

fit to enshrine in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights the fundamental principle that everyone “has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”

Even as the world recognizes the central and indisputable importance of press freedom, journalists find themselves in frequent peril. Since this day was first celebrated some 16 years ago, 692 journalists have been killed. Only a third of those deaths were linked to the dangers of covering war; the majority of victims were local reporters covering topics such as crime, corruption, and national security in their home countries. Adding to this tragic figure are the hundreds more each year who face intimidation, censorship, and arbitrary arrest, guilty of nothing more than a passion for truth and a tenacious belief that a free society depends on an informed citizenry. In every corner of the globe,

there are journalists in jail or being actively harassed, from Azerbaijan to Zimbabwe, Burma to Uzbekistan, Cuba to Eritrea. Emblematic examples of this distressing reality are figures like J.S. Tissainayagam in Sri Lanka or Shi Tao and Hu Jia in China. We are also especially concerned about the citizens from our own country currently under detention abroad, individuals such as Roxana Saberi in Iran and Euna Lee and Laura Ling in North Korea.

Today I lend my voice of support and admiration to all those brave men and women of the press who labor to expose truth and enhance accountability around the world. In so doing, I recall the words of Thomas Jefferson: “The basis of our governments being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter.”

The President’s Weekly Address *May 2, 2009*

Over the last week, my administration has taken several precautions to address the challenge posed by the 2009 H1N1 flu virus. Today I’d like to take a few minutes to explain why.

This is a new strain of the flu virus, and because we haven’t developed an immunity to it, it has more potential to cause us harm. Unlike the various strains of animal flu that have emerged in the past, it’s a flu that’s spreading from human to human. This creates the potential for a pandemic, which is why we are acting quickly and aggressively.

This H1N1 flu has had its biggest impact in Mexico, where it’s claimed a number of lives and infected hundreds more. Thus far, the strain in this country, that has infected people in at least 19 States, has not been as potent or as deadly. We can’t know for certain why that is, which is why we are taking all necessary precautions in the event that the virus does turn into something worse.

This is also why the Centers for Disease Control has recommended that schools and child-care facilities with confirmed cases of the virus

close for up to 14 days. This is why we urge employers to allow infected employees to take as many sick days as necessary. If more schools are forced to close, we’ve also recommended that both parents and businesses think about contingency plans if children do have to stay home. We’ve asked every American to take the same steps you would take to prevent any other flu: keep your hands washed, cover your mouth when you cough, stay home from work if you’re sick, and keep your children home from school if they’re sick.

The White House has launched pages in Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter to support the ongoing efforts by the CDC to update the public as quickly and effectively as possible. And as our scientists and researchers learn more information about this virus every day, the guidance we offer will likely change. What will not change is the fact that we’ll be making every recommendation based on the best science possible.

We will also continue investing in every resource necessary to treat this virus and prevent

a wider outbreak. The good news is that the current strain of H1N1 can be defeated by a course of antiviral treatment that we already have on hand. We began this week with 50 million courses of this treatment in the Strategic National Stockpile. Over the course of the last few days, we have delivered one-quarter of that stockpile to States so that they are prepared to treat anyone who is infected with this virus. We then purchased an additional 13 million treatments to refill our strategic stockpile.

Out of an abundance of caution, I have also asked Congress for \$1.5 billion, if it's needed, to purchase additional antivirals, emergency equipment, and the development of a vaccine that can prevent this virus as we prepare for the next flu season in the fall.

The Recovery Act that Congress enacted in February also included expansions of community health centers, a dramatic increase in the training of health care workers and nurses, and \$300 million for the development and deployment of vaccines, all of which will help us meet this threat.

Finally, thanks to the work that the last administration and Congress did to prepare for a possible avian flu pandemic in 2005, States and the Federal Government have fully opera-

ble influenza readiness plans and are better prepared to deal with such a challenge than ever before.

It is my greatest hope and prayer that all of these precautions and preparations prove unnecessary. But because we have it within our power to limit the potential damage of this virus, we have a solemn and urgent responsibility to take the necessary steps. I would sooner take action now than hesitate and face graver consequences later. I have no higher priority as President of the United States than the safety and security of the American people, and I will do whatever is necessary to protect this country. So I want to thank every American for their patience and understanding during this developing challenge, and I promise that this Government will continue speaking clearly and honestly about the steps we're taking to meet it.

Thank you.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:25 p.m. on May 1 in the Library at the White House for broadcast on May 2. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 1 but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on May 2.

Statement on the Death of Former Representative Jack F. Kemp

May 3, 2009

Jack Kemp's commitment to public service and his passion for politics influenced not only the direction of his party, but his country. From his tenure as a Buffalo Congressman to his ascent in national politics, Jack Kemp was a man who could fiercely advocate his own beliefs and principles while also remembering

the lessons he learned years earlier on the football field: that bitter divisiveness between race and class and station only stood in the way of the common aim of a team to win.

Michelle and I extend our prayers and deepest condolences to the entire Kemp family.

Remarks on Tax Reform

May 4, 2009

All right. Good morning, everybody. I hope you all had a good weekend.

Let's begin with a simple premise: Nobody likes paying taxes, particularly in times of economic stress. But most Americans meet their responsibilities because they understand that

it's an obligation of citizenship, necessary to pay the costs of our common defense and our mutual well-being.

And yet, even as most American citizens and businesses meet these responsibilities, there are others who are shirking theirs. And