

prise, on the Pentagon's decision on the tanker planes, which reversed the decision which had originally been taken in favor of Airbus? Did you raise this subject with President Obama? And if so, did you try and put together a new approach, so as to ensure that the competition would be fairer?

[*The reporter then continued in English.*]

Q. Mr. President, what do you think about this new version of this contract with the Pentagon, and don't you think that it would be probably fair to share this contract with the Europeans, since they are now full members of NATO and that they share the price of the war on the ground?

President Sarkozy. If I said I hadn't raised it, it would mean that what I've just told you would be meaningless and senseless. Of course we've talked about it, and President Obama will give you his answer. But I said to him, I trust you. And I do trust him. If you say to me that the request for proposals, the call for tenders will be free, fair, and transparent, then we say, EADS will bid, and we trust you.

President Obama. And what I said to President Sarkozy is, is that the process will be free and fair and that the trust is justified.

Now, it's important for my European friends to understand that, at least here, the Secretary of Defense makes procurement decisions. The President does not meddle in these decisions. And that's a longstanding policy. So I maintain an arm's length approach,

but I have assurances from Secretary of Defense Gates that, in fact, the rebidding process is going to be completely transparent, completely open, and a fair competition. That's in our interests. It's in the interest of American taxpayers, and it's also in the interest of our young men and women who rely on this equipment in order to protect this Nation.

And it's important to note, I think, for those of you who don't know Secretary Gates, this is somebody who has actually taken on the military and weapons systems establishment and initiated some very significant procurement reforms that nobody ever thought would happen here in Washington. So he's somebody who's willing to call it like it is and make difficult decisions, and he will do so in this situation as well.

Okay? Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 4:56 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Carla Bruni-Sarkozy, wife of President Sarkozy; and President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan. President Sarkozy referred to Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Bernard Kouchner and Minister of Economy, Industry, and Employment Christine Lagarde of France; Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany; and Prime Minister Gordon Brown of the United Kingdom. President Sarkozy and a reporter spoke in French, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report Related to Afghanistan and Pakistan March 30, 2010

Dear _____:

In response to the requirement of section 1117 of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2009, and in order to keep the Congress fully informed, I am providing the attached report related to Afghanistan and Pakistan.

My Administration completed a thorough policy review last November, and I announced a new approach at West Point on December 1,

2009. As with the development of that policy, we have continued to consult closely with the Congress on the implementation of this new approach. We are now implementing this policy and do not believe further adjustments are required at this time. Consistent with the statute and given the time necessary to accumulate data, the attached report covers the period ending December 31, 2009. To the extent pos-

sible, the report provides an update on our assessment since that date.

As the Congress begins consideration of the supplemental, I underscore our Nation's interests in the successful implementation of this policy.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Daniel K. Inouye, chairman, and W. Thad Cochran, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Carl Levin, chairman, and John S. McCain III, ranking member, Senate Committee on Armed Services; John F. Kerry, chairman, and Richard G. Lugar, ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Joseph I. Lieberman, chairman, and Susan M. Collins, ranking member, Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; Diane Feinstein, chairman, and Christopher S. "Kit" Bond, ranking member, Senate Commit-

tee on Intelligence; Patrick J. Leahy, chairman, and Jefferson B. Sessions III, ranking member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary; David R. Obey, chairman, and Jerry Lewis, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations; Isaac N. "Ike" Skelton IV, chairman, and Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, ranking member, House Committee on Armed Services; Howard L. Berman, chairman, and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, ranking member, House Committee on Foreign Affairs; Bennie G. Thompson, chairman, House Committee on Homeland Security; Mark E. Souder, ranking member, House Homeland Security Subcommittee on Border, Maritime and Global Counterterrorism; John Conyers, Jr., chairman, and Lamar S. Smith, ranking member, House Committee on the Judiciary; and Silvestre Reyes, chairman, and Peter Hoekstra, ranking member, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 31.

Remarks at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland *March 31, 2010*

Thank you so much. Please have a seat. I've got a few introductions that I want to make very quickly before I start my remarks. First of all, I think that by the end of his tenure, we're going to know that Ken Salazar is one of the finest Secretaries of Interior we've ever had. So please give him a big round of applause.

Other members of what we call our green team are here: Steven Chu, our Secretary of Energy; Martha Johnson, the Administrator of the GSA; Nancy Sutley, the CEQ Chair. We've got Carol Browner, who's the White House Energy and Climate Change Director. Please give them a big round of applause. They've put in a lot of work.

Governor Martin O'Malley is here, Governor of Maryland. Ray Mabus, Secretary of the Navy, is here. Admiral Gary Roughead, Chief of Naval Operations, is here, and we appreciate his outstanding service. Thank you, Gar.

I want to thank Steven Shepro, the base commander here at Andrews, and the leadership

that's present from the Air Force, the Marine Corps, and the Coast Guard.

Ken and I were colleagues in the Senate, and I appointed him because I knew that he would be a faithful and pragmatic steward of our natural resources. And as Secretary, he is changing the way that the Interior Department does business so that we're responsibly developing traditional sources of energy and renewable sources of energy, from the wind on the high plains to the suns in the desert to the waves off our coasts. And so I'm very grateful to the work that he's done, and it's culminating in one of the announcements that we're making today.

It's also good to see so many members of our Armed Forces here today. Andrews is the home of Air Force One, and I appreciate everything that you do for me and my family. I should point out that you've got a 100-percent ontime departure record. [*Laughter*] You don't charge for luggage—[*laughter*—so it's a pretty good deal. And I want to thank you not only for the support that you provide me, but also for the