

Now, the American people sent us here to do the right thing not for party, but for country. So we're going to work together to get things done on their behalf. That's the least that they should expect of us, not the most that they should expect of us. I'm ready to roll up my sleeves over the next several weeks and next several months. I know that people in both parties are ready to do that as well. And we will keep you updated on the progress that

we're making on these debt limit talks over the next several days. Thank you.

Meeting With House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi

Q. How was the meeting with Mrs. Pelosi?
The President. It was good.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:05 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Statement on the Launch of the Space Shuttle *Atlantis* July 8, 2011

Today Americans across the country watched with pride as four of our fellow citizens blasted off from the Kennedy Space Center in the Space Shuttle *Atlantis* and America reached for the heavens once more.

Behind *Atlantis* and her crew of brave astronauts stand thousands of dedicated workers who have poured their hearts and souls into America's space shuttle program over the past three decades. To them and all of NASA's incredible workforce, I want to express my sincere gratitude. You helped our country lead the space age, and you continue to inspire us each day.

Today's launch may mark the final flight of the space shuttle, but it propels us into the next era of our never-ending adventure to push the very frontiers of exploration and discovery in space. We'll drive new advances in science and technology. We'll enhance knowledge, educa-

tion, innovation, and economic growth. And I have tasked the men and women of NASA with an ambitious new mission: to break new boundaries in space exploration, ultimately sending Americans to Mars. I know they are up to the challenge, and I plan to be around to see it.

Congratulations to *Atlantis*, her astronauts, and the people of America's space program on a picture-perfect launch, and good luck on the rest of your mission to the International Space Station and for a safe return home. I know the American people share my pride at what we have accomplished as a nation and my excitement about the next chapter of our preeminence in space.

NOTE: The statement referred to Christopher J. Ferguson, commander, Douglas G. Hurley, pilot, and Sandra H. Magnus and Rex J. Walheim, mission specialists, Space Shuttle *Atlantis*.

Statement on the Death of Elizabeth A. Ford July 8, 2011

Throughout her long and active life, Elizabeth Anne Ford distinguished herself through her courage and compassion. As our Nation's First Lady, she was a powerful advocate for women's health and women's rights. After leaving the White House, Mrs. Ford helped reduce the social stigma surrounding addiction and inspired thousands to seek much-needed treatment. While her death is a cause for sadness, we know that organizations such as the

Betty Ford Center will honor her legacy by giving countless Americans a new lease on life.

Today we take comfort in the knowledge that Betty and her husband, former President Gerald Ford, are together once more. Michelle and I send our thoughts and prayers to their children Michael, John, Steven, and Susan.

NOTE: The statement referred to Susan Ford Bales, daughter of former First Lady Ford.