

those nations that refuse to abide by their international obligations must be held accountable.

The document includes an agreement to hold a regional conference in 2012 to discuss issues relevant to a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their delivery systems. The United States has long supported such a zone, although our view is that a comprehensive and durable peace in the region and full compliance by all regional states with their arms control and nonproliferation obligations are essential precursors for its establishment. We strongly oppose efforts to single

out Israel and will oppose actions that jeopardize Israel's national security.

The greatest threat to proliferation in the Middle East and to the NPT is Iran's failure to live up to its NPT obligations. Today's efforts will only strengthen the NPT as a critical part of our efforts to ensure that all nations meet their NPT and nonproliferation obligations or face consequences. Together, we must work for a world where nations benefit from the peaceful power of nuclear energy, while also being secure from the threat posed by nuclear proliferation.

The President's Weekly Address *May 29, 2010*

This weekend, as we celebrate Memorial Day, families across America will gather in backyards and front porches, fire up the barbecue, kick back with friends, and spend time with people they care about. That's as it should be. But I also hope that as you do so, you'll take some time to reflect on what Memorial Day is all about, on why we set this day aside as a time of national remembrance.

It's fitting every day to pay tribute to the men and women who wear the uniform of the United States of America. Still, there are certain days that have been set aside for all of us to do so. Veterans Day is one such day, when we are called to honor Americans who've fought under our country's flag.

Our calling on Memorial Day is different. On this day, we honor not just those who've worn this country's uniform, but the men and women who've died in its service, who've laid down their lives in defense of their fellow citizens, who've given their last full measure of devotion to protect the United States of America. These are the men and women I'll be honoring this weekend, and I know many of you are doing the same.

There are any number of reasons America emerged from its humble beginnings as a cluster of colonies to become the most prosperous, most powerful nation on Earth. There is the hard work, the resilience, the character of our people. There is the ingenuity and enterprising spirit of our entrepreneurs and innovators.

There are the ideals of opportunity, equality, and freedom that have not only inspired our people to perfect our own Union, but inspired others to perfect theirs as well.

But from the very start, there was something more: a steadfast commitment to serve, to fight, and if necessary, to die to preserve America and advance the ideals we cherish. It's a commitment witnessed at each defining moment along the journey of this country. It's what led a rag-tag militia to face British soldiers at Lexington and Concord. It's what led young men, in a country divided half slave and half free, to take up arms to save our Union. It's what led patriots in each generation to sacrifice their own lives to secure the life of our Nation, from the trenches of World War I to the battles of World War II, from Inchon and Khe Sanh to Mosul and Marja.

That commitment, that willingness to lay down their lives so we might inherit the blessings of this Nation, is what we honor today. But on this Memorial Day, as on every day, we're called to honor their ultimate sacrifice with more than words. We're called to honor them with deeds.

We're called to honor them by doing our part for the loved ones our fallen heroes have left behind and looking after our military families, by making sure the men and women serving this country around the world have the support they need to achieve their mission and come home safely, by making sure veterans have the care and assistance they need, in short, by serv-

ing all those who have ever worn the uniform of this country—and their families—as well as they have served us.

On April 25, 1866, about a year after the Civil War ended, a group of women visited a cemetery in Columbus, Mississippi, to place flowers by the graves of Confederate soldiers who had fallen at Shiloh. As they did, they noticed other graves nearby belonging to Union dead. But no one had come to visit those graves or place a flower there. So they decided to lay a few stems for those men too, in recognition not of a fallen Confederate or a fallen Union soldier, but a fallen American.

A few years later, an organization of Civil War veterans established what became Memorial Day, selecting a date that coincided with the time when flowers were in bloom. So this weekend, as we commemorate Memorial Day, I ask you to hold all our fallen heroes in your hearts and, if you can, lay a flower where they have come to rest.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 4:55 p.m. on May 27 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on May 29. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 28, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on May 29.

Statement on the Oil Spill in the Gulf of Mexico *May 29, 2010*

Today I've spoken with National Incident Commander Admiral Thad Allen, as well as Energy Secretary Steven Chu, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar, EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson, and senior White House advisers John Brennan and Carol Browner regarding the ongoing efforts to stop the BP oil spill. From the beginning, our concern has been that the surest way to stop the flow of oil—the drilling of relief wells—would take several months to complete. So engineers and experts have explored a variety of alternatives to stop the leak now. They had hoped that the top kill approach attempted this week would halt the flow of oil and gas currently escaping from the seafloor. But while we initially received optimistic reports about the procedure, it is now clear that it has not worked. Rear Admiral Mary Landry today directed BP to launch a new procedure whereby the riser pipe will be cut and a containment structure fitted over the leak.

This approach is not without risk and has never been attempted before at this depth. That is why it was not activated until other methods had been exhausted. It will be difficult and will take several days. It is also important to note that while we were hopeful that the top kill would succeed, we were also mindful that there was a significant chance it would not. And we will continue to pursue any and all responsible means of stopping this leak until the completion of the two relief wells currently being drilled.

As I said yesterday, every day that this leak continues is an assault on the people of the Gulf Coast region, their livelihoods, and the natural bounty that belongs to all of us. It is as enraging as it is heartbreaking, and we will not relent until this leak is contained, until the waters and shores are cleaned up, and until the people unjustly victimized by this manmade disaster are made whole.

Remarks on Memorial Day at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland *May 31, 2010*

Hello, everybody. First of all, I want to just say thank you to Colonel Steve Shepro, who's

just done such great work for us and for me over the last several months, several years. I