

Military Personnel/Military Families

M. Sgt. Barfield. Yes, sir. I have a final question for you, sir; I know you have a full plate today. If you could sit down and speak to each military member and their family, as Commander in Chief, what would you tell them, and how would you convey your commitment to them, sir?

The President. Well, first of all, what I'd tell them is thank you. And you know, just yesterday, I had the mother and father of a fallen marine, who actually was stationed here at Camp Lejeune—I had written them a letter of gratitude and condolence. Their son had just been killed relatively recently. They actually got a ride on Air Force One down here because their grandchildren, their son's children, are still down here.

And what I told them was, first of all, thank you; that all of America is grateful. We enjoy the freedoms we do because of what young men and women like that are willing to do on our behalf. And I wanted to tell them also that I carry them in my mind every single day when I'm making decisions; that when I am thinking about troop deployments, when I'm thinking

about budgets, when I'm thinking about what our foreign policy is going to be, uppermost in my mind is understanding that young men and women are willing to offer up their last full measure of devotion to this country. The least they can expect is, is that their President is going to get it right and to keep them in mind when he is making the decision.

M. Sgt. Barfield. Yes, sir. I really appreciate you joining us on the Pentagon Channel, sir.

The President. I enjoyed it very much. Thank you so much.

M. Sgt. Barfield. Thank you, sir.

The President. You bet.

NOTE: The interview began taping at 2:15 p.m. at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commander, U.S. Central Command; Gen. Raymond T. Odierno, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Forces—Iraq; Gen. David D. McKiernan, USA, commander, NATO International Security Assistance Force, Afghanistan; and Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq.

Memorandum on Transfer of Detainee to Control of the Attorney General
February 27, 2009

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense

Subject: Transfer of Detainee to Control of the Attorney General

Based on the information available to me, including the memorandum from the Secretary of Defense and the Attorney General dated February 26, 2009, and the joint recommendation contained therein, I hereby determine that it is in the interest of the United States that Ali Saleh Kahlah al-Marri be released from detention by the Secretary of Defense and transferred to the control of the Attorney General for the purpose of criminal proceedings against him.

Accordingly, by the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws

of the United States, I hereby direct you to transfer Mr. al-Marri to the control of the Attorney General upon the Attorney General's request. This memorandum supersedes the Presidential directive of June 23, 2003, to the Secretary of Defense, which ordered the detention of Mr. al-Marri as an enemy combatant. Upon Mr. al-Marri's transfer to the control of the Attorney General, the authority to detain Mr. al-Marri provided to the Secretary of Defense in the June 23, 2003, order shall cease.

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this memorandum.