

Statement on Preliminary Assessments From Reviews Ordered on the Christmas Day Terrorist Attack

December 31, 2009

This morning I spoke with John Brennan about preliminary assessments from the ongoing consultations I have ordered into the human and systemic failures that occurred leading up to the attempted act of terrorism on Christmas Day and about our Government-wide efforts at continued vigilance on homeland security and counterterrorism efforts. In a separate call, I spoke with Sec. Napolitano to receive an update on both the Department of Homeland Security review of detection capa-

bilities and the enhanced security measures in place since the Christmas Day incident.

I anticipate receiving assessments from several agencies this evening and will review those tonight and over the course of the weekend. On Tuesday, in Washington, I will meet personally with relevant agency heads to discuss our ongoing reviews as well as security enhancements and intelligence-sharing improvements in our homeland security and counterterrorism operations.

Message to the Central Intelligence Agency on the Terrorist Attack in Khost Province, Afghanistan

December 31, 2009

To the men and women of the CIA:

I write to mark a sad occasion in the history of the CIA and our country. Yesterday, seven Americans in Afghanistan gave their lives in service to their country. Michelle and I have their families, friends and colleagues in our thoughts and prayers.

These brave Americans were part of a long line of patriots who have made great sacrifices for their fellow citizens, and for our way of life. The United States would not be able to maintain the freedom and security that we cherish without decades of service from the dedicated men and women of the CIA. You have helped us understand the world as it is, and taken great risks to protect our country. You have served in the shadows, and your sacrifices have sometimes been unknown to your fellow citizens, your friends, and even your families.

In recent years, the CIA has been tested as never before. Since our country was attacked on September 11, 2001, you have served on the frontlines in directly confronting the dangers of the 21st century. Because of your service, plots have been disrupted, American lives

have been saved, and our Allies and partners have been more secure. Your triumphs and even your names may be unknown to your fellow Americans, but your service is deeply appreciated. Indeed, I know firsthand the excellent quality of your work because I rely on it every day.

The men and women who gave their lives in Afghanistan did their duty with courage, honor and excellence, and we must draw strength from the example of their sacrifice. They will take their place on the Memorial Wall at Langley alongside so many other heroes who gave their lives on behalf of their country. And they will live on in the hearts of those who loved them, and in the freedom that they gave their lives to defend.

May God bless the memory of those we lost, and may God bless the United States of America.

BARACK OBAMA

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

Appendix A—Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this book.

July 1

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing followed by an economic briefing. Then, also in the Oval Office, he met with his senior advisers.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Annandale, VA. Later, he returned to Washington, DC. He then participated in an interview with regional press from around the country.

Later in the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President participated in a bill signing ceremony for S. 614, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the Women Airforce Service Pilots ("WASP").

July 2

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Roosevelt Room, the President met with business leaders to discuss job creation and innovation.

During the day, the President participated in an interview with Jennifer Loven of the Associated Press.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jonathan Addleton to be Ambassador to Mongolia.

The President announced his intention to nominate Gayleatha Beatrice Brown to be Ambassador to Burkina Faso.

The President announced his intention to nominate Earl M. Irving to be Ambassador to Swaziland.

The President announced his intention to nominate Douglas W. Kmiec to be Ambassador to Malta.

The President announced his intention to nominate Fay Hartog-Levin to be Ambassador to the Netherlands.

The President declared a major disaster in Illinois and ordered Federal aid to supplement

State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, flooding, and tornadoes on May 8 and 9.

July 3

In the morning, the President traveled to Camp David, MD.

July 4

In the morning, the President and Mrs. Obama and their daughters Sasha and Malia returned to Washington, DC.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Obama hosted a barbeque and concert for military personnel and their families to celebrate Independence Day.

July 5

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with President Abdullah Gul of Turkey.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Obama and their daughters Sasha and Malia traveled to Moscow, Russia, arriving the following afternoon.

July 6

In the morning, while en route aboard Air Force One, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, upon arrival at Moscow Airport, the President and Mrs. Obama and their daughters traveled to the Russian Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, where he participated in a wreath-laying ceremony. Later, they traveled to the Kremlin, where he met with President Dmitry A. Medvedev of Russia. They then traveled to the Ritz Carlton hotel.

In the evening, the President returned to the Kremlin. He then returned to the Ritz Carlton. Later, he and Mrs. Obama traveled to the U.S. Embassy, where they met with U.S. Embassy staff.

Later in the evening, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to the Gorkiy, where they had dinner with President Medvedev and his wife,