GSP. On June 3, 2006, Montenegro declared independence from Serbia and Montenegro and the country separated into two independent republics, the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Montenegro. Pursuant to section 502 of the 1974 Act, and having considered the factors set forth in sections 501 and 502(c), I have determined that, in light of the separation of Serbia and Montenegro into two countries, the Republic of Serbia and the Republic

of Montenegro should each be designated as beneficiary developing countries for purposes of the GSP.

Section 502(e) of the 1974 Act, provides that the President shall terminate the designation of a country as a beneficiary developing country for purposes of the GSP if the President determines that such country has become a “high income” country as defined by the official statistics of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Termination is effective on January 1 of the second year following the year in which such determination is made. I have determined that Trinidad and Tobago has become a “high income” country, and I am terminating the designation of that country as a beneficiary developing country for purposes of the GSP, effective January 1, 2010.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Issuance of Temporary Munitions Export Licenses for Exports to China

June 30, 2008

Dear Madam Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by section 902(b)(2) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, FY 1990 and 1991 (Public Law 101–246) (the “Act”), and as President of the United States, I hereby report to the Congress that it is in the

national interest of the United States to terminate temporarily the suspensions under section 902(a)(3) of the Act with respect to the issuance of temporary munitions export licenses for exports to the People’s Republic of China insofar as these restrictions pertain to firearms and related items for use by U.S. and non-U.S. athletes