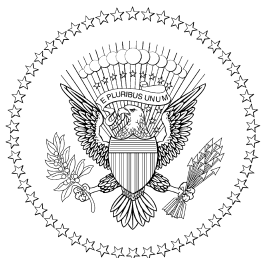


Weekly Compilation of  
**Presidential  
Documents**



Monday, April 23, 2007  
Volume 43—Number 16  
Pages 453–506

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## WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

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## PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

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Week Ending Friday, April 20, 2007

### **The President's Radio Address**

*April 14, 2007*

Good morning. This week, I extended an invitation to congressional leaders of both parties to come to the White House so we can discuss the emergency war funding our troops are waiting for. When we meet on Wednesday, I look forward to hearing how Members of Congress plan to meet their responsibilities and provide our troops with the funding they need.

Supporting our troops is a solemn responsibility of all elected officials in Washington, DC. So 68 days ago, I sent Congress an emergency war spending bill that would provide the vital funds needed for our troops on the frontlines. But instead of approving this funding, Democrats in Congress have spent the past 68 days pushing legislation that would undercut our troops. They passed bills that would impose restrictions on our military commanders and set an arbitrary date for withdrawal from Iraq, giving our enemies the victory they desperately want.

The Democrats' bills also spend billions of dollars on domestic projects that have nothing to do with the war, such as funding for tours of the United States Capitol and for peanut storage. And after passing these unacceptable bills in the House and Senate, Democratic leaders then chose to leave town without sending any legislation to my desk.

The Senate came back to Washington earlier this week, but the House is still on its Easter recess. Meanwhile, our troops are waiting for the funds. And to cover the shortfall, our military may be forced to consider what Army General Pete Schoomaker has called "increasingly draconian measures."

In the next few days, our military leaders will notify Congress that they will be forced to transfer \$1.6 billion from other military accounts to make up for the gaps caused by Congress's failure to fund our troops in the field. That means our military will have to

take money from personnel accounts so they can continue to fund U.S. Army operations in Iraq and elsewhere.

This \$1.6 billion in transfer comes on top of another \$1.7 billion in transfers that our military leaders notified Congress about last month. In March, Congress was told that the military would need to take money from personnel accounts, weapons, and communications systems, so we can continue to fund programs that protect our troops from improvised explosive devices and send hundreds of mine-resistant vehicles to the frontlines. These actions are only the beginning, and the longer Congress delays, the worse the impact on the men and women of the Armed Forces will be.

I recognize that Republicans and Democrats in Washington have differences over the best course in Iraq, and we should vigorously debate those differences. But our troops should not be trapped in the middle. They have been waiting for this money long enough. Congress must now work quickly and pass a clean bill that funds our troops, without artificial timelines for withdrawal, without handcuffing our generals on the ground, and without extraneous domestic spending.

When you live in Washington, it's easy to get caught up in the complexities of legislative procedure. But for the American people, this is not a complicated debate. When Americans went to the polls last November, they did not vote for politicians to substitute their judgment for the judgment of our commanders on the ground. And they certainly did not vote to make peanut storage projects part of the funding for our troops.

The American people voted for change in Iraq, and that is exactly what our new commander in Iraq, General David Petraeus, is working to achieve. And they expect their elected leaders to support our men and women on the frontlines, so they have every

resource they need to complete their mission.

We owe it to the American people and to our troops and their families to deliver our full support. I will continue working with Republicans and responsible Democrats to do just that. I call on Members of Congress to put partisanship on hold, resolve their differences, and send me a clean bill that gets our troops the funds they need.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:35 a.m. on April 13 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 14. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 13 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his address, the President referred to Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

### **Statement on Jackie Robinson**

*April 14, 2007*

On April 15, 1947, an African American wearing the number 42 broke baseball's color barrier. Jackie Robinson's courage and skill convinced players, coaches, and fans to judge an athlete by his performance and not the color of his skin. His leadership strengthened America's pastime and strengthened America. Sixty years later, our Nation celebrates Jackie Robinson's accomplishments and his legacy, and we give thanks for his extraordinary life.

### **Remarks to Members of Armed Forces Service Organizations**

*April 16, 2007*

Thank you all. Please be seated. Welcome to the White House. You know, I get to welcome a lot of guests here. I don't think there's a more important guest than a veteran or the family of a service man or woman or the families of those whose loved one has given their life to the country. And so I welcome an incredibly important group of guests. And thank you for coming, and thank you for your time.

I appreciate very much to be in the presence of moms and dads, husbands and wives, sons and daughters of some of the finest citizens our Nation has ever produced. I want to thank the leaders of organizations that support our military families. I appreciate your tireless work to send a clear signal that many in the United States of America support our troops. Each of you knows what is stake—what is at stake in this war on terror. And I appreciate your efforts to rally our Nation to support our troops and to support the mission for which they have risked and, in some cases, have given their lives. I thank you for coming. Thanks for your service to the United States of America.

Many of the families here today have relatives serving in harm's way. Others have lost loved ones in the struggle. They have come here to Washington with a message for their elected leaders in our Nation's Capital: Our troops need the resources, equipment, and weapons to fight our enemies. Congress needs to pass an emergency war spending bill, without strings and without further delay.

On Wednesday, I will meet with congressional leaders from both parties right here at the White House. I'm going to pass on your message to them.

I appreciate members of the Families United for Our Troops and Their Mission. Thanks for doing what you do. I want to thank the members of the Armed Forces Foundation and those who serve with our Veterans Service Organizations.

A time of war is a time of sacrifice for our Nation, but especially for our military families. Being left behind when a loved one goes to war is one of the hardest jobs in our military. The families here today inspire our Nation—inspire them with their sense of duty and with their deep devotion to our country.

The families gathered here understand that we are a nation at war. Like me, they wish we weren't at war—but we are. They know that the enemies who attacked us on September the 11th, 2001, want to bring further destruction to our country. They know that the only way to stop them is to stay on

the offense, to fight the extremists and radicals where they live so we don't have to face them where we live.

The families gathered here understand that our troops want to finish the job. Today, because of e-mail and instant messaging and other modern technologies, our military families are able to stay in contact with their loved ones overseas. I see some baby boomers out there and—who wore our uniform. You never would have imagined e-mailing a loved one in the midst of your time overseas, but that's what's happening today. Families here know what our troops are seeing and hearing on the ground; they get instant feedback from the—as a result of modern technologies. And they know better than anyone our troops' desire to succeed and their determination to prevail.

Families gathered here understand that America is not going to be safe until the terrorist threat is defeated. If we do not defeat the terrorists and extremists in Iraq, they won't leave us alone; they will follow us to the United States of America. That's what makes this battle in the war on terror so incredibly important. One of the lessons of September the 11th is, what happens overseas matters to the security of the United States of America, and we must not forget that lesson.

The consequences of failure in Iraq would be death and destruction in the Middle East and here in America. To protect our citizens at home, we must defeat the terrorists. We defeat them by staying on the offense, and we defeat them by helping young democracies defeat their ideology of hate. And it's hard work, but it is necessary work, and thousands of men and women who wear our uniform understand the stakes.

It's a remarkable country, isn't it, where people stand up and volunteer to serve the United States in uniform during a time of war. And yet that's who we honor here today.

We must give our men and women in uniform the tools and resources they need to prevail. Providing these resources is the responsibility of the United States Congress. And that is why, 70 days ago, I sent Congress an emergency war spending bill that would provide the vital funds our troops urgently need. But instead of approving this funding,

Democrats in Congress have spent the past 70 days pushing legislation that would undercut our troops.

They passed bills in the House and the Senate that would impose restrictions on our military commanders. They set an arbitrary date for withdrawal from Iraq. And they spend billions of dollars on domestic projects that have nothing to do with the war. After passing these unacceptable bills, House and Senate leaders then chose to leave town for spring recess without resolving their differences or sending any legislation to my desk.

As Congress delays, the clock is ticking for our troops. Last week, Secretary of Defense Gates wrote to Congress, laying out the consequences of their failure to pass emergency spending for our troops on the frontlines. He warned that because Congress has not acted, quote, "the Army will soon begin reducing quality of life initiatives, reducing the repair and maintenance of equipment necessary for deployment training, and curtailing the training of Army Guard and Reserve units within the United States, reducing their readiness levels." He continued that if emergency funding is not received by mid-May, quote, "the Army will have to consider further actions to include reducing the pace of equipment overhaul work at Army depots, curtailing training rotations for brigade combat teams currently scheduled for overseas deployment," a step that the Secretary said, "would likely require the further extension of currently deployed forces." In other words, there are consequences for Congress's delay in getting our troops the money that the Defense Department has requested.

Congress's failure to fund our troops will mean that the readiness of our forces will suffer. This is unacceptable to me; it's unacceptable to you; and it's unacceptable to the vast majority of the American people.

Listen, I understand Republicans and Democrats in Washington have differences over the best course in Iraq. That's healthy. That's normal. And we should debate those differences. But our troops should not be caught in the middle.

Last week, the Senate returned to Washington, and this week, the House has returned as well. I've invited congressional

leaders of both parties to meet me at the White House 2 days from today. That's what we're supposed to do; we're supposed to talk out our differences. I'm looking forward to the meetings. I hope the Democratic leadership will drop their unreasonable demands for a precipitous withdrawal. We've only committed about a little over half of our troops into a decision I made to help secure the Iraqi capital, and yet there are some saying, we ought to leave before we get there.

I think it is wrong for Congress to restrict our military commanders. I can understand having a difference of opinion about Iraq, but our commanders need the flexibility necessary to meet the mission. We should not be substituting political judgment for the judgment of those in our military. And the idea of putting, you know, peanut storage—which may be necessary at some point in time; I don't know; I haven't analyzed the peanut storage issue—[laughter]—but I do know it doesn't have much to do with—about making sure your loved ones gets what's needed to do their job.

I am willing to discuss any way forward that does not hamstring our troops, set an artificial timetable for withdrawal, and spend billions on projects not related to the war. The American people expect the leaders in Washington to find common ground, but they also expect the Congress and the White House to work together to make sure our troops get funded quickly. We should not legislate defeat in this vital war.

We owe it to our men and women in uniform to give them the full support. It's important as people debate this issue to think about somebody like Merrilee Carlson, with us today. She's a Gold Star Mom. Two years ago, Merrilee's son, Michael, gave his life in Iraq when his platoon was on a night mission to take out two terrorist bomb-making factories. As they approached their target, they passed over a culvert that gave way, and their Bradley fighting vehicle plunged into the water, and Michael and four others in the vehicle died that day.

Michael penned a high school essay before he joined the Army. This is what he wrote: "I want my life to account for something. Everyone eventually loses their life. I have only so much time. I want to fight for some-

thing, be a part of something greater than myself. I want to be a soldier or something of that caliber." He became a soldier; he gave his life for something greater than himself. And now his mom and dad have just one demand, and that is to make sure Michael's sacrifice is not in vain.

We owe it to the Carlson family, we owe it to other Gold Star families here today to complete the mission for which their loved ones gave their lives. We owe it to a future generation of Americans to help secure peace. We owe it to the American people to make this Nation safer. The most solemn obligation of the government and Washington is to provide security for the American people and to protect them from harm.

We owe it to the brave Iraqis. I just spoke to the Prime Minister; I told him I was coming to see you. He said, "Please thank the people in the White House for their sacrifices."

And we will continue to work hard to be an ally in this war on terror. We'll continue to do the hard work necessary to help change the conditions that caused 19 young men to get on airplanes to come and kill thousands of our citizens on September the 11th.

We owe it to every sailor, soldier, airman, marine in harm's way to give them the tools they need to prevail. That's what we owe them.

As we saw with last week's brutal attack on the Iraqi Parliament, our troops face depraved and determined enemies—enemies that could just as easily come here to kill us. And therefore, we must give our men and women in uniform the best equipment, the best training, and the unqualified support of our Nation.

Congress needs to put partisanship on hold. It needs to get rid of all the politics right now and send me an emergency war spending bill that I can sign that gets our troops the support they need and gives our commanders the flexibility they need to complete this mission.

I appreciate you coming. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq.

### **Remarks on the Shootings at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia**

*April 16, 2007*

Our Nation is shocked and saddened by the news of the shootings at Virginia Tech today. The exact total has not yet been confirmed, but it appears that more than 30 people were killed and many more were wounded.

I've spoken with Governor Tim Kaine and Virginia Tech President Charles Steger. I told them that Laura and I and many across our Nation are praying for the victims and their families and all the members of the university community who have been devastated by this terrible tragedy. I told them that my administration would do everything possible to assist with the investigation, and that I pledged that we would stand ready to help local law enforcement and the local community in any way we can during this time of sorrow.

Schools should be places of safety and sanctuary and learning. When that sanctuary is violated, the impact is felt in every American classroom and every American community.

Today our Nation grieves with those who have lost loved ones at Virginia Tech. We hold the victims in our hearts; we lift them up in our prayers; and we ask a loving God to comfort those who are suffering today.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:01 p.m. in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Charles W. Steger, president, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

### **Remarks During a Memorial Convocation at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia**

*April 17, 2007*

Governor, thank you. President Steger, thank you very much. Students and faculty and staff and grieving family members and members of this really extraordinary place: Laura and I have come to Blacksburg today

with hearts full of sorrow. This is a day of mourning for the Virginia Tech community, and it is a day of sadness for our entire Nation. We've come to express our sympathy. In this time of anguish, I hope you know that people all over this country are thinking about you and asking God to provide comfort for all who have been affected.

Yesterday began like any other day. Students woke up, and they grabbed their backpacks, and they headed for class. And soon the day took a dark turn, with students and faculty barricading themselves in classrooms and dormitories, confused, terrified, and deeply worried. By the end of the morning, it was the worst day of violence on a college campus in American history, and for many of you here today, it was the worst day of your lives.

It's impossible to make sense of such violence and suffering. Those whose lives were taken did nothing to deserve their fate. They were simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. Now they're gone, and they leave behind grieving families and grieving classmates and a grieving nation.

In such times as this, we look for sources of strength to sustain us. And in this moment of loss, you're finding these sources everywhere around you. These sources of strength are in this community, this college community. You have a compassionate and resilient community here at Virginia Tech. Even as yesterday's events were still unfolding, members of this community found each other; you came together in dorm rooms and dining halls and on blogs. One recent graduate wrote this: "I don't know most of you guys, but we're all Hokies, which means we're family. To all of you who are okay, I'm happy for that. For those of you who are in pain or have lost someone close to you, I'm sure you can call on anyone of us and have help any time you need it."

These sources of strength are with your loved ones. For many of you, your first instinct was to call home and let your moms and dads know that you were okay. Others took on the terrible duty of calling the relatives of a classmate or a colleague who had been wounded or lost. I know many of you feel awfully far away from people you lean on, people you count on during difficult

times. But as a dad, I can assure you, a parent's love is never far from their child's heart. And as you draw closer to your own families in the coming days, I ask you to reach out to those who ache for sons and daughters who will never come home.

These sources of strength are also in the faith that sustains so many of us. Across the town of Blacksburg and in towns all across America, houses of worship from every faith have opened their doors and have lifted you up in prayer. People who have never met you are praying for you; they're praying for your friends who have fallen and who are injured. There's a power in these prayers, a real power. In times like this, we can find comfort in the grace and guidance of a loving God. As the Scriptures tells us, "Don't be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

And on this terrible day of mourning, it's hard to imagine that a time will come when life at Virginia Tech will return to normal. But such a day will come. And when it does, you will always remember the friends and teachers who were lost yesterday and the time you shared with them and the lives they hoped to lead. May God bless you.

May God bless and keep the souls of the lost. And may His love touch all those who suffer and grieve.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:36 p.m. at Cassell Coliseum. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Tim Kaine of Virginia; and Charles W. Steger, president, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

### **Proclamation 8126—Honoring the Victims of the Tragedy at Virginia Tech**

*April 17, 2007*

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

Our Nation grieves with those who have lost loved ones at Virginia Tech. We hold the victims in our hearts. We lift them up

in our prayers, and we ask a loving God to comfort those who are suffering.

As a mark of respect for the victims of the senseless acts of violence perpetrated on Monday, April 16, 2007, by the authority vested in me as President of the United States by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, I hereby order that the flag of the United States shall be flown at half-staff at the White House and upon all public buildings and grounds, at all military posts and naval stations, and on all naval vessels of the Federal Government in the District of Columbia and throughout the United States and its Territories and possessions until sunset, Sunday, April 22, 2007. I also direct that the flag shall be flown at half-staff for the same length of time at all United States embassies, legations, consular offices, and other facilities abroad, including all military facilities and naval vessels and stations.

**In Witness Whereof**, I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:53 a.m., April 18, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 19.

### **Remarks at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**

*April 18, 2007*

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thank you all very much. I appreciate your hospitality, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much for the fine job you're doing. I am honored to have just taken a tour of this important museum with Sara Bloomfield, who arguably is one of the best museum directors in the country—[*applause*]*—*particularly if you can put up with the board of directors that I've named. [*Laughter*]

I thank you all for serving. I appreciate you taking on this important assignment. For—my friends on the board will tell you that I hold the Holocaust Museum dear to

my heart. You will hear me express my appreciation for the work that is being done here, and I mean it sincerely.

I thank very much Elie Wiesel for joining us. He's a big figure in the life of the world, as he should be. He speaks with moral clarity. And I can't thank you enough for being a leader of talking about what is right. And I'm honored to be in your presence.

I am traveling with some members of my administration, starting with the Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice. Thank you for being here. Presidential Special Envoy to Sudan, Andrew Natsios—thank you for coming, Andrew. And the newly minted—or newly sworn in U.N. Ambassador Zal Khalilzad—Mr. Ambassador, thanks for coming.

I want to thank the Members of Congress who have joined us; appreciate you taking time. I thank the members of the diplomatic community who have joined us. I'm honored that you are here. I thank the survivors of the Holocaust who have graced us with your presence.

We meet at a time of sorrow for our Nation. Our flags fly at half-mast in memory of 32 souls whose lives were taken at Virginia Tech on Monday morning. That day we saw horror, but we also saw quiet acts of courage. We saw this courage in a teacher named Liviu Librescu. With the gunman set to enter his class, this brave professor blocked the door with his body while his students fled to safety. On the Day of Remembrance, this Holocaust survivor gave his own life so that others may live. And this morning we honor his memory, and we take strength from his example.

This is a place devoted to memory. Inside this building are etched the words of the Prophet Isaiah: "You are my witness." As part of this witness, these walls show how one of the world's most advanced nations embraced a policy aimed at the annihilation of the Jewish people. These walls help restore the humanity of the millions who were loaded into trains and murdered by men who considered themselves cultured. And these walls remind us that the Holocaust was not inevitable; it was allowed to gather strength and force only because of the world's weakness and appeasement in the face of evil.

Today, we call what happened "genocide," but when the Holocaust started, this word did not yet exist. In a 1941 radio address, Churchill spoke of the horrors the Nazis were visiting on innocent civilians in Russia. He said, "We are in the presence of a crime without a name." It is an apt description of the evil that followed the swastika. Mankind had long experience with savagery and slaughter before. Yet in places such as Auschwitz and Dachau and Buchenwald, the world saw something new and terrible: the state-sanctioned extermination of a people, carried out with the chilling industrial efficiency of a so-called modern nation.

Some may be tempted to ask: Why have a museum dedicated to such a dark subject? The men and women who built this museum will tell you: Because evil is not just a chapter in history; it is a reality in the human heart. So this museum serves as a living reminder of what happens when good and decent people avert their eyes from hatred and murder. It honors those who died by serving as the conscience for those who live. And it reminds us that the words "never again" do not refer to the past; they refer to the future.

You who are survivors know why the Holocaust must be taught to every generation. You who lost your families to the gas chambers of Europe watch as Jewish cemeteries and synagogues across that continent are defaced and defiled. You who bear the tattoos of death camps hear the leader of Iran declare that the Holocaust is a myth. You who have found refuge in a Jewish homeland know that tyrants and terrorists have vowed to wipe it from the map. And you who have survived evil know that the only way to defeat it is to look it in the face and not back down.

It is evil we are now seeing in Sudan—and we're not going to back down. For 22 years, Sudan was plagued by a civil war between the north and south that claimed more than 2 million lives. That war came to an end in January 2005, when Sudan's Government and rebels in the south signed a comprehensive peace agreement that the United States helped to broker. Under this historic accord, Sudan established a Government of National Unity that includes a First Vice President and other cabinet members from

the country's south. It also established a government for Southern Sudan that the United States is providing with aid and other assistance.

Unfortunately, just as peace was coming to the south, another conflict broke out in the west, where rebel groups in Darfur attacked government outposts. To fight this rebellion, the Government in Khartoum unleashed a horse-mounted militia called the Janjaweed, which carried out systematic assaults against innocent civilians.

The human toll has been staggering. More than 200,000 people have died from the conflict or from malnutrition and disease that have spread in its wake. And more than 2 million people have been forced from their homes and villages into camps both inside and outside their country.

Ending the violence in Darfur requires better security for the people of Darfur; it requires progress toward political reconciliation. Today, more than 7,000 African Union troops have been deployed to Darfur, and they serve courageously. The problem is, the area they patrol is the size of Texas—7,000 people is not enough to provide the security the people of Darfur need. Ultimately the violence will continue until Sudan's Government and the rebel groups reach a political settlement that includes traditional community leaders, representatives of civil society, and African and Arab tribes in the region.

This museum cannot stop the violence, but through your good work, you're making it impossible for the world to turn a blind eye. Earlier I saw an exhibit that puts faces on the millions of men, women, and children who have been killed or driven into the desert. I also saw an interesting new venture that you've arranged with Google Earth. As a result of this partnership, millions of Internet users around the world will be able to zoom in and see satellite images of the burnt-out villages and mosques and schools. No one who sees these pictures can doubt that genocide is the only word for what is happening in Darfur and that we have a moral obligation to stop it.

The United States is helping to lead the effort. Last May, I announced an agreement for Darfur that we helped broker between the Sudanese Government and the largest

rebel group. It's a positive agreement. It gave us some sense of optimism that we could help stop the genocide. Under this agreement, Sudan's Government promised to disarm the Janjaweed and punish all those who violated the cease-fire. The main rebel group agreed to withdraw into specified areas.

In August, the United Nations followed up this agreement with a new Security Council resolution. This resolution authorized the U.N. Mission in Sudan to extend its forces to Darfur and to transform the existing AU forces into a larger, better equipped U.N. peacekeeping mission. The U.N. recognized there were not enough forces in Darfur to bring security and peace.

In November, the United Nations, the African Union, the EU, the Arab League, the Government of Sudan, the United States, and 12 other nations reached another important agreement at a meeting in Addis Ababa. This agreement strengthened the terms of the cease-fire. It reenergized the political process and called for the joint U.N.-AU peacekeeping force to go into action, a force that would be nearly three times the size of the existing AU force.

These are all good agreements. They represent a clear path to end the conflict. And if implemented, they would allow the people of Darfur to return home to their villages safely, and begin to rebuild their lives in peace.

Unfortunately, these agreements have been routinely violated. Sudan's Government has moved arms to Darfur, conducted bombing raids on villages. They've used military vehicles and aircraft that are painted white, which makes them look like those deployed by humanitarian agencies and peacekeeping forces.

Many rebel groups have also pursued violence instead of peace. The groups who have not signed onto last May's peace accord have splintered, and they're roaming the Darfur's countryside pillaging and stealing at will. They have killed civilians. They've plundered vehicles and plundered supplies from international aid workers. They've added to the lawlessness. The Government in Khartoum has been able—unable to control the problem, and they made it even worse last fall

with a failed military campaign designed to crush the groups.

While there is now a temporary lull in the fighting between the government and militias and rebel groups, millions of displaced people remain highly vulnerable to attack. The increased lawlessness and instability has made it difficult for aid workers to deliver relief to those who need it—some organizations have been forced to evacuate their staff for safety reasons. Once again, the consequences are being borne by defenseless men, women, and children. That is the story being told here at the Holocaust Museum, and I appreciate what you're doing.

The brutal treatment of innocent civilians in Darfur is unacceptable. It is unacceptable to me; it is unacceptable to Americans; it's unacceptable to the United Nations—at least that's what they've said. This status quo must not continue.

Just this week, Sudan's Government reached an agreement with the United Nations to allow 3,000 U.N. troops and their equipment into the country to support the AU force. The world has heard these promises from Sudan before. President Bashir's record has been to promise cooperation while finding new ways to subvert and obstruct the U.N.'s efforts to bring peace to his country. The time for promises is over; President Bashir must act.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, is now in discussions with President Bashir to get the Government of Sudan to meet all its commitments. President Bashir should take the last chance by responding to the Secretary-General's efforts—and to meet the just demands of the international community. He must follow through on the deployment of the U.N. support forces. He must allow the deployment of the full, joint U.N.-African Union peace-keeping force and take every necessary step to facilitate its deployment. He must end support for the Janjaweed. He must reach out to the rebel leaders and allow humanitarian aid to reach the people of Darfur. And he must stop his pattern of obstruction once and for all.

I have made a decision to allow the Secretary-General more time to pursue his diplomacy. However, if President Bashir does

not fulfill the steps I outlined above, in a short period of time, my administration will take the following steps.

First, the Department of Treasury will tighten U.S. economic sanctions on Sudan. This new effort will allow the United States to enforce more aggressively existing sanctions against Sudan's Government by blocking any of its dollar transactions within the U.S. financial system. As part of this effort, the Treasury Department will add 29 companies owned or controlled by the Government of Sudan to its list of Specially Designated Nationals. This designation will bar these companies from the U.S. financial system and make it a crime for U.S.—American companies and individuals to willfully do business with them.

Second, we will also target sanctions against individuals responsible for the violence. These sanctions will isolate designated individuals by cutting them off from the U.S. financial system, preventing them from doing business with any American citizen or company, and calling the world's attention to their crimes.

Third, I will direct the Secretary of State to prepare a new United Nations Security Council resolution. This resolution will apply new sanctions against the Government of Sudan and against individuals found to be violating human rights or obstructing the peace process. It will impose an expanded embargo on arms sales to the Government of Sudan. It will prohibit Sudan's Government from conducting any offensive military flights over Darfur. It will strengthen our ability to monitor and report any violations. And in the next days, we will begin consulting with other Security Council members on the terms of such a resolution.

If Sudan's obstruction continues despite these measures, we will also consider other options. Last week, I sent Deputy Secretary of State Negroponte to the region. He informed Sudan's Government and rebel groups that our patience is limited, that we care deeply about the human condition in Darfur, that it matters to the United States that people are suffering.

I have spoken in the past about the need to end Sudan's use of military aircraft to attack innocent civilians. We're also looking

at what steps the international community could take to deny Sudan's Government the ability to fly its military aircraft over Darfur. And if we do not begin to see signs of good faith and commitments, we will hear calls for even sterner measures.

The situation doesn't have to come to that. I urge the United Nations Security Council and the African Union and all members of the international community to stand behind the Addis Ababa framework and reject efforts to obstruct its implementation. The world needs to act. If President Bashir does not meet his obligations to the United States of America, we'll act.

As we continue to pressure the Government of Sudan to meet its commitments, we will continue our engagement in support of the people of Darfur. My administration is increasing support for the Transitional Darfur Regional Authority. It's an interim authority designed to help the people of Darfur improve local government and build foundations for a healthy economy. We are increasing support for Sudan's First Vice President and the United Nations and African Union special envoys, who are working to bring the rebel groups together and get them to sign in to the peace process.

We're continuing our humanitarian assistance to the people of Darfur. Since 2005, the United States has devoted more than \$2 billion to humanitarian relief and development, and I thank the American people for their generosity. We'll continue to bring relief to the people of Darfur. We'll continue to insist that rebel groups and the Sudanese Government allow international workers to deliver this relief to the people who depend on it.

All the people in this room and people in this country have a vital role to play. Everyone ought to raise their voice. We ought to continue to demand that the genocide in Sudan be stopped.

During my tour of the Darfur exhibits this morning, I was shown a photo of a one-year-old girl who had been shot as her mother fled the Janjaweed. Although the mother had tried to protect her baby, it was to no avail. When the photo was taken, an observer nearby began to shout: "This is what they do!

This is what happens here! Now you know! Now you see!"

Thanks to the efforts of the people in this room, the world knows and the world sees. And now the world must act.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:32 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Fred S. Zeidman, Chairman, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council; Sara J. Bloomfield, director, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum; Nobel Prize winner and author Elie Wiesel; President Mahmud Ahmadi-nejad of Iran; President Umar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir and First Vice President Salva Kiir Mayardit of Sudan; United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Darfur Jan Eliasson; and African Union Special Envoy for the Darfur Talks and Chief Mediator Salim Ahmed Salim.

### **Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Congressional Leaders**

*April 18, 2007*

All of us around the table care deeply about what happened at Virginia Tech. And I know I can speak for all of us here that we send our prayers to the families of the victims, and we send our prayers to the friends of the victims. And we also send our deep concerns to the Virginia Tech community.

This fine educational institution is going through a lot of trauma and pain, and all of us here care deeply about their lives, and they just need to know it. They need to know people grieve for them.

I also want to thank the leaders from Congress for coming down. I'm looking forward to what will be a—one, I suspect, of many conversations on this war in Iraq and other major foreign policy issues.

We're going to have a very good discussion. People have strong opinions around the table, and I'm looking forward to listening to them. I've got my own opinion, which I'm more than willing to share. The whole objective is to figure out how best to get our troops funded, get the money they need to do the job that I've asked them to do.

And so, again, I want to thank you all for coming. I'm looking forward to our discussions.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:30 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House.

**Statement on the Supreme Court  
Decision on Partial-Birth Abortion**  
*April 18, 2007*

I am pleased that the Supreme Court upheld a law that prohibits the abhorrent procedure of partial-birth abortion. Today's decision affirms that the Constitution does not stand in the way of the people's representatives enacting laws reflecting the compassion and humanity of America. The partial-birth abortion ban, which an overwhelming bipartisan majority in Congress passed and I signed into law, represents a commitment to building a culture of life in America.

The Supreme Court's decision is an affirmation of the progress we have made over the past 6 years in protecting human dignity and upholding the sanctity of life. We will continue to work for the day when every child is welcomed in life and protected in law.

**Executive Order 13430—2007**  
**Amendments to the Manual For  
Courts-Martial, United States**

*April 18, 2007*

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including chapter 47 of title 10, United States Code (Uniform Code of Military Justice, 10 U.S.C. 801–946), and in order to prescribe amendments to the Manual for Courts-Martial, United States, prescribed by Executive Order 12473 of April 13, 1984, as amended, it is hereby ordered as follows:

**Section 1.** Part II of the Manual for Courts-Martial, United States, is amended as follows:

(a) R.C.M. 703(b)(1) is amended by adding at the end the following new sentences:

“With the consent of both the accused and Government, the military judge may authorize any witness to testify via remote means. Over a party's objection, the military judge may authorize any witness to testify on inter-

locutory questions via remote means or similar technology if the practical difficulties of producing the witness outweigh the significance of the witness' personal appearance (although such testimony will not be admissible over the accused's objection as evidence on the ultimate issue of guilt). Factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, the costs of producing the witness; the timing of the request for production of the witness; the potential delay in the interlocutory proceeding that may be caused by the production of the witness; the willingness of the witness to testify in person; the likelihood of significant interference with military operational deployment, mission accomplishment, or essential training; and, for child witnesses, the traumatic effect of providing in-court testimony.”

(b) R.C.M. 804 is amended by redesignating paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) as paragraphs (c), (d), and (e), respectively, and inserting the following new paragraph (b):

“(b) *Presence by remote means.* If authorized by the regulations of the Secretary concerned, the military judge may order the use of audiovisual technology, such as videoteleconferencing technology, between the parties and the military judge for purposes of Article 39(a) sessions. Use of such audiovisual technology will satisfy the “presence” requirement of the accused only when the accused has a defense counsel physically present at his location. Such technology may include two or more remote sites as long as all parties can see and hear each other.”

(c) R.C.M. 804(c)(2) is redesignated as R.C.M. 804(d)(2) and amended to read as follows:

“(2) *Procedure.* The accused's absence will be conditional upon his being able to view the witness' testimony from a remote location. Normally, transmission of the testimony will include a system that will transmit the accused's image and voice into the courtroom from a remote location as well as transmission of the child's testimony from the courtroom to the accused's location. A one-way transmission may be used if deemed necessary by the military judge. The accused will also be provided private, contemporaneous communication with his counsel. The

procedures described herein shall be employed unless the accused has made a knowing and affirmative waiver of these procedures.”

(d) R.C.M. 805(a) is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: “If authorized by regulations of the Secretary concerned, for purposes of Article 39(a) sessions solely, the presence of the military judge at Article 39(a) sessions may be satisfied by the use of audiovisual technology, such as videoteleconferencing technology.”

(e) R.C.M. 805(c) is amended by adding at the end the following new sentences:

“If authorized by regulations of the Secretary concerned, for purposes of Article 39(a) sessions solely, the presence of counsel at Article 39(a) sessions may be satisfied by the use of audiovisual technology, such as videoteleconferencing technology. At least one qualified defense counsel shall be physically present with the accused.”

(f) R.C.M. 914A is amended by deleting the third sentence of paragraph (a).

(g) R.C.M. 914A is further amended by redesignating paragraph (b) as paragraph (c) and inserting the following new paragraph (b):

“(b) *Definition.* As used in this rule, “remote live testimony” includes, but is not limited to, testimony by videoteleconference, closed circuit television, or similar technology.”

(h) New Rule R.C.M. 914B is inserted after R.C.M. 914A:

“Rule 914B. Use of remote testimony.

(a) *General procedures.* The military judge shall determine the procedures used to take testimony via remote means. At a minimum, all parties shall be able to hear each other, those in attendance at the remote site shall be identified, and the accused shall be permitted private, contemporaneous communication with his counsel.

(b) *Definition.* As used in this rule, testimony via “remote means” includes, but is not limited to, testimony by videoteleconference, closed circuit television, telephone, or similar technology.”

(i) R.C.M. 1001(e)(2)(D) is amended by deleting the “or” before “former testimony” and inserting “, or testimony by remote means” after “former testimony.”

**Sec. 2.** Part IV of the Manual for Courts-Martial, United States, is amended as follows:

(a) Paragraph 4.c.(6) is amended by redesignating paragraph (f) as paragraph (g) and inserting the following new paragraph (f):

“(f) *Article 119a-attempting to kill an unborn child*”

(b) Paragraph 12a is amended by replacing the word “Transportation” with the words “Homeland Security”.

(c) Paragraph 35a is amended to read as follows:

“(a) Any person subject to this chapter who—

(1) operates or physically controls any vehicle, aircraft, or vessel in a reckless or wanton manner or while impaired by a substance described in section 912a(b) of this title (Article 112a(b)); or

(2) operates or is in actual physical control of any vehicle, aircraft, or vessel while drunk or when the alcohol concentration in the person’s blood or breath is equal to or exceeds the applicable limit under subsection (b), shall be punished as a court-martial may direct.

(b)(1) For purposes of subsection (a), the applicable limit on the alcohol concentration in a person’s blood or breath is as follows:

(A) In the case of the operation or control of a vehicle, aircraft, or vessel in the United States, such limit is the lesser of—

(i) the blood alcohol content limit under the law of the State in which the conduct occurred, except as may be provided under paragraph (2) for conduct on a military installation that is in more than one State; or

(ii) the blood alcohol content limit specified in paragraph (3).

(B) In the case of the operation or control of a vehicle, aircraft, or vessel outside the United States, the applicable blood alcohol content limit is the blood alcohol content limit specified in paragraph (3) or such lower limit as the Secretary of Defense may by regulation prescribe.

(2) In the case of a military installation that is in more than one State, if those States have different blood alcohol content limits under their respective State laws, the Secretary may select one such blood alcohol content limit to apply uniformly on that installation.

(3) For purposes of paragraph (1), the blood alcohol content limit with respect to alcohol concentration in a person's blood is 0.10 grams of alcohol per 100 milliliters of blood and with respect to alcohol concentration in a person's breath is 0.10 grams of alcohol per 210 liters of breath, as shown by chemical analysis.

(4) In this subsection:

(A) The term "blood alcohol content limit" means the amount of alcohol concentration in a person's blood or breath at which operation or control of a vehicle, aircraft, or vessel is prohibited.

(B) The term "United States" includes the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, and American Samoa and the term "State" includes each of those jurisdictions.

(d) Paragraph 35b(2)(c) is amended to read as follows:

"(c) the alcohol concentration in the accused's blood or breath equaled to or exceeded the applicable limit under subparagraph (b) of paragraph 35a. [NOTE: If injury resulted add the following element]"

(e) Para 35f is amended to read as follows:

"In that \_\_\_\_\_ (personal jurisdiction data), did (at/onboard location)/(subject matter jurisdiction data, if required), on or about \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_, (in the motor pool area)(near the Officer's Club)(at the intersection of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_)(while in the Gulf of Mexico)(while in flight over North America) physically control [a vehicle, to wit: (a truck)(a passenger car)(\_\_\_\_\_)] [an aircraft, to wit: (an AH 64 helicopter)(an F 14 A fighter)(a KC 135 tanker)(\_\_\_\_\_)] [a vessel, to wit: (the aircraft carrier USS)(the Coast Cutter)(\_\_\_\_\_)], [while drunk][while impaired by \_\_\_\_\_][while the alcohol concentration in his (blood or breath equaled or exceeded the applicable limit under subparagraph (b) of paragraph 35a) as shown by chemical analysis][in a (reckless)(wanton) manner by (attempting to pass another vehicle on a sharp curve)(by ordering that the aircraft be flown below the authorized altitude)][and did thereby cause said (vehicle)(aircraft)(vessel) to (strike and)(injure \_\_\_\_\_)]."

(f) By inserting the new paragraph 44a:

**"44a. Article 119a—Death or injury of an unborn child**

a. *Text.*

(a)(1) Any person subject to this chapter who engages in conduct that violates any of the provisions of law listed in subsection (b) and thereby causes the death of, or bodily injury (as defined in section 1365 of title 18 to, a child who is in utero at the time the conduct takes place, is guilty of a separate offense under this section and shall, upon conviction, be punished by such punishment, other than death, as a court-martial may direct, which shall be consistent with the punishments prescribed by the President for that conduct had that injury or death occurred to the unborn child's mother.

(2) An offense under this section does not require proof that—

(i) the person engaging in the conduct had knowledge or should have had knowledge that the victim of the underlying offense was pregnant; or

(ii) the accused intended to cause the death of, or bodily injury to, the unborn child.

(3) If the person engaging in the conduct thereby intentionally kills or attempts to kill the unborn child, that person shall, instead of being punished under paragraph (1), be punished as provided under sections 880, 918, and 919(a) of this title (articles 80, 118, and 119(a)) for intentionally killing or attempting to kill a human being.

(4) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the death penalty shall not be imposed for an offense under this section.

(b) The provisions referred to in subsection (a) are sections 918, 919(a), 919(b)(2), 920(a), 922, 924, 926, and 928 of this title (articles 118, 119(a), 119(b)(2), 120(a), 122, 124, 126, and 128).

(c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to permit the prosecution (1) of any person authorized by state or federal law to perform abortions for conduct relating to an abortion for which the consent of the pregnant woman, or a person authorized by law to act on her behalf, has been obtained or for which such consent is implied by law;

(2) of any person for any medical treatment of the pregnant woman or her unborn child; or

(3) of any woman with respect to her unborn child.

(d) As used in this section, the term “unborn child” means a child in utero, and the term “child in utero” or “child who is in utero” means a member of the species homo sapiens, at any stage of development, who is carried in the womb.

b. *Elements.*

(1) *Injuring an unborn child.*

(a) That the accused was engaged in the [(murder (article 118)), (voluntary manslaughter (article 119(a))), (involuntary manslaughter (article 119(b)(2))), (rape (article 120)), (robbery (article 122)), (maiming (article 124)), (assault (article 128)), of] or [burning or setting afire, as arson (article 126), of (a dwelling inhabited by) (a structure or property (known to be occupied by) (belonging to))]

a woman;

(b) That the woman was then pregnant; and

(c) That the accused thereby caused bodily injury to the unborn child of that woman.

(2) *Killing an unborn child.*

(a) That the accused was engaged in the [(murder (article 118)), (voluntary manslaughter (article 119(a))), (involuntary manslaughter (article 119(b)(2))), (rape (article 120)), (robbery (article 122)), (maiming (article 124)), (assault (article 128)), of] or [burning or setting afire, as arson (article 126), of (a dwelling inhabited by) (a structure or property known to (be occupied by) (belong to))]

a woman;

(b) That the woman was then pregnant; and

(c) That the accused thereby caused the death of the unborn child of that woman.

(3) *Attempting to kill an unborn child.*

(a) That the accused was engaged in the [(murder (article 118)), (voluntary manslaughter (article 119(a))), (involuntary manslaughter (article 119(b)(2))), (rape (article 120)), (robbery (article 122)), (maiming (article 124)), (assault (article 128)), of] or [burning or setting afire, as arson (article 126), of (a dwelling inhabited by) (a structure or property (known to be occupied by) (belonging to))]

a woman;

(b) That the woman was then pregnant; and

(c) That the accused thereby intended and attempted to kill the unborn child of that woman.

(4) *Intentionally killing an unborn child.*

(a) That the accused was engaged in the [(murder (article 118)), (voluntary manslaughter (article 119(a))), (involuntary manslaughter (article 119(b)(2))), (rape (article 120)), (robbery (article 122)), (maiming (article 124)), (assault (article 128)), of] or [burning or setting afire, as arson (article 126), of (a dwelling inhabited by) (a structure or property (known to be occupied by) (belonging to))]

a woman;

(b) That the woman was then pregnant; and

(c) That the accused thereby intentionally killed the unborn child of that woman.

c. *Explanation.*

(1) *Nature of offense.* This article makes it a separate, punishable crime to cause the death of or bodily injury to an unborn child while engaged in arson (article 126, UCMJ); murder (article 118, UCMJ); voluntary manslaughter (article 119(a), UCMJ); involuntary manslaughter (article 119(b)(2), UCMJ); rape (article 120(a), UCMJ); robbery (article 122, UCMJ); maiming (article 124, UCMJ); or assault (article 128, UCMJ) against a pregnant woman. For all underlying offenses, except arson, this article requires that the victim of the underlying offense be the pregnant mother. For purposes of arson, the pregnant mother must have some nexus to the arson such that she sustained some “bodily injury” due to the arson. For the purposes of this article the term “woman” means a female of any age. This article does not permit the prosecution of any—

(a) person for conduct relating to an abortion for which the consent of the pregnant woman, or a person authorized by law to act on her behalf, has been obtained or for which such consent is implied by law;

(b) person for any medical treatment of the pregnant woman or her unborn child; or

(c) woman with respect to her unborn child.

(2) The offenses of “injuring an unborn child” and “killing an unborn child” do not require proof that—

(a) the person engaging in the conduct (the accused) had knowledge or should have had knowledge that the victim of the underlying offense was pregnant; or

(b) the accused intended to cause the death of, or bodily injury to, the unborn child.

(3) The offense of “attempting to kill an unborn child” requires that the accused intended by his conduct to cause the death of the unborn child (See paragraph b(3)(c) above).

(4) *Bodily injury*. For the purpose of this offense, the term “bodily injury” is that which is provided by section 1365 of title 18, to wit: a cut, abrasion, bruise, burn, or disfigurement; physical pain; illness; impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty; or any other injury to the body, no matter how temporary.

(5) *Unborn child*. “Unborn child” means a child in utero or a member of the species homo sapiens who is carried in the womb, at any stage of development, from conception to birth.

d. *Lesser included offenses*.

(1) *Killing an unborn child*. Article 119a—injuring an unborn child

(2) *Intentionally killing an unborn child*.

(a) Article 119a—killing an unborn child

(b) Article 119a—injuring an unborn child

(c) Article 119a—attempts (attempting to kill an unborn child)

e. *Maximum punishment*.

The maximum punishment for (1) *Injuring an unborn child*; (2) *Killing an unborn child*; (3) *Attempting to kill an unborn child*; or (4) *Intentionally killing an unborn child* is such punishment, other than death, as a court-martial may direct, but shall be consistent with the punishment had the bodily injury, death, attempt to kill, or intentional killing occurred to the unborn child’s mother.

f. *Sample specifications*.

(1) *Injuring an unborn child*.

In that \_\_\_\_\_(personal jurisdiction data), did (at/on board—location), (subject-matter jurisdiction data, if required), on or about \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_, cause bodily injury to the unborn child of , a pregnant woman, by engaging in the [(murder) (voluntary manslaughter) (involuntary manslaughter) (rape) (robbery) (maiming) (as-

sault) of] [(burning) (setting afire) of (a dwelling inhabited by) (a structure or property known to (be occupied by) (belong to))] that woman.

(2) *Killing an unborn child*.

In that \_\_\_\_\_(personal jurisdiction data), did (at/on board—location), (subject-matter jurisdiction data, if required), on or about \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_, cause the death of the unborn child of , a pregnant woman, by engaging in the [(murder) (voluntary manslaughter) (involuntary manslaughter) (rape) (robbery) (maiming) (assault) of] [(burning) (setting afire) of (a dwelling inhabited by) (a structure or property known to (be occupied by) (belong to))] that woman.

(3) *Attempting to kill an unborn child*.

In that \_\_\_\_\_(personal jurisdiction data), did (at/on board—location), (subject-matter jurisdiction data, if required), on or about \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_, attempt to kill the unborn child of , a pregnant woman, by engaging in the [(murder) (voluntary manslaughter) (involuntary manslaughter) (rape) (robbery) (maiming) (assault) of] [(burning) (setting afire) of (a dwelling inhabited by) (a structure or property known to (be occupied by) (belong to))] that woman.

(4) *Intentionally killing an unborn child*.

In that \_\_\_\_\_(personal jurisdiction data), did (at/on board—location), (subject-matter jurisdiction data, if required), on or about \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_, intentionally kill the unborn child of , a pregnant woman, by engaging in the [(murder) (voluntary manslaughter) (involuntary manslaughter) (rape) (robbery) (maiming) (assault) of] [(burning) (setting afire) of (a dwelling inhabited by) (a structure or property known to (be occupied by) (belong to))] that woman.”

(g) By inserting the new paragraph 45a to read:

**“45a. Article 120a Stalking**

a. *Text*

(a) Any person subject to this section:

(1) who wrongfully engages in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear

death or bodily harm, including sexual assault, to himself or herself or a member of his or her immediate family;

(2) who has knowledge, or should have knowledge, that the specific person will be placed in reasonable fear of death or bodily harm, including sexual assault, to himself or herself or a member of his or her immediate family; and

(3) whose acts induce reasonable fear in the specific person of death or bodily harm, including sexual assault, to himself or herself or to a member of his or her immediate family; is guilty of stalking and shall be punished as a court-martial may direct.

(b) In this section:

(1) The term “course of conduct” means:

(A) a repeated maintenance of visual or physical proximity to a specific person; or

(B) a repeated conveyance of verbal threat, written threats, or threats implied by conduct, or a combination of such threats, directed at or towards a specific person.

(2) The term “repeated,” with respect to conduct, means two or more occasions of such conduct.

(3) The term “immediate family,” in the case of a specific person, means a spouse, parent, child, or sibling of the person, or any other family member, relative, or intimate partner of the person who regularly resides in the household of the person or who within the six months preceding the commencement of the course of conduct regularly resided in the household of the person.

b. *Elements.*

(1) That the accused wrongfully engaged in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear death or bodily harm to himself or herself or a member of his or her immediate family;

(2) That the accused had knowledge, or should have had knowledge, that the specific person would be placed in reasonable fear of death or bodily harm to himself or herself or a member of his or her immediate family; and

(3) That the accused’s acts induced reasonable fear in the specific person of death or bodily harm to himself or herself or to a member of his or her immediate family.

c. *Explanation.* See Paragraph 54.c(1)(a) for an explanation of “bodily harm”.

d. *Lesser included offenses.* Article 80—attempts.

e. *Maximum punishment.* Dishonorable discharge, forfeiture of all pay and allowances, and confinement for 3 years.

f. *Sample Specification.*

In that \_\_\_\_\_ (personal jurisdiction data), who (knew)(should have known) that \_\_\_\_\_ would be placed in reasonable fear of (death)(bodily harm) to (himself)(herself) (\_\_\_\_\_, a member of his or her immediate family) did (at/on board—location), (subject-matter jurisdiction data, if required), (on or about \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_)(from about \_\_\_\_\_ to about \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_), wrongfully engage in a course of conduct directed at \_\_\_\_\_, to wit: \_\_\_\_\_ thereby inducing in \_\_\_\_\_, a reasonable fear of (death)(bodily harm) to (himself)(herself) (\_\_\_\_\_, a member of his or her immediate family).”

**Sec. 3.** Part V of the Manual for Courts-Martial, United States, is amended as follows:

(a) Paragraph 5.c.(8) is amended by replacing the word “foreign” with the word “hardship.”

(b) Paragraph 7(e) is amended by replacing the word “Transportation” with the words “Homeland Security”.

**Sec. 4.** Part IV of the Manual for Courts-Martial, United States, is amended by replacing the word “Transportation” with the words “Homeland Security.”

**Sec. 5.** These amendments shall take effect 30 days from the date of this order.

(a) Nothing in these amendments shall be construed to make punishable any act done or omitted prior to the effective date of this order that was not punishable when done or omitted.

(b) Nothing in these amendments shall be construed to invalidate any nonjudicial punishment proceedings, restraint, investigation, referral of charges, trial in which arraignment occurred, or other action begun prior to the effective date of this order, and any such nonjudicial punishment, restraint, investigation, referral of charges, trial, or other action may proceed in the same manner and with

the same effect as if these amendments had not been prescribed.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
April 18, 2007.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register,  
8:45 a.m., April 20, 2007]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the  
*Federal Register* on April 23.

**Remarks at Tippecanoe High School  
and a Question-and-Answer Session  
in Tipp City, Ohio**

*April 19, 2007*

**The President.** Thank you all. Please be seated. Thank you. Sit down. Thanks for coming. I'm honored you're here. Steve, thank you for the invitation. It's a real pleasure to be with you. What I thought I would do is share some thoughts with you about a couple of subjects, primarily Iraq, and then I'd like to answer some of your questions, on any topic that you'd like to ask me about.

Before I do, I do want to thank Steve and the chamber of commerce for giving me a chance to dialog with you and, hopefully, giving the students here at this high school a chance to hear from the President firsthand. I know there are students who will be listening. My mission is to not only share with you what's on my mind and why I have made some of the decisions I have made, but another mission is to convince you that serving the public—that public service is worthwhile; that you can go into politics or you can feed the hungry or you can serve in the military, and it's a fulfilling part of a person's life and a necessary part, in my judgment, of a country that is a complete country.

So I want to thank the high school folks. I want to thank Chuck Wray, the principal, for greeting me. I appreciated you letting me come to this center of learning. I particularly want to thank the teachers for teaching. There is no more noble profession than to be a teacher, and I'm honored to be in your midst.

I want to thank the mayor, George Lovett—George L. [Laughter] Thank you, George—George W. [Laughter]

I'm traveling today with the leader in the House for the Republican Party, John Boehner. John is a—[applause]—I've found him to be a good, solid, honest person. I know he is providing strong leadership in the House of Representatives. And I know he cares a lot about this district. I've seen John work issues. I've heard him speak in depth about what he believes. And I appreciate his leadership, and I appreciate him joining me today.

I wish I was traveling here with Laura. The best thing about my family is my wife. She is a great First Lady. I know that sounds not very objective, but that's how I feel. And she's also patient. Putting up with me requires a lot of patience. But she sends her best; she's in New Orleans today.

And I will tell you, one reason—this may sound counterintuitive, but a good marriage is really good after serving together in Washington, DC. It's been an amazing experience to be a husband and then a dad as President of the United States. And I emphasize, that is the priority for me as the President. It's my faith, my family, and my country. And I am pleased to report that our family is doing great, particularly since my wife is such a fantastic person. And she sends her very best.

Let me say something about Virginia Tech, and I want to first thank Steve for the moment of silence. You know, it's a—there is—the President spends time at disasters. It's—part of the job of the Presidency is to help people heal from hurt. And the amazing thing is, though, when you go down to a scene like Virginia Tech, you can't help but be buoyed by the spirit, that out of the tragedy comes a certain sense of resolve.

One of the things I try to assure the families and the students and the faculty of that fine university was that there are a lot of people around our country who are praying for them. It's interesting, here in Tipp City, the first thing that happened was a moment of silence, a moment of prayer, to provide—at least my prayer was, please comfort and strengthen those whose lives were affected by this horrible incident. It really speaks to

the strength of this country, doesn't it, that total strangers here in Ohio are willing to hold up people in Virginia in prayer, and I thank you for that. And my message to the folks who still hurt in—at Virginia Tech is that a lot of people care about you, and a lot of people think about you, a lot of people grieve with you, and a lot of people hope you find sustenance in a power higher than yourself, and a lot of us believe you will.

My job is a job to make decisions. I'm a decision—if the job description were, what do you do, it's decisionmaker. And I make a lot of big ones, and I make a lot of little ones. Interestingly enough, the first decision I made happened right before I got sworn in as President. I was at the Blair House, which is across the street from the White House, getting ready to give my Inaugural Address. And the phone rang, and the head usher at the White House said, "President-elect Bush." I said, "Yes." He said, "What color rug do you want in the Oval Office?" [Laughter] I said, this is going to be a decisionmaking experience. [Laughter]

The first lesson about decisionmaking is, if you're short on a subject, ask for help. So if you're a student listening and you're not very good at math, ask for help. Don't be afraid to admit that you need help when it comes to life. I wasn't afraid to admit I wasn't sure how to design a rug, so I called Laura. [Laughter] I said, "They've asked me to design a rug in the Oval Office. I don't know anything about rug designing; will you help me?" She said, "Of course." But I said, "I want it to say something"—the President has got to be a strategic thinker—and I said to her, "Make sure the rug says, optimistic person comes to work." [Laughter] Because you can't make decisions unless you're optimistic that the decisions you make will lead to a better tomorrow. And so if you were to come in the Oval Office, what you would see is this fantastic rug that looks like the sun. And it just sets the tone for the Oval Office.

I share that with you because I make a lot of decisions, and I'm optimistic that the decisions I have made will yield a better tomorrow. The hardest decision you make is whether or not to commit troops into combat—people like this young man, people who've served our country with great distinc-

tion, people who volunteered to say, "I want to serve the United States." The hardest decision a President makes is to ask those men and women to go into harm's way.

My decisionmaking was deeply affected by the attack of September the 11th, 2001. It was a moment that defined a dangerous world to me with absolute clarity. I realized then that this country was no longer invulnerable to attack from what may be happening overseas.

I realized that there is an enemy of the United States that is active and is lethal. At further study of that enemy, I realized that they share an ideology, that these weren't—that the—and when you really think about it, the September the 11th attack was not the first attack. There was a 1993 World Trade Center attack; there was attacks on our Embassies in East Africa; there was an attack on the USS *Cole*; there have been other attacks on U.S. citizens. And that these attacks were instigated and carried out by cold-blooded killers who have a belief system. They are threatened by free societies. They can't stand the thought of freedom being the prevailing attitude in the world because their view is, if you don't believe in what I believe in, you probably shouldn't be around.

This enemy is smart, capable, and unpredictable. They have defined a war on the United States, and I believe we're at war. I believe the attack on America made it clear that we're at war. I wish that wasn't the case. Nobody ought to ever hope to be a war President or a Presidency—a President during war. But that's how I see the world. And I made a vow that I would do everything I could, and work with Members of Congress to do everything they could, to protect the United States. It is the most solemn duty of our country, is to protect our country from harm.

A lesson learned was that—at least in my opinion—that in order to protect us, we must aggressively pursue the enemy and defeat them elsewhere so we don't have to face them here. In other words, if what happens overseas matters to the United States, therefore, the best way to protect us is to deal with threats overseas. In other words, we just can't let a threat idle; we can't hope that a

threat doesn't come home to hurt us. A lesson of that terrible day was, threats overseas can come home to hurt us. And so the fundamental question—and this has led to constructive debate—it's, what do you do about it?

I've chosen a path that says, we will go overseas and defeat them there. I also know full well that it's important for us if we're facing an ideology, if we're facing ideologues, if we're confronting people who believe something, that we have got to defeat their belief system with a better belief system. Forms of government matter, in my opinion. It matters how—the nature of the government in which people live. And therefore, I have put as part of our foreign policy not only an aggressive plan to find extremists and radicals and bring them to justice before they hurt us but also to help people live in liberty—free societies as the great alternative to people living under a tyrant, for example.

And so my decisionmaking was based upon those principles. And now we're involved in a—I call it a global war against terror. You can call it a global war against extremists, a global war against radicals, a global war against people who want to hurt America; you can call it whatever you want, but it is a global effort. And by the way, the United States is not alone in this effort. We're helping lead an effort. And the major battlefield in this global war is Iraq, and I want to spend some time talking about Iraq.

Living under a tyrant must be just brutal, and living under the reign of Saddam Hussein was incredibly brutal. A lot of innocent people were killed; a lot of people were cowed by the state. There really wasn't much in terms of a civil structure that would enable people to have a kind of a form of a representative government. People were kept apart through violence, in many ways. People were pitted against each other. A lot of people were given favored treatment.

The decision to remove Saddam Hussein was a difficult decision, I think a necessary decision. If you want to talk about that later on, we can. And what has happened since then is that we are trying to help a young democracy survive in the heart of the Middle East and, at the same time, prevent our stat-

ed enemies from establishing safe haven from which to attack us again.

Now I say that—preventing our enemies from establishing a safe haven from which to attack us again—because that is their stated objective in Iraq. That's what Al Qaida says. Al Qaida is the same group of folks that attacked us on September the 11th. They have said their objective is to drive the United States out of Iraq in order to establish safe haven. And why would they need safe haven? They would need safe haven from which to plot and plan and train to attack again. They have an objective, and that is to spread their ideology throughout the Middle East. That is what they have stated. That's their objectives.

Our objective is to deny them safe haven, is to prevent Al Qaida from being able to do in Iraq that which they did in Afghanistan, which is where they trained thousands of young men to come and kill—to eventually kill innocent people.

Our objective also is to help a young democracy flourish in a part of the world that desperately needs liberty, in a part of the world where government—forms of government will provide hope so as eventually to discourage the type of mentality that says 19 kids should get on airplanes and kill 3,000 people.

And it's incredibly hard work, but I have come to the conclusion, obviously, that it's necessary work. It's necessary work for peace.

In 2005, the Iraqi people went to the polls; 12 million voted. I view that as a statement that says—by the way, I wasn't surprised that 12 million people, if given a chance to vote, voted. I was pleased, but I wasn't surprised. And the reason I wasn't surprised is because I believe in this principle: I believe liberty is universal. I don't believe freedom is just confined to America. I think there is a universal principle that all people desire and want and should be free, that it's not just an American ideal; it is universal.

I think back, for example, right after World War II—people might have argued after fighting the Japanese that they don't want to be free. They're the enemy; they killed a lot of people; they attacked the United States; why should we work to help them be

free? Except those people were—didn't quite understand, not only do people want to be free, that when free societies emerge, they're more likely to yield the peace.

And so it's a—this country began to evolve, and it started with elections. And it's easy to forget the elections because of all the violence. In 2006, I was convinced that we would be able to reposition our troops and have fewer troops in Iraq because the Iraqis want to take on the security themselves. This is a sovereign government. People got elected. They want to be—showing the people of Iraq that they can run their own Government. I don't know if you get that sense on your TV screens or not, but I certainly get that sense when I talk to the Prime Minister, with whom I speak quite frequently.

And yet they—and yet the enemy—and the enemy—when I say “enemy,” these are enemies of free societies, primarily Al Qaida inspired—blew up the great religious shrine in '06, a year ago—all aiming to create a sense of sectarian violence, all aiming to exacerbate the religious tensions that sometimes were exacerbated under Saddam Hussein, all aiming at preventing this young democracy from succeeding. And they succeeded. The enemy succeeded in causing there to be sectarian strife. In other words, the Government wasn't ready to provide the security. People started taking matters into their own hands. “I'm going to protect myself, or I'm going to rely upon somebody else to protect me,” they would say.

So I have a decision point to make, last fall. And the decision point was whether or not to either scale back or increase our presence in Iraq. And that was a difficult decision. It's difficult any time, as I told you, you put a soldier in harm's way. I understand the consequence of committing people into war. The interesting thing is, I'm the Commander in Chief of an incredibly amazing group of men and women who also understand that consequence and yet are willing to volunteer.

The question was, do we increase our—I call it reinforce; you can call it surge; there's all kind of words for it—or do we pull back? As you know, I made a decision to reinforce. And I did because I believe the Iraqis want to have a peaceful society. I believe Iraqi mothers want their children to grow up in

peace, just like American mothers do. I think, if given a chance, that society can emerge into a free society. I felt strongly that if violence erupted, sectarian violence erupted in the capital, it would make it impossible to achieve the objective, and that is to help this free society. Listen, there are people—or let it emerge into a free society.

And the goal is a country that is stable enough for the Government to work, that can defend itself and serve as an ally in this war on terror, that won't be a safe haven, that will deny the extremists and the radicals. I happen to think there will be an additional dividend when we succeed. Remember the rug? I'm optimistic we can succeed. I wouldn't ask families to have their troops there if I didn't think, one, it was necessary, and two, we could succeed. I believe we're going to succeed, and I believe success will embolden other moderate people that said, they're going to reject extremists and radicals in their midst.

There's a good group of people in Washington, fair, decent, honorable people—and by the way, in this political discourse, we should never question anybody's patriotism if they don't happen to agree with the President. That's not the American way. The American way is, we ought to have a honest and open dialog. There are good people, patriotic people who didn't believe that additional troops would make that big a difference, and therefore, we should not increase but, in some cases, pull out, in some cases, pull back. Either case, having weighed the options, I didn't think it was viable, and I didn't think it would work.

A couple of points I want to make, and then I promise to stop talking and answer your questions. [*Laughter*] People often ask me, what are we seeing on TV? What's happening with the violence? Here's my best analysis: One, the spectaculars you see are Al Qaida inspired. They claim credit for a lot of the big bombings. The bombing of the Parliament was Al Qaida; the bombing of the Golden Samarra was Al Qaida. These are the Sunni extremists inspired by Usama bin Laden, who attacked the United States. I keep repeating that because I want you to understand, what matters overseas, in my

judgment, affects the security of the United States of America in this new era.

Their objective is twofold: One, shake the confidence of the average Iraqi that their Government is incapable of providing security, and therefore, people will turn to militias in order to protect themselves; their second objective is to shake our confidence. It's an interesting war, isn't it, where asymmetrical warfare is—and that means people being able to use suicide bombers—not only, obviously, kills a lot of innocent people, like which happened yesterday in Iraq, but also helps define whether or not we're successful.

If the definition of success in Iraq or anywhere is no suicide bombers, we'll never be successful. We will have handed Al Qaida “that's what it takes” in order to determine whether or not these young democracies, for example, can survive. Think about that. If our definition is no more suiciders, you've just basically said to the suiciders, go ahead.

Iran is influential inside of Iraq. They are influential by providing advanced weaponry. They are influential by dealing with some militias, tend to be Shi'a militias, all aiming to create discomfort, all aiming to kind of—according to some—to create enough discomfort for the United States, but in doing so, they're making it harder for this young democracy to emerge. Isn't it interesting, when you really take a step back and think about what I just said, that Al Qaida is making serious moves in Iraq, as is surrogates for Iran.

Two of the biggest issues we face for the security of this country today and tomorrow is Al Qaida and Iran. And yet their influence is being played out in Iraq. I believe that if we were to leave before this country had an opportunity to stabilize, to grow—and by the way, I fully understand and completely agree with those who say, this is not just a military mission alone. That is too much, to ask our military to be able to achieve objectives without there being a corresponding political avenue, political strategy being fulfilled by the Iraqis. I fully expect them to reconcile. I fully expect them—and I made it clear to the Prime Minister that they should pass different de-Ba'athification law, that they ought to have local elections, that they ought to share their oil wells so people feel a com-

mon—you know, a common bond to something bigger than provincialism.

They have to do work. They know they have to do work. I told that to Prime Minister Maliki this week on a secure video: You have an obligation to your people, and to our people, for that matter, to do the hard work necessary, to show people that you're capable of getting your Government to move forward with political reconciliation. There has to be reconstruction money spent, their reconstruction money. They've dedicated \$10 billion out of their budget, and now they've got to spend that money wisely to show people that the Government can be for all the people.

But if we were to leave before that were to happen, I will share a scenario that I'm fearful of. One, that the very radicals and extremists who attack us would be emboldened. It would confirm their sense that the United States is incapable of long-term commitments, incapable of—it would confirm their commitment that they think we're soft, let me put it to you that way. That's what they think.

That doesn't necessarily mean that the United States has to kind of muscle up for the sake of muscling up. That's not what I'm trying to say. But I do believe it is risky to have an enemy that has attacked us before to not take the United States seriously for the long run.

Secondly, there would be a violence—level of violence that would spill out beyond just the capital, could spill out beyond Iraq. And then you would have ancient feuds fueled by extremists and radicals competing for power—radical Shi'a, radical, extreme Sunnis, all competing for power. They would happen to share two enemies: one, the United States and Israel, for starters, and every other moderate person in the Middle East.

Imagine a scenario where the oil wealth of certain countries became controlled—came under the control of a radical, extremist group. And then all of a sudden, you'd be dealing not only with safe haven for potential violent attack; you'd be dealing with the economic consequences of people who didn't share the values of the West, for example.

Iran wants to—they've stated they'd like to have—let me just say, we believe they would like to have a nuclear weapon. Part of our diplomacy is to prevent them from doing so. If the United States were to leave a chaotic Iraq, not only would the vacuum of our failure there to help this young Government enable extremists to move more freely and embolden them, but I also believe it would—it could cause the Middle East to enter into a nuclear arms race.

The scenario I'm beginning to describe to you, I believe, is a real scenario, a real possibility for a scenario. And I believe if this were to happen, people would look back 30 years from now or 20 years from now, and say, what happened to them in 2007; how come they couldn't see the threat?

And so I want to share that with you because—these thoughts with you, because as a person whose job it is to make decisions, you've got to understand that I'm making them on what I believe is solid ground. These are necessary decisions for the country.

We're having an interesting debate in Washington. John and I spent some time talking about it, and that is this supplemental funding. In other words, I sent up a request to make sure our troops had the money necessary to do the missions that they have been asked to do. I want to share a couple thoughts with you on that, and then I'll answer some questions.

First, I think it's a mistake—and I've made it clear that the Congress should not have artificial timetables for withdrawal in a funding mission—funding statement. I'll tell you why. [*Applause*] Thank you. Thank you. The reason why is, if you're a young commander on the ground or an Iraqi soldier and you've been tasked with a mission to help provide security for a city and an enemy hears that you're leaving soon, it affects your capacity to do your job. It sends a signal to a dangerous part of the world that it's just a matter of time, things will happen.

I think it's a mistake for Congress to tell the military how to do its job. We've got fantastic generals and colonels and captains who are trained to carry on military missions; that's their responsibility. And it's very important that they be given the resources and the flexibility necessary to carry out that

which the Commander in Chief has asked them to do.

I fully understand the debate, and again, I repeat to you. It's an important debate. I would hope it would be conducted with civil tone to bring honor to the process. Sometimes it gets a little out of hand there in Washington, I admit. But my message to the Congress has been, don't put our troops in between the debate; let's get them the money, let's get the commanders the flexibility, and we can debate Iraq policy without shorting the capacity for these troops to do their jobs.

These are—I would call these times consequential times. I believe we're in a long, ideological struggle. And I believe the struggle will determine whether or not this country is secure. People ask me—you know, I've been reading a lot of history. People ask me, "Can you think of any historical parallels?" Well, clearly the cold war is an interesting parallel. There's a—by the way, every new phase of history has its own unique features to it. For example, you've got a kid in the battlefield, and he's e-mailing home every day, or 24-hour news cycles. I mean, there's a lot of war—asymmetrical warfare, or \$50 weapons are sometimes used to defeat expensive vehicles. In other words, these are different times.

But there are some parallels. One is, of course, the ideological standoff during the cold war, eventually won by freedom, the forces of freedom. For some, that sounds, maybe, corny. But it's true. It's an historical truth. And in my judgment, it requires people to have faith in that universal principle of liberty.

I like to remind people that my dad was a 18-year-old kid when he signed up to—for the United States Navy in World War II and went off to combat in a really bloody war. And yet his son becomes the President, and one of his best friends in the international scene was the Prime Minister of Japan. Prime Minister Koizumi was a partner in peace. Isn't it interesting? I think there's a historical lesson there, that liberty has got the capacity to transform enemies to allies.

I think there's a lesson in Korea. I think if you were to ask somebody to predict in 1953 what the world would look like in the

Far East, I don't think they would have said, China would have a marketplace that was growing; Korea would be our sixth largest trading partner—I think it's the sixth largest trading partner, but certainly a partner in peace; and Japan would have been an ally, a strong ally that would have committed troops to the young democracy of Iraq to help this democracy. I don't think people would have predicted that, but, in fact, it happened. It happened because the United States provided enough stability so that societies were able to evolve toward free societies, or freer societies.

We've got—we face this—we face a unique set of challenges, but I think we can learn something from history when we think about those challenges. And I guess my conclusion is, I believe the decisions I have made were not only necessary to protect the country but are laying a foundation of peace, the beginnings of laying that foundation of peace, so that generations will look back and say, "Thank goodness—thank goodness America didn't lose sight of basic principles, and thank goodness America stayed true to her beliefs, and thank goodness America led."

So thanks for letting me share some thoughts with you. And now I'll be glad to answer some questions. [*Applause*] Okay, thank you. Probably a nerve-wracking experience to think about asking—it's not a nerve-wracking experience. Go ahead.

### **Emergency Supplemental Appropriations**

**Q.** Mr. President, what is your view of those who—in the opposing party who've you've advised to come to the White House to discuss solutions to the Iraq war and its funding who have expressed a reluctance to come and talk because of the perception that you would have a precondition or a no-negotiation on any points regarding the war?

**The President.** No, thanks. He asked the question about—prior to the meeting yesterday, there was some concern that I wouldn't listen, that I'd made up my mind, and therefore, discussions weren't necessary. And I will tell you, we had a very cordial meeting. The Speaker and the leader and minority leader and Senator McConnell all came down, along with others.

Clearly, there's different points of view, and that's fine. That's the greatness about our society. In my discussions with the leaders, I said, "You have the authority to pass the funding legislation. That's your authority, not mine." I submitted what the Pentagon thinks it needs. In other words, the process works where I ask the Pentagon, how much do you need? What do you need to do the job? And they submitted their request, and then we, on behalf of the Pentagon, sent it up to Congress. And they had the authority to pass that—pass the bill any way they see fit.

I have the authority, in our Constitution, to veto the bill if I don't think it meets certain criteria. They, then, have the authority to say, "Well, we don't agree with the President's veto, and now we're going to override the veto," so that that which they passed becomes law. And here's where we are. I said, "Get a bill to me as quickly as you can." And I believe they committed to a bill late next week, or a week from next Monday, I think is what they're aiming for. And therefore, we will sit back and hope they get it done quickly. Time is of the essence. We need to get money to the troops. It's important for them to get the money.

However, I did make it clear that in exercising your authority, if you put timetables, or if you micromanage—or artificial deadlines or micromanage the war or insist upon using a war supplemental to load up with items that are not related to the global war on terror, I will exercise my constitutional authority, and then you will have the opportunity to override my veto if you so choose.

My point to the leaders—and it was a very cordial meeting yesterday, by the way, and people—the positive news is that we don't—the negative thing is we don't agree 100 percent. That's not—you shouldn't be surprised. The positive news is that there was a cordial discussion. The discussion was dignified, like you would hope it would be, and people were free to express their minds.

And so my attitude is, if they feel like they've got to send this up there with their strings, like they said, please do it in a hurry so I can veto it, and then we can get down to the business of getting the troops funded. [*Laughter*]

Sir.

### **Public Opinion on Iraq**

**Q.** Mr. President, how would you respond to the rather mistaken idea that the war in Iraq is becoming a war—in Vietnam?

**The President.** Yes, thank you. There's a lot of differences. First, the Iraqi people voted for a modern constitution, and then set up a Government under that Constitution. Secondly, the—that's as opposed to two divided countries, north and south. In my judgment, the vast majority of people want to live underneath that Constitution they passed. They want to live in peace. And what you're seeing is radical on the fringe creating chaos in order to either get the people to lose confidence in their Government or for us to leave.

A major difference as far as here at home is concerned is that our military is an all-volunteer army, and we need to keep it that way. By the way, the way you keep it that way is to make sure our troops have all they need to do their job and to make sure their families are happy.

There are some similarities, of course; death is terrible. Another similarity, of course, is that Vietnam was the first time a war was brought onto our TV screens here in America on a regular basis. I'm looking around looking for baby boomers; I see a few of us here. It's a different—it was the first time that the violence and horror of war was brought home. That's the way it is today.

Americans, rightly so, are concerned about whether or not we can succeed in Iraq. Nobody wants to be there if we can't succeed, especially me. And these—violence on our TV screens affects our frame of mind, probably more so today than what took place in Vietnam. I want to remind you that after Vietnam, after we left, the—millions of people lost their life—the Khmer Rouge, for example, in Cambodia. And my concern is, there would be a parallel there; that if we didn't help this Government get going, stay on its feet, be able to defend itself, the same thing would happen. There would be the slaughter of a lot of innocent life. The difference, of course, is that this time around the enemy wouldn't just be content to stay in the Middle East; they'd follow us here.

It's interesting, I met with some Congressmen today, and one person challenged that.

He said, "I don't necessarily agree with that." In other words, I have told people that this is a unique war, where an enemy will follow us home, because I believe that. But if you give Al Qaida a safe haven and enough time to plan and plot, I believe the risk is, they will come and get us. And I freely admit that much of my thinking was affected on September the 11th, 2001, and the aftermath of September the 11th, 2001. And I wanted to share that with you and the American people so that they understand that when I make decisions, why I'm making decisions. I can assure you, I'm not going to make any decisions in regard to anybody's life based upon a poll or a focus group.

Sir. They don't want you to ask the question. [*Laughter*] They silenced you. Go ahead and yell. [*Laughter*]

### **International Support for Iraq/Iran and Syria**

**Q.** Would you speak, please, a little bit about—

**The President.** Now you can use it.

**Q.** Would you speak a little bit about the support or lack of support that we're getting from other countries, particularly those countries surrounding Iraq—

**The President.** Sure.

**Q.** —Saudi Arabia, so forth?

**The President.** Thank you, sir. First, our mission is getting a lot of support from the Iraqis. That's the place to first look. Are the Iraqis willing to make sacrifices necessary for their own country? I think there's a lot of Americans who wonder whether or not the Iraqis want to live in a free society and are willing to do that which is necessary to help their country succeed. If I felt they weren't, I would not have our troops in harm's way, just so you know.

I believe they are. They have suffered unbelievable death and destruction. Yesterday's bombing—I don't—we don't have the intel on it; I suspect it's Al Qaida. Al Qaida convinces the suiciders to show up. Al Qaida understands the effects of this kind of warfare on the minds of not only people in Iraq but here and elsewhere in the world. And yet the Iraqis continue to recruit for their army and their police force. I thought it was interesting that the Sunni Speaker of the House,

the day that the council chambers were bombed, said, "We're going to meet." These folks have gone through unbelievable horrors—they really have—and yet they continue to show courage in the face of this kind of violence.

Secondly, there is—there are nations who are concerned about whether or not a Shi'a government in Iraq will end up being a surrogate for Iran, for example. I think there are some Sunni nations—Sunni-governed nations, like Saudi and Jordan, that are concerned about a shift in the Middle East toward Iran, and that they are—wonder whether or not this Government of Iraq, which is a Shi'a government as a result of the fact that most people in Iraq—or the majority, the largest plurality of people in Iraq are Shi'a—you wouldn't be surprised if people voted that; that's what happened as a result of the elections. And they wonder whether or not the Government is going to be of and by and for the Iraqi people. And that concerns them.

And so one of the reasons we were working with the Iraqis on this neighborhood conference is for people to hear firsthand that the Iraqi Government is, first and foremost, Iraqi. They're not interested in being anybody else's surrogate.

We've got a lot of work to do there, and it's an interesting question you asked. I was pleased, and I thank His Majesty, that 80 percent of the debt in Saudi—I'll get you in a minute—is—80 percent of the Saudi debt in Iraq was forgiven. I appreciated that. It's a strong gesture. But we have a lot—not we, the Iraqi Government has a lot of work to do to convince skeptical nations that, in fact, they're going to be a pluralistic society, that they're not going to hold one group above another when it comes to their society.

Iran—I mentioned Iran. Iran is a serious problem. This is a nation that has said they want to have a nuclear—or we believe wants to have a nuclear weapon. And to what end? They don't need a nuclear weapon. And it's really important for the free world to work together to prevent them from having a nuclear weapon.

I'm very worried about a nuclear arms race in the Middle East. It's not in the interests of our children that that happens, for the

sake of peace. They have been unhelpful in Iraq, intentionally unhelpful in Iraq. And so I obviously sent out the orders to our troops, commanders, that they will protect themselves against Iranian influence—or let me just say this—threats to their lives based—because of what Iran has done.

We have no beef with the Iranian people, which is really important for the people of Iran to understand. We value the history of Iran. We respect the traditions of Iran. It's the Iranian Government that is making the decisions that is causing you to be isolated. You're missing a opportunity to be a great nation because your Government has made decisions that is causing the world to put economic sanctions on you and to isolate you. I would hope the Iranian Government would change their attitude. And the Iranian people must understand that if they do—if they don't—if they stop their enrichment process, that they can have a better relationship with countries such as the United States. If they aren't meddling in Iraq, they can have a better relationship with a country that wishes them no harm.

Syria—I don't know if I'm going too much or not, but you asked. [*Laughter*] We have made it very clear to President Asad that there are a series of gestures we'd like to see him make for the sake of peace. One such gesture is to leave Lebanon alone; let the Lebanese democracy flourish; stop interfering in this young democracy.

Isn't it interesting that it's the democracies of the Middle East that are having the most problem with the extremists? I think it is. We have said to the Syrians, "Stop harboring Hamas and Hizballah"—violent, radical organizations aimed at causing harm in the Middle East. And we have said to President Asad, "Stop allowing the flow of suicide bombers through your country into Iraq."

You know, some have suggested that the United States start diplomatic relations with Syria. My message is, the Syrian has got the choice to make; the Syrian President must make the choice that will stop isolating his regime. And the United States will continue to make it clear to Syria, and work with other nations to make it clear to Syria, that their behavior is unacceptable if we want peace in the Middle East.

And so that's a—there will be meetings. I think the Iraq Compact group will be meeting as will an Iraq neighbor group. And it's there that the neighborhood can come together, all—and Condi is going to—Condi, Secretary Rice will be representing us there—all aiming to make it clear that we hope that we can encourage nations to help this young democracy to not only survive but to thrive. And it's an interesting challenge given the history of the region.

Yes, sir.

### **Immigration Reform/Border Security**

**Q.** Mr. President, to kind of switch directions a little bit, illegal aliens in this country apparently are putting a lot of pressure on our social services. Could you comment on what the plans are in the future to take care of that?

**The President.** Yes, sir. They are not apparently putting pressure on the social services; they are putting pressure on the social services. [*Laughter*]

I believe it's in the interest of the United States to have a comprehensive immigration plan that meets certain objectives: one, helps us better secure our border; two, recognizes that people are doing work here that Americans are not doing; three, that recognizes that we are a nation of immigrants, and we ought to uphold that tradition in a way that honors the rule of law; four, that it's in the interest of the country that people who are here be assimilated in a way that—with our traditions and history—in other words, those who eventually become citizens be assimilated. In other words, one of the great things about America is, we've been able to assimilate people from different backgrounds and different countries. I suspect some of your relatives might be the kind of people I'm talking about.

Four, that we do not grant amnesty. I am very worried about automatic citizenship being granted to people who have been here illegally. I think it undermines the rule of law. I also think it would create a condition or, indeed, send the signal that it's okay for another X millions of people to come.

Five, you can't kick people out. You may think you can kick people out, but you can't. It's not going to work. It's impractical to think

that you can find 10 million people who have been here for a long period of time and boot them out of the country.

Six, if you hire somebody who is an illegal alien, you ought to be held to account. Now, those are the principles—[*applause*—wait a minute. Those are the principles. And we're working in Congress. The first step was to make it clear to the American people that we would change our border policy. This is a subject I'm real familiar with. As you might recall, I was the Governor of the great State of Texas, and we've been dealing with immigration—[*applause*—there you go. Always one in every crowd. [*Laughter*]

A lot of Americans did not believe that this country was intent upon enforcing our border. And a couple of years ago, working with John and other Members of Congress, we began a border modernization program. And that meant, for example, more Border Patrol agents, and we will have doubled them, I think—I can't remember; I don't want to throw out facts; I may get them wrong, but we're doubling the number of Border Patrol agents by 2008.

It means some barriers, whether they be vehicle barriers or fencing, different roads to make our enforcement folks be able to travel easier on the border, UAVs—unmanned aerial vehicles—infrared detection devices. In other words, this border is becoming modernized.

It's interesting, I went down to Yuma, Arizona, right after Easter. And when I first went down there, there was a fence next to Mexico, and that was it; kind of a rickety fence, it looked like. And one of the tactics was for people to storm over the fence and rush the neighborhood on the other side, and the Border Patrol may pick up two or three of them, and however many else got in. Now there is double fencing in this area, with a wide area in between that our Border Patrol are able to travel on. In other words, we're beginning to get a modernization program that's pretty effective. As a matter of fact, the number of arrests are down.

Another problem we had—it's a long answer because it's a really important topic. Another problem we had was catch-and-release. We would—the Border Patrol would catch

somebody, say, from Mexico; they'd send them right back, but, say, from—a lot of folks are coming from Central America. But by the way, the reason why is because they want to put food on the table, and there are jobs Americans aren't doing. You know what I'm talking about. Some of you—if you're running a nursery, you know what I'm talking about. If you've got a chicken factory, a chicken-plucking factory, or whatever you call them, you know what I'm talking about. People have got starving families, and they want to come and work.

By the way, if I were a leader of a country where people were willing to take risks like these people were, I'd be worried that I'd be losing an incredibly good part of my workforce—hard-working people.

Anyway, they're coming across—and from Central America; they're paying exorbitant sums, by the way. There's a whole industry based upon using people as chattel. They're commodities to be exploited, frankly. And they're coming up, and so we would catch them, but we didn't have enough beds on the border. So they catch a fellow from El Salvador trying to sneak in, and they say, "Check back in with us, you know; we don't have any room to hold you. Come back in, and we'll have the immigration judge." Well, guess what happened? A guy wants to work; he's not interested in seeing the immigration judge; off he goes; you'll never find him.

And so we've ended that practice by increasing the number of beds now on the border. So when we get somebody from other than Mexico, we hold them, and then send them back to their country. And the message is getting out that the border is becoming more secure.

However, I think it's very important—I'm getting to the meat here—very important for us to have a temporary-worker program if you really want to enforce the border. Our border is long. It is hard to enforce to begin with. It seems like to me that it's in our national interest to let people come on a temporary basis to do jobs Americans are not doing, on a temporary, verifiable basis, with a tamper-proof card, to let people come and do jobs Americans aren't doing and let them go home after that so that they don't have to sneak across the border. In other words,

if there's a way for people to come in an orderly way, they won't have to try to get in the bottom of the 18-wheeler and pay a person thousands of dollars to smuggle them into the United States of America.

There are a lot of employers who are worried about losing labor here in the United States. They don't know whether they're legal or illegal, by the way, because not only is there a smuggling operation; there's a document forging operation. In other words, the law that we have in place has created an entire underground system of smugglers, innkeepers, and document forgers. And that's not the American way, by the way.

And so these guys don't know what they're getting—some card, it looks legal; "Sure, let's go; you can work in my nursery or go pick my—help me pick my lettuce." And they don't know whether they're looking at somebody legal or illegal. We need a tamper-proof card that will enable an employer to verify whether or not this person is here legally or not. Otherwise, it's unfair to hold somebody to account. In other words, if we're enforcing the law, saying you're employing somebody here illegally, we better make sure that that employer is able to verify with certainty whether the person is here legal or not.

Finally, the fundamental question is, what do you do with the—you right there; everybody nervous up front—[laughter]—the question is, what about the 10 to 12 million people who are already here? It's a tough issue. As I've told you, my position is, not legal automatically. I'm also realistic enough to know that you're just—it may sound attractive in the political sound-bite world—just kick them out. It is not going to work. It's just not going to work.

And so we're working with the Senate and the House to devise a plan that, in essence, says that you have broken the law and that you have an obligation to pay a fine for having broken the law if you want to stay in the United States; that there is a line for citizenship—there are a lot of people in that line right now—and that after paying a penalty for breaking the law, that you can get at the back of the line, not the front of the line; that if you want to become a citizen, you've got to prove that you can speak the language, that you can assimilate, that you have paid

your taxes, that you haven't broken the law—[*applause*]*—*that you haven't broken the law, and then, if you choose, you have an opportunity to apply for citizenship, but you don't get to jump ahead of people who have played by the rules.

And this is a tough debate, and I appreciate John's leadership on this issue. It's an emotional debate. I just ask our fellow citizens not to forget that we are a nation of law, but we are also a humane country that breaks our heart when we see people being abused and mistreated, and that I believe that—I know we need to have a civil debate on the subject. We're immigrants. We're a nation of immigrants. And I happen to personally believe as well, that there's nothing better for society than to have it renewed. When newcomers who come here legally realize the great benefits that one can achieve through hard work, it renews our spirit and renews our soul, when people are given a chance to realize the great blessings of the United States of America.

And so we're working on it. Thank you for bringing it up. It's going to be an interesting, interesting legislative issue. I'm—there's—a lot of good people in the Senate are working hard to reach accord. And we're right in the middle of them trying to help them. And then if we can get a bill out of the Senate, we'll take it to the House and see where we go. Good question.

Yes, sir.

***U.S. Armed Forces/Iraq Study Group/  
Health Care of Wounded Soldiers and  
Veterans***

**Q.** Thank you, Mr. President—

**The President.** About time you asked a question. [*Laughter*]

**Q.** This is truly an honor. Thank you for coming today. My question is about the U.S. military preparedness. I'm actually of a small manufacturing company in Dayton where we manufacture a lot of parts for the up-armored Humvees, gun turrets, and things like that—

**The President.** This isn't, like, one of these self-interest questions, is it? [*Laughter*]

**Q.** No, no, no. There's my—I'll get right to it. There's—currently the law is that only 50 percent of the military components have

to be U.S.-made. When we went into Afghanistan, there was a gentleman in Switzerland who refused to give us part of something for the NORDAM bomb that we had—he refused to make it because it was made over there. And my question is about increasing that percentage and keeping a prepared military, that we don't have to rely on other countries to defend ourselves.

**The President.** Right. My answer is, I'm really not sure what you're talking about, and I'll look into it. [*Laughter*] But I can tell you, we're going to spend a lot of money on this military because we're worried about whether or not this military will have the supplies necessary, the equipment necessary after multiple rotations.

I want to assure parents whose loved one may be in the military, we're not going to put your son or daughter over there unless they're ready. And no question, multiple rotations have been hard on our families. And as you know, recently, Secretary Gates recommended to me, and I accepted, saying with certainty to our troops, "Your tours will be up to 15 months, and you'll be home for a guaranteed 12 months." And the reason why he did that is that we had some people deployed for what they thought might be 12 months and were asked to stay in theater. And what's the most important thing we can do for this volunteer army is to provide certainty for our families.

In other words, you sign—you volunteer to be in the military, and you're deployed—we want to make sure there's certainty so that families can prepare. The worst thing that can happen, according to our military experts there, is for somebody's hopes to be dashed, that there's not clarity about what's expected of our troops. And so we did that.

There is—the term of art is called reset—that is to make sure that we reset our military. And there is an area where there is good common ground with Members of Congress—the Democrat leadership understands that reset is an important part of keeping this military ready and active.

Let me say one thing I forgot to tell you before. I don't know if you remember the Baker-Hamilton report. James A. Baker, the Secretary of State, Lee Hamilton—two distinguished people, real good people; the kind

of Americans that have served with distinction and are still serving. They proposed an interesting idea, which was for the United States to be postured at some point in time with the following force posture: one, embedded with Iraqi troops, not only as a training mission but to help them understand chain of command issues and the issues of a modern military; that our troops be stationed in a over-the-horizon position so we could respond to a particular situation, so it didn't get out of control; that we helped defend the territorial integrity of Iraq; and that we chase down Al Qaida.

It's an interesting force posture to be in. Frankly, I was hopeful, as I mentioned to you, that we could be in that kind of force posture a year ago. I really thought we were going to be there until the sectarian violence got out of control. They also said that the United States may have to increase troops in order to be able to get there. And that's what you're seeing happen. And that's where I'd like to be. And I'd like to be in a position so that the certainty of our troop deployments, like we've come, is just etched in everybody's mind.

I'm watching our military very carefully. I love our military, for starters. And I want to make sure that during these difficult times, that we help them on their needs. One of my concerns is that the health care not be as good as it can possibly be.

I will tell you that we had a bureaucracy problem at Walter Reed. What we didn't have is a compassion problem at Walter Reed. We've got some unbelievably good docs and nurses who work around the clock to help the trooper—troops and their families. But our bureaucracy, that sometimes can be large and cumbersome at the Federal level, didn't respond. And I appreciate the way Secretary Gates got control of the situation.

Just so you know, I am concerned that a soldier getting out of—or a marine getting out of uniform and stays in the Defense—is transferred seamlessly from the Defense health system to the Veterans health system. In other words, one of my concerns is that there is a gap. And we owe it to these families and these soldiers and marines to make sure that that service is seamless. And that's why

I asked Bob Dole and Donna Shalala to make sure that those two bureaucracies don't create the conditions where somebody isn't getting the help they need.

I know that's on people's minds. One of the areas where we do agree is that we got to make sure our veterans are treated as good as we can possibly treat them. We've asked a lot of these troops, and we will do the best to make sure the Veterans Administration and the Defense health systems work well.

Yes, sir.

### **President's Principles**

**Q.** Mr. President, I admire your stay-to-it-iveness. You mentioned earlier about not using polls and focus groups. But I have to ask you personally, with respect to economics, with respect to the war, with respect to the war on terror and Iraq and immigration, when you go to bed at night and you see these polls—everybody and their brother does a poll now—how does it make you feel?

**The President.** That's an interesting question. You know, I'm—I've been in politics long enough to know that polls just go poof at times. I mean, they're a moment; that they are—let me put it to you this way: When it's all said and done, when Laura and I head back home—which at this moment will be Crawford, Texas—I will get there and look in the mirror, and I will say, "I came with a set of principles, and I didn't try to change my principles to make me popular." You can't make good decisions—[*applause*].

As I mentioned to you, this is a decision-making experience, and you cannot make good decisions if you're not making decisions on a consistent set of principles. It's impossible. Oh, you can make decisions, all right, but they're inconsistent. What I think is important is consistency during difficult and troubled times, so that people—they may not agree, but they know where I'm coming from.

And I'll share some of the principles. You've heard one—I believe freedom is universal. I believe that. Let me put it another way: I believe there's an Almighty, and I believe a gift from the Almighty to every man and woman and child on this Earth is freedom. That's what I believe.

Secondly, I believe you can spend your money better than the government can spend your money. Oh, I know that sounds like a sound bite, but it's a principle by which you set budgets. For example, I believe that cutting taxes helped this country overcome a recession and a war. And the reason why is, is that markets flourish when people have more money. Employers, small businesses do better when you have more money. When your treasury is more likely to have money, you're more likely to take risk. And that's what tax cuts do.

And by the way, it's another issue that we're facing. In all due respect to the Democrats, if you look at their budget, they want to raise your taxes. I believe Congress needs to keep your taxes low. I believe, by the way—let me—[*applause*]. Thank you. I'm not trying to rally; I'm just trying to explain. [*Laughter*]

I believe we have proven that the best way to balance the budget—and I know many of you are concerned about a balanced budget—is to grow the economy through low taxes, which means enhanced revenues, and be wise about spending your money. In other words, progrowth economic policies have proven to work. And it turns out that when the economy grows, taxes increase. And therefore, the corollary is to make sure we don't overspend.

The temptation in Washington is to spend; it just is, and—every idea sounds like a great idea. But we are proving that you can balance the budget by keeping taxes low. As a matter of fact, I think it was 167 billion—the deficit was 167 billion less than anticipated because of—over the last 2 years—because of low taxes. I said we'd cut the deficit in half by 5 years or 4 years, and we've done it 3 years quicker. Now we've submitted a new budget that shows we can balance the budget without raising taxes. That's a principle.

I believe, for example, that the government ought to trust people to make decisions. And so how does that—like health care; that's a big issue for all of us. One of the ways that I think—was that your question? Good, okay. I'll ask it for you—what are you going to do on health care? Anyway—[*laughter*]. The Tax Code discriminates against an individual on health care de-

isions. And I believe that we ought to change the Tax Code so an employee of a corporation is treated equally as somebody who is self-employed. In other words, the tax treatment ought to be the same, all aimed at encouraging individual decisionmaking in the marketplace. I'm a big believer in health savings accounts, because health savings accounts means you are the decisionmaker, along with your doc.

Health care—like Medicare, we changed Medicare for the better. Medicare—I remind people, Medicare had changed—medicine had changed; Medicare hadn't. Prescription drugs became an integral part of medicine, and yet the senior was not covered with prescription drugs in Medicare. It didn't make any sense to me to pay thousands for an ulcer operation but not a dime for the prescription drugs that could have prevented the ulcer from happening in the first place.

And so we modernized Medicare with the prescription drug benefit, but we also did something unique when it came to Government programs. We gave seniors choices. In other words, we created more of a marketplace. It's amazing what happens when people demand something: People provide for it in the marketplace. Competition helps keep price low. It was estimated that we would spend some 600 billion additional money through Medicare, and yet the cost to the Government and you, more particularly, is substantially lower because of competition. That's a principle.

When it comes to pension plans, I think you ought to be managing your money. I don't think you ought to be relying upon government to tell you what your benefit is. I think you ought to be in a position to take your own money and manage it on a tax advantage basis.

In other words, my point is, the principle is that we ought to trust people to make decisions. To whom much is given, much is required. I'm glad you asked this question; thank you. [*Laughter*] Listen—Laura says, “You love to hear yourself talk, don't you?” [*Laughter*]

I want to share this story with you, though, because I believe an important principle is, to whom much is given, much is required. The United States of America has been given

a lot. We are a blessed nation. For—those of you who travel around the world know exactly what I'm talking about, about what a great life we have here compared to a lot of other folks.

When I first came into office, I was deeply concerned about the pandemic of HIV/AIDS, particularly on the continent of Africa. I was concerned because during the 21st century, an entire—it was possible that an entire generation could be wiped out by a disease for which we could do something about.

I went to Congress; I went to you. I asked for a substantial sum of money to help fund a campaign to save lives on the most 19 affected nations on Earth. I asked a former CEO of Eli Lilly, Randy Tobias, to run the program. As a result of your generosity based upon the principle, to whom much is given, much is required, over 850,000 people receive antiretroviral drugs today. That's up from 50,000, 3 years ago.

Is it in our Nation's interest to do that? I believe it is. If what happens overseas matters here at home, then I do think it's important to help address issues like starvation and disease. But I also think it's in the interest of the soul of the Nation to adhere to an important principle. And I think we're adding to a glorious chapter in our history to say that the people of the United States have helped save thousands of lives that otherwise might have been lost to HIV/AIDS.

And so those are some of the principles. And you asked a question, what do I think? I think it's important to stand on principle. I think it's important to make decisions based upon a core set of beliefs. That's what I think. And politics comes and goes, but your principles don't. And everybody wants to be loved—not everybody, but—[laughter]—you run for office, I guess you do. [Laughter] You never heard anybody say, "I want to be despised; I'm running for office." [Laughter] But I believe, sir, in my soul, that I have made the right decisions for this country when it comes to prosperity and peace. That's what I believe.

I want to share something with you about history. I'm reading a lot of history, I mentioned to you. I read three histories on George Washington last year. The year 2006, I read three histories about our first Presi-

dent. My attitude is, if they're still writing about 1, 43 doesn't need to worry about it. [Laughter]

Yes, ma'am.

### **Shootings at Virginia Tech/School Safety**

**Q.** This is in regards to the Virginia Tech tragedy. Being a high school student—

**The President.** Go ahead. Go ahead. Let's get the mike there.

**Q.** Sorry.

**The President.** Thanks.

**Q.** This is in regards to the Virginia Tech tragedy. Being a high school student, I was wondering what's being done to ensure safety in schools?

**The President.** I think that—first of all, I don't know your principal very well—I met him. I will tell you, though, that his biggest concern, besides you learning to read, write, add, and subtract and be a student who can contribute to society, is your safety.

One of the lessons of these tragedies is to make sure that when people see somebody or know somebody who is exhibiting abnormal behavior, to do something about it, to suggest that somebody take a look; that if you are a parent and your child is doing strange things on the Internet, pay attention to it and not be afraid to ask for help and not be afraid to say, "I am concerned about what I'm seeing."

I think there's a tendency at times for people—and I fully understand this—is to respect somebody's privacy, you know, and not share concerns. But some of the lessons of the shootings have been that it is—and I don't know about this case—and by the way, they're still digging out the facts, so I think it's very important for us not to comment until it's all said and done—but that other cases, there have been warning signals, that if an adult, for example, had taken those signals seriously, perhaps tragedy could have been avoided.

And so the lesson is, is that—and I know you're—the lesson is, is that the principals and teachers and adults of this school must be on alert, and I know they are.

And as I—I repeat to you: You're lucky—all of us—a lot of these high schools are really lucky to have people who care about you.

I mean the—unfortunately, in a complex society, the teacher’s job and the principal’s job is more than just teaching; it is safety. And yet that is a vital concern, I know, to the folks who run this school.

Okay, yes, ma’am.

### **War on Terror**

**Q.** [*Inaudible*]*—*misconception about scaling back in Iraq.

**The President.** Sure, go ahead. Wait, I want this question recorded. A little hustle there. [*Laughter*] Thank you.

**Q.** I believe there’s a big misconception that scaling back in Iraq will cost less in the long run than to go in and get the job done. How do you get that message across to America and especially to Congress?

**The President.** Yes, I appreciate that. Her concern is that a scale back will either save money or save lives or save headache, and how do you get the message out? Coming here is part of getting the message out. The President has got to be educator in chief, and I’ve just got to keep talking about it. I’ve spent a lot of time on this subject. This is a subject that has concerned a lot of our fellow citizens. They are deeply worried about whether or not it is possible for us to succeed, and that there needs to be an explanation of the violence.

And my answer is, is that the—there is a political process that’s ongoing, an economic process that’s ongoing, a rebuilding process that’s ongoing, and a security process that’s ongoing, and that you can’t have the former unless you have security. And therefore, it’s in the interest—if a failed state creates violence and chaos that eventually could come and hurt us, it’s in our interest to help succeed.

And therefore, the troop levels need to be commensurate with the capacity of that society to protect itself. The objective is to have the Iraqis take over their own security. It’s just that they weren’t ready to do so. And I appreciate your question.

It’s very important—I think some really are—I know a lot of people are tired of it. People get pretty tired of war, and I understand that. It’s really important as we—that we have a sober discussion and understand what will be the consequences of failure.

As I told you, on the rug—the reason I brought up the rug was to not only kind of break the ice but also to talk about strategic thought. The President’s job is to think not only about today but tomorrow. The President’s job is not only think about the short-term security of the United States but to think about the little guys, you know—what the world will look like 20 or 30 or 40 years from now.

And I appreciate your question because I will continue to work hard to explain the consequences of this world in which we live; that what happens overseas matters here at home in the 21st century, and that we are in the beginning of a long struggle that will have, hopefully, not a lot of military action, would be my hope for future Presidents. But it is a struggle akin to other struggles we have been through.

The ideological struggle of the cold war is a potential parallel. It’s freedom versus communism. This is a—this is a struggle with freedom versus extreme radicalism. There have been—how do you allow a society, or how do you encourage societies to evolve after struggle, after conflict? There are other historical parallels. And my job is to continue to explain the consequences—consequences of success, which I believe will be peace; the consequences of failure, which I believe will be creating a more dangerous situation here in the United States.

Boehner is a busy man. He is busy representing the people of this district. He is now giving me the signal—[*laughter*]. I’m feeling his vibes. [*Laughter*] I’m going to fly him back to Washington.

I’m honored that you gave me a chance to come and visit with you. I ask for God’s blessings on our troops and their families, on the people of Virginia Tech, and on the people of the United States. Thank you for your time.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:05 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Steve Bruns, former president, Tipp City Area Chamber of Commerce; Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; Mahmud al-Mashhadani, Speaker of the Iraqi House of Representatives; King Abdallah bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia; President Bashar al-Asad of Syria; Secretary of Defense

Robert M. Gates; and Bob Dole and Donna E. Shalala, Cochairs, President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors.

**Proclamation 8127—Small Business Week, 2007**

April 19, 2007

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

During Small Business Week, we honor small business owners and workers for their important role in ensuring that America remains the economic leader of the world. Every day, our Nation's small businesses help enhance the lives of our citizens and lead the way in an economy distinguished by low unemployment, sustained job creation, and one of the fastest growth rates of any major industrialized nation.

To help extend our Nation's prosperity, my Administration is committed to continuing the pro-growth economic policies that encourage enterprise and make America the best place in the world to do business. Our economy has created more than 7 million new jobs since major tax relief was enacted in 2003, and we are working to keep taxes low to help small businesses continue to expand. We are taking steps to make health care more affordable and available for small business owners and employees by encouraging Health Savings Accounts, supporting Association Health Plans legislation, and proposing a standard tax deduction for health insurance. My Administration is also committed to ensuring that small businesses can compete in the global economy.

By continuing to expand trade, we can open new markets for American products, lower prices for consumers, and create better American jobs.

Small businesses are the lifeblood of cities and towns across the country, and we salute small business owners, entrepreneurs, and employees for enhancing our communities and expanding opportunities for all. The hard work and ingenuity of our Nation's small business men and women are helping to sustain America's economic strength.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 22 through April 28, 2007, as Small Business Week. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs that celebrate the accomplishments of small business owners and their employees and encourage the development of new small businesses.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this nineteenth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:29 a.m., April 23, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on April 24.

**Proclamation 8128—Dutch-American Friendship Day, 2007**

April 19, 2007

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

On Dutch-American Friendship Day, we celebrate our longtime friendship with the Kingdom of the Netherlands and honor the many Dutch Americans who have made significant contributions to our country.

Our close partnership with the Netherlands dates back to the founding of our Nation, and it remains among our oldest continuous relationships. Many of the Pilgrims first sailed for the New World from a Dutch port, and when a small American warship approached the island of St. Eustatius in 1776, the Dutch port there gave the American flag its first friendly gun salute. A few years later, the Netherlands became one of the first nations to recognize the independence of the United States of America. The United States

and the Netherlands are continuing that tradition of close cooperation in the 21st century, working together to bring hope and liberty to places where it has long been denied.

Dutch Americans have enriched the American experience and have helped write our history, strengthen our character, and shape our society. Today, we pay tribute to our allies in the Netherlands and recognize the proud citizens of Dutch ancestry who call America home.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 19, 2007, as Dutch-American Friendship Day. I encourage all Americans to celebrate our country's Dutch heritage and the many ways Dutch Americans have strengthened our Nation.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this nineteenth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:29 a.m., April 23, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on April 24.

### **Remarks on Signing the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program Reauthorization Act**

*April 20, 2007*

**The President.** Good morning. Thanks. Be seated. Welcome to the Roosevelt Room. This morning I have the honor of signing a bill that will help continue our Nation's fight against breast and cervical cancer. This bill reauthorizes the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program. I want to thank the Congress for passing this bill. I appreciate you all coming down to witness the signing of this important piece of legislation.

Our family, like many families, has been touched by this issue. Laura's mom, my

mother-in-law, Jenna Welch, was diagnosed with breast cancer at the age of 78. She is a fortunate person—she had surgery, and 9 years later, she is a cancer survivor, and we are thankful for that.

As a result of her mom's battle with cancer, Laura has devoted a lot of time and energy to raising awareness about breast cancer through efforts like the pink ribbon campaign. She managed to get me to wear pink. [Laughter] I appreciate Laura's good work. And I thank your good work as well, and thank you for joining us.

I want to thank Mike Leavitt, the Secretary of Health and Human Services. I appreciate Senator Barbara Mikulski from Maryland, who is a pioneer in a bill such as this. And, Senator, you're a—when you get on an issue, you can—[laughter]—you get things done, and we appreciate your leadership.

**Senator Barbara Mikulski.** Thank you, Mr. President.

**The President.** I thank Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin, who is a bill sponsor, as well as Congresswoman Sue Myrick. Sue is a cancer survivor. And we appreciate both of your leadership on this issue. I thank members from my administration for joining us; good to see you all.

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths for American women. This year, an estimated 180,000 Americans will be diagnosed with breast cancer; 11,000 will be diagnosed with cervical cancer. Together these two cancers are expected to claim the lives of more than 44,000 Americans in 2007.

Early detection allows early intervention and is the best way to increase the chance for survival. Mammograms and pap tests and other screening services can help doctors diagnose cancer before it has a chance to spread. When breast cancer or cervical cancer is caught early, the survival rate is more than 90 percent. Early detection makes treatment more effective; it gives hopes to patients; and it saves lives.

The National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program has helped millions of low-income and uninsured women get screened for cancer. This is an effective program. Since its creation, the program has conducted nearly 7 million cancer

screenings; it's diagnosed thousands of cases of breast and cervical cancer; and it's helped educate women about the importance of early detection. We expect that in 2007, this program will provide more than 700,000 screenings for low-income and uninsured women. The program is an important part of this Nation's fight against cancer, and the bill I'm about to sign will continue to life-saving work.

I appreciate working with the United States Congress to fund breast and cervical cancer research and prevention. The span of my administration, we have spent, along with Congress, \$6.7 billion. My budget for 2008 includes another billion dollars for research and prevention activities. We'll continue to work to ensure that every American woman has access to the screenings she needs to detect the cancers in time to treat them.

Again, I want to thank the Members of Congress for their hard work and their dedication in passing this important piece of legislation. I appreciate you all joining us to witness the bill signing ceremony. And it's now my honor to sign the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program Reauthorization Act. [Laughter]

[At this point, the President signed the bill.]

**The First Lady.** Thank you all.

**The President.** Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:32 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. H.R. 1132, approved April 20, was assigned Public Law No. 110-18. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

### Remarks to the World Affairs Council of Western Michigan and a Question-and-Answer Session in East Grand Rapids, Michigan

April 20, 2007

**The President.** Thank you all very much. I'm glad to be back in Grand Rapids. I appreciate the opportunity to address the World Affairs Council of Western Michigan. I was leaving the White House today, Laura said, "Where are you headed?" I said, "To the west coast." [Laughter] She said, "Make sure

you take your suntan lotion." [Laughter] I said, "The west coast of Michigan"—[laughter]—and I'm glad to be with you.

You can't help but think about Gerald Ford when you come to Grand Rapids, Michigan. You know, our country was blessed to have such a decent, honorable, kind, courageous leader in Gerald R. Ford, and we miss him a lot.

I appreciate Dixie Anderson, who is the executive director of the World Affairs Council of Western Michigan. I thank Barbara Propes, who is the president of the World Affairs Council of America. I want to thank Ping Liang, president, board of directors of the World Affairs Council of Western Michigan, and a fellow Yale Bulldog.

I appreciate my friend, Ambassador Pete Secchia for joining us today. He was the Ambassador to Italy under 41. I appreciate Sara Shubel, who is the superintendent of the East Grand Rapids Public Schools. Thank you very much for allowing me to come to this beautiful auditorium here in East Grand Rapids High School. I appreciate Jenny Fee, the associate principal, as well as Larry Fisher.

My purpose of coming is to instruct, is to talk about the issues that our world is facing, particularly the issue of Iraq. And I appreciate the chance to come to this high school to do so.

I thank Congressman Vern Ehlers, Congressman from this district. I appreciate you being here, Vern, and thank you for joining me and Congressman Pete Hoekstra on Air Force One. It's probably quite convenient for you to fly from Washington on Air Force One. [Laughter] Glad to provide the transportation. [Laughter] Both these men are really honorable folks who serve western Michigan well in Congress, and I want to thank you for your service.

I thank the Michigan Attorney General, Michael Cox, for joining us. Mike, thanks for coming today. Michigan Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land. She heard this was a foreign policy speech. [Laughter] I appreciate Mayor Cindy Bartman, city of East Grand Rapids; Mayor George Heartwell, city of Grand Rapids. Thank you all for serving. I appreciate your willingness to become public servants.

One of the messages I hope that I can convey to the high school students who are here, no matter what your political beliefs may be, that it's important to serve. It's important to serve the community in which you live. And you can do so all kinds of ways. You can run for mayor at some point in time, or you can feed the hungry. But service is noble, and service is necessary. I see we've got some who wear the uniform of the United States military. In this day and age, that's the ultimate service, as far as I'm concerned, and I appreciate you volunteering.

For more than a half century, the World Affairs Council of Western Michigan has been a forum for lively and important debate. I understand this council was set up in 1949. It's been an important forum for people to talk about the big questions facing our country. There is no bigger question than what course our Nation should pursue in Iraq, and that's what I'm here to talk about.

Three months ago, my administration completed an extensive review of that very question. I ordered major changes to our strategy in Iraq. And to lead this new strategy, I named General David Petraeus, an expert who wrote the Army's new manual on counterinsurgency warfare.

This new strategy is fundamentally different from the previous strategy. It recognizes that our top priority must be to help Iraq's elected leaders secure their population, especially in Baghdad, because Iraqis will not be able to make the political and economic progress they need until they have a basic measure of security. Iraq's leaders are committed to providing that security, but at this point, they cannot do it on their own.

And so I ordered American reinforcements to help the Iraqis secure their population, to go after the terrorists and insurgents that are inciting sectarian violence, and to get their capital under control. As our troops take on this mission, they will continue to train and mentor the Iraqi security forces for the day they can take full responsibility for the security of their own country.

General Petraeus has been carrying out this new strategy for just over 2 months. He reports that it will be later this year before we can judge the potential of success. Yet the first indicators are beginning to emerge,

and they show that so far, the operation is meeting expectations. There are still horrific attacks in Iraq, such as the bombings in Baghdad on Wednesday, but the direction of the fight is beginning to shift.

In the coming months, I'll deliver regular updates on our operations. Today I want to share some details about how this effort is unfolding in three areas: Baghdad; Anbar Province; and the outskirts of Baghdad, where terrorists and extremists are making a stand.

The most significant element of our new strategy is being carried out in Baghdad. Baghdad has been the site of most of the sectarian violence; it is the destination for most of our reinforcements. So far, three additional American brigades totaling about 12,000 troops have reached the Baghdad area; another brigade is in Kuwait preparing to deploy; and one more will arrive in Kuwait next month. The Iraqi Government is also meeting its pledge to boost its force levels in the city. For every American combat soldier deployed to Baghdad, there are now about three Iraqi security forces—giving us a combined total of nearly 80,000 combat forces in the Baghdad area.

My point is, is that the American combat forces are not alone in the effort to secure the nation's capital. And just as important as the growing number of troops is their changing position in the city. I direct your attention to a map showing our troop presence around Baghdad late last year. This is how we were positioned. Most troops were at bases on the outskirts of the city. They would move into Baghdad to clear out neighborhoods during the day, and then they would return to their bases at night. The problem was that when our troops moved back to the bases, the extremists, the radicals, the killers moved back to the neighborhoods.

And we're changing. Part of our strategy change, part of the new mission in Baghdad is for American troops to live and work side by side with Iraqi forces at small neighborhood posts called joint security stations. You can see from this map, there are now more than two dozen joint security stations located throughout Baghdad; more are planned. From these stations, Iraqi and American forces work together to clear out and then

secure neighborhoods—all aimed at providing security for the people of Baghdad. If a heavy fight breaks out, our forces will step in, and Iraqi forces learn valuable skills from American troops. They'll fight shoulder to shoulder with the finest military ever assembled.

By living in Baghdad neighborhoods, American forces get to know the culture and concerns of local residents. Equally important, the local residents get to know them. When Iraqi civilians see a large presence of professional soldiers and police patrolling their streets, they grow in confidence and trust. They become less likely to turn to militias for protection. People want security in their lives, and they tend to turn to the most apparently effective security force. And as people gain confidence in the ability of the Iraqi troops, along with the United States, to provide security, they begin to cooperate. In fact, Iraqi and American forces have received more tips in the past 3 months than during any 3-month period on record. These are tips provided by local citizens about where to find terrorists and insurgents.

Most people—the vast majority of people want to live in peace. Iraqi mothers want their children to grow up in peace. And if given the opportunity and given the confidence, civilians turn in the terrorists and extremists and murderers to help achieve that peace.

This new approach to securing Baghdad brings risks. When I announced the new operation, I cautioned that more troops conducting more operations in more neighborhoods would likely to—bring more casualties. Since the security operation began, we have seen some of the highest casualty levels of the war. And as the number of troops in Baghdad grows and operations move into even more dangerous neighborhoods, we can expect the pattern to continue.

We must also expect the terrorists and insurgents to continue mounting terrible attacks. Here is a photo of the devastation caused by a car bomb at a bus stop in Baghdad on Wednesday. The victims of this attack were innocent men and women who were simply coming home from work. Yet this was hardly a random act of murder. It has all the hallmarks of an Al Qaida attack. The terror-

ists bombed the buses at rush hour, with the specific intent to kill as many people as possible. This has been long a pattern of Al Qaida in Iraq; this is what they do. They carried out the spectacular attack on the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad. They bombed the Jordanian Embassy in Iraq. They claimed credit for the bombing of the Golden Mosque of Samarra. Just last week, they sent a suicide bomber to attack the Iraqi Parliament building.

Al Qaida believes that its best chance to achieve its objectives, which is to drive the United States out of Iraq and prevent the emergence of a free society in the Middle East, is to defeat the security operation by conducting spectacular attacks that provoke Iraqis into taking violence into their own hands and lead Americans to conclude that the sectarian killing will never be contained. This strategy is merciless, but it is not without logic. It's important for all Iraqis, Sunnis and Shi'a alike, to understand that Al Qaida is the greatest threat to peace in their country. And the question is whether we and the Iraqis will give in and to—respond the way Al Qaida wants. Because of the lessons of September the 11th, the answer is, the United States Government will not give in to what Al Qaida wants. And the Iraqis must not give in to Al Qaida if they want to have a peaceful society.

The nature of a strategy aimed at securing the population is that the most important gains are often the least dramatic. Day by day, block by block, Iraqi and American forces are making incremental gains in Baghdad. Thanks to more troops on the streets and more cooperation from residents, the average number of weapons stockpiles seized each week has jumped 50 percent since the beginning of the new strategy. American and Iraqi forces tracked down and captured the leaders of a major car bomb ring. We found and cleared a warehouse where terrorists were storing chemicals to make weapons. We captured members of a death squad that had terrorized hundreds of residents in a Baghdad neighborhood. As a result, displaced families are beginning to return home. And the number of sectarian murders in Baghdad has dropped by half since the operation began.

The results of the security operation are uneven across the city. In some areas, there have been sharp declines in sectarian killing, while in other areas, the level of violence is still far too high. Yet even in volatile districts like Sadr City, our new approach is beginning to make a difference. A report last month in the Grand Rapids Press quoted an Iraqi resident of Sadr City. Perhaps you read it. If you didn't, here's what it said: "They thanked us"—they're talking about our forces and Iraqi forces—"They thanked us with respect and a smile." This resident said, "I'm happy that such a campaign is done in my neighborhood." People want security, and they want to live in peace.

Developments like these are not as spectacular as a terrorist bomb. When a family decides to stop depending on militias to protect them or a young man rejects insurgency and joins the Iraqi Army, it doesn't usually make the evening news. Yet small, individual choices like these are vital to the success of our campaign. They show that despite all the violence, the vast majority of Iraqis want security; they want to live in peace. I know I've said that more than once. It's important for our citizens to understand that people around the world are anxious for peace, and yet there are extremists and radicals and murderers who will do anything they can to prevent it from happening.

The Iraqi security forces are growing in maturity and gaining trust, and that's important. Our men and women in uniform are showing great courage and skill, and that's important to the Iraqi people as well.

Another significant element of our new strategy is being carried out in Anbar Province, a largely Sunni area west of Baghdad. For much of the past 4 years, Anbar has been a hotbed for insurgents and Al Qaida terrorists. Remember, Al Qaida is Sunni in nature. According to a captured Al Qaida document, according to what Al Qaida has made clear, their goal is to take over the Anbar Province and make it their home base for Iraq. That would bring them closer to their stated objective of taking down Iraq's democracy, building a radical Islamic empire, and having safe haven from which to launch attacks on the United States' citizens here at home or abroad. That is what Al Qaida has stated.

That is their objective, and Anbar Province is where they're trying to achieve their objective. Al Qaida has pursued this goal through a ruthless campaign of violence, and they grew in power. They were succeeding.

And then something began to change. The people of Anbar began to realize their life was not the paradise Al Qaida promised—as a matter of fact, it was a nightmare. So courageous tribal sheiks launched a movement called "The Awakening" and began cooperating with American and Iraqi forces. The sheiks and their followers knew exactly who the terrorists were, and they began providing highly specific intelligence. To help capitalize on this opportunity, I sent more troops into Anbar Province. Alongside the Iraqi Army and police, U.S. marines and Special Operations forces have been striking terrible blows against Al Qaida.

The maps show the dramatic changes taking place in Ramadi, which happens to be the capital of Anbar Province. The red-shaded areas in the first map show the concentration of Al Qaida terrorists in the city 2 months ago. The second map shows the concentration of the terrorists now. Their presence has declined substantially. Here is how one reporter described the changes: "A year ago, Ramadi's police force had virtually been wiped out, leaving only a couple dozen officers and a lawless city with nowhere to turn for help. Now guerrilla fighters have begun to disappear; schools and shops have reopened; and civilians have begun walking in previously deserted streets."

Anbar Province is still not safe. Al Qaida has responded to these changes with sickening brutality. They have bombed fellow Sunnis in prayer at a mosque; they send death squads into neighborhoods; they have recruited children as young as 12 years old to help carry out suicide attacks. But this time, local Sunnis are refusing to be intimidated. With the encouragement of their tribal leaders, they're stepping forward to protect their families and drive out the terrorists. They're stepping forward to prevent Al Qaida—the people who attacked us on September the 11th, 2001—from establishing safe haven in Anbar Province. And I believe strongly it's in the interest of the United States of America to help them.

General Petraeus said earlier this month: “In the latest recruiting effort, which used to draw minimal numbers of Iraqis willing to serve in the Iraqi Army or the Iraqi police in Anbar Province, there were over 2,000 volunteers for the latest training.” General Petraeus went on, “Frankly, it’s a stunning development and reflects the frustration the Sunni Arab tribes have with what Al Qaida has done to them. It has really had a devastating effect.” If given a chance, most people will reject extremists and radicals and murderers.

The United States will help Sunni sheiks and will help their people. We will stay on the offense in Anbar Province. We and the Iraqi Government are carrying out our new strategy in Baghdad and Anbar, as well as the “Baghdad belts”—these are areas on the outskirts of the capital that have been staging grounds for deadly attacks. I have discussed the capital city with you. I discussed a western Province with you. And I’m now going to talk about the belts around the capital city of Iraq.

We have moved an additional Stryker battalion to Diyala Province, which is northeast of Baghdad, where our soldiers and Iraqi forces are conducting raids against Al Qaida and insurgents. We have sent reinforcements to Diwaniyah Province—Diwaniyah, a city of Diwaniyah, which is 80 miles south of Baghdad, where we’re working with Iraqi forces to rout out militia and Shi’a extremists.

In these and other parts of the Baghdad belts, Iraqi and American forces are fighting to clear and hold territory that the enemies of a free society considered their own. They’re fighting back. As a result, violence is increasing. And as our forces move deeper into the territory, the violence could increase even more. Yet these operations are having an important impact on this young democracy. They’re keeping the pressure on the terrorists and insurgents who have fled Anbar and Baghdad. They’re helping cut off the supply of weapons and fighters to violent groups inside the capital. They’re showing Iraqi citizens across the country, there will be no sanctuary for killers anywhere in a free Iraq.

All of these military operations are designed to improve security for everyday folks.

They’re designed to reduce sectarian violence. And they’re designed to open up breathing space for political progress by Iraq’s Government.

It may seem like decades ago, but it wasn’t all that long ago that 12 million Iraqi citizens voted for a free and democratic future for their country. And the Government they elected is in place—it hasn’t been in place a year yet—and they’re working hard to make progress on some key benchmarks, progress to help this country reconcile and unite after years of tyrannical and brutal rule.

The Iraqi legislature passed a budget that commits \$10 billion of their money for reconstruction projects, and now the Government must spend that money to improve the lives of Iraqi citizens. The Council of Ministers recently approved legislation that would provide a framework for an equitable sharing of oil resources, and now that legislation needs to go before their Parliament for approval. The Government has formed a committee to organize Provincial elections, and the next step is to set a date for those elections to be held. Iraqi leaders are taking steps toward agreement on a de-Ba’athification law that will allow more Iraqis to reenter their nation’s civic life, and they need to agree on that measure and send it to the Parliament.

Prime Minister Maliki is working to build greater support from Iraq’s neighbors and the international community. I just talked to him the other day on secure video—I was in the White House, and he was in Baghdad—and we talked about this neighborhood conference, an opportunity to rally the international community to help support this young democracy’s efforts to thrive and prosper. And at the conference in Egypt next month, he, along with Secretary Rice and other concerned leaders, will seek increased diplomatic and financial commitments for this country.

Iraq’s leaders have begun meeting their benchmarks, and they’ve got a lot left to do. As more breathing space is created by reducing the sectarian violence, Iraq’s leaders have got to take advantage of that breathing space. I have made it abundantly clear to the Prime Minister that our patience is not unlimited, that we fully recognize that there has to be political progress and economic progress,

along with military progress in order for that Government to succeed. And it's up to the Iraqi people and the Iraq-elected folks to show America and the world they're ready to do the hard work necessary to reconcile and move forward.

It's important to understand that Iraq's Government is working hard in a difficult environment. The day after its building was bombed, the Iraqi Parliament held a special session. Its Speaker said the meeting sent "a clear message to all the terrorists and all those who dare to try to stop this political process that we will sacrifice in order for it to continue." I found that to be a heartening statement; that here Al Qaida bombs their Parliament, and this man stands up and says, you're not going to scare us; we want to represent the will of the 12 million people who voted.

You've just got to know my view of—the vast majority of Iraqis are courageous people. They've endured brutality as a result of murderers trying to stop their new country from—their new system of government from succeeding. And I'm impressed by their courage. And I believe this current Government under Prime Minister Maliki is committed to building a strong democracy. That's my judgment, having talked to him. I've watched a man begun to grow in office. I first talked to him in June, when he was named the Prime Minister. I've talked to him consistently ever since. I look to see whether or not he has courage to make the difficult decisions necessary to achieve peace. I'm looking to see whether or not he has got the capacity to reach out and help unify this country. He says, you know, sometimes it's hard to get the Parliament to do exactly what he thinks they ought to do. [*Laughter*] I know what he means. [*Laughter*]

As we increase troop levels, we're also increasing our civilian presence. We're doubling the number of what's called Provincial Reconstruction Teams, which partner civilian experts with combat units to ensure that military operations are followed up with rapid economic assistance. These teams help local Iraqi leaders restore basic services and stimulate job creation and promote reconciliation. Their work highlights a sharp difference: The Iraqi and American Governments want to re-

build communities and improve lives; the extremists and terrorists want to destroy communities and take lives. And when ordinary Iraqis see this difference for themselves, they become more likely to stand with their elected leaders and help marginalize the extremists in this struggle.

Here at home, a different kind of struggle is taking place, and its outcome will have a direct impact on the frontlines. Despite the initial signs of progress on the ground, despite the fact that many reinforcements have not even arrived, Democrat leadership of the Congress is pushing legislation that would undercut the strategy General David Petraeus has just started to pursue. They have passed bills in the House and Senate that would impose restrictions on our military commanders and mandate a precipitous withdrawal by an arbitrary date. They say, withdrawal, regardless of the conditions on the ground. That approach makes for a vivid contrast with the attitude in Iraq. A prominent Middle East scholar recently visited Iraq, described the difference: "A traveler who moves between Baghdad and Washington is struck by the gloomy despair in Washington and the cautious sense of optimism in Baghdad."

We have honest differences of opinion in Washington and around this country, and I appreciate those differences. The ability to debate differences openly and frequently is what makes America a great country. Our men and women in uniform should never be caught in the middle of these debates. It has now been 74 days since I sent to Congress a request for emergency funding that our troops urgently need. The leadership in Congress have spent those 74 days trying to substitute their judgment for the judgment of our generals, without sending me legislation. And now, to cover ongoing Army operations, the Pentagon is being forced to transfer money from military personnel accounts.

The delay in spending is beginning to affect the ability of the Pentagon to fund our troops and all our missions. On Wednesday, I met at the White House with congressional leaders from both parties. It was a very cordial meeting. I think you would have been pleased at the tone of the meeting in the Cabinet Room there at the White House—

at least I was. I urged the people around the table to put politics aside and to send a bill that funds our troops, without arbitrary deadlines, without wasteful spending, and without handcuffing our commanders.

There is ample time to debate this war. We need to get the troops the money. When we debate the war on terror, it can be convenient to divide up the fight by location. And so we hear about, quote, “the war in Afghanistan” and, quote, “the war in Iraq,” if they were something separate. This is a natural way to talk about a complicated subject—I don’t think it’s accurate. Our enemies make no distinction based on borders. They view the world as a giant battlefield and will strike wherever they can. The killers who behead captives and order suicide bombings in Iraq are followers of the same radical ideology as those who destroy markets in Afghanistan, or they set off car bombs in Algeria, and blow up subway trains in London. The men who attacked Iraq’s Parliament last week swear allegiance to the same terrorist network as those who attacked America on September the 11th, 2001.

The fight in Iraq has been long and is trying. It’s a difficult period in our Nation’s history. I also say it’s a consequential moment in our Nation’s history as well. It’s natural to wish there was an easy way out, that we could just pack up and bring our troops home and be safe. Yet in Iraq, the easy road would be a road to disaster. If we were to leave Iraq before that Government can defend itself and be an ally in this war against extremists and radicals and be able to deny safe haven from people who want to hurt the United States, the consequences for this country would be grave.

There would be a security vacuum in Iraq. Extremists and radicals love vacuums in which to spread chaos. The world would see different factions of radicals, different groups of extremists competing for influence and power. The extremists who emerge from this battle would turn the country into a new radical regime in the Middle East. I told you they want to launch new attacks on America, and they need safe haven from which to do so.

Not every enemy we face in Iraq wants to attack us here at home, but many of them

do. And I believe it’s in the interest of this country to take those threats seriously. We don’t have to imagine what might happen if a group of terrorists gained safe haven. We’ve learned that lesson, I hope—precisely what happened in Afghanistan—it’s really important for our memories not to dim. At least it’s important for my memory not to dim, because my most important job is to protect the American people. The lesson of 9/11 is that when you allow extremists and radicals and killers to find a sanctuary anywhere in the world, that can have deadly consequences on the streets of our own cities. What happens overseas matters here in the United States of America. It’s one of the fundamental lessons of September the 11th, 2001.

Those who advocate pulling out of Iraq claim they are proposing an alternative strategy to deal with the situation there. Withdrawal is not a strategy. Withdrawal would do nothing to prevent violence from spilling out across that country and plunging Iraq into chaos and anarchy. Withdrawal would do nothing to prevent Al Qaida from taking advantage of the chaos to seize control of a nation with some of the world’s largest oil resources. Withdrawal would embolden these radicals and extremists. Withdrawal would do nothing to prevent Al Qaida from using Iraq as a base to overthrow other moderate countries. Withdrawal would do nothing to prevent Iran from exploiting the chaos in Iraq to destabilize the region, expand its radical influence, threaten Israel, and further its ambitions to obtain nuclear weapons.

If anything, withdrawal would make each of these dangerous developments more likely. Withdrawal would embolden enemies and confirm their belief that America is weak and does not have the stomach to do what is necessary to lay the foundations for peace. Ultimately, withdrawal would increase the probability that American troops would have to return to Iraq and confront an enemy that is even more dangerous.

So no matter how frustrating the fight in Iraq can be, no matter how much we wish the war was over, the security of our country depends directly on the outcome of Iraq. The price of giving up there would be paid in American lives for years to come. I firmly

believe that historians would look back on that decision to withdraw, and say, “What happened to them in the year 2007; how come they could not see the dangers to the United States of America?”

No one understands the stakes in Iraq more clearly than our troops. Every man and woman in our military volunteered for the job. They make us proud every day. Michael Evans is a specialist from Sumner, Illinois. His unit is part of the new operation to secure Baghdad. He said, quote, “It is a great feeling to know we’re contributing to getting insurgents off the streets, so the people do not have to live in fear.” He went on to say, “I’ll be coming away from this knowing that I was doing something to help the American people—so that what happened on 9/11 never happens again.”

I agree with him. Specialist Evans represents the greatness of our country: decent citizens volunteering to protect you. You know, for all we hear about the consequences of failure in Iraq, we should not forget the consequences of success in Iraq. Success in Iraq would bring something powerful and new, a democracy at the heart of the Middle East, a nation that fights terrorists instead of harboring them, and a powerful example for others of the power of liberty to overcome an ideology of hate.

We have done this kind of work in the United States of America before. I am—you know, I marvel at the fact that on the one hand, my dad joined the Navy at 18 to fight a sworn enemy, the Japanese, and on the other hand, his son, some 55 years later, best friend and keeping the peace with the Prime Minister of Japan. I find that an amazing fact of history: 41 fights them; 43 works with them to lay the foundation for peace, including working with Japan to deploy Japanese troops in Iraq. It’s amazing to me. But it shows the power of liberty to transform enemies into allies.

We have done the hard work before of helping young democracies. As a matter of fact, we did so after a brutal World War II, in helping Germany and Japan get back on their feet and establish forms of government that yield peace. We did so after the Korean war. I suspect it would be hard to find anybody in 1953 to predict that an American

President would one day be reporting to the World Affairs Council of Western Michigan that relations in the Far East are solid for the United States of America and that that part of the world is relatively peaceful compared to other troubled parts of the world. In ’53 they would have been thinking about all the lives lost in Japan or in Korea. In ’53 they would have seen a Communist China gaining strength.

And yet, in 2007, we’ve got a Korea that went through difficult times to get to the democracy she’s now in and is now a major trading partner of the United States. We’ve got a China with an open marketplace, based upon the principles where consumers get to decide things, not the state. The political system has got a long way to go, but the marketplace is beginning to redefine that society. Or how about Japan, a place where we lost thousands of lives, and yet now they’re a partner in peace.

America has done the hard work necessary to give liberty a chance to prevail. And it’s in my opinion and in the opinion of people like Specialist Evans that we do so in the Middle East for the sake of peace for a young generation of Americans.

Thank you.

I’ll be glad to answer a couple of questions, on any subject. Yes, sir.

### ***Emergency Supplemental Appropriations/ War on Terror Strategy***

**Q.** How do you think the new Democratic Congress will—[inaudible].

**The President.** Yes, thanks. First of all, I just want you to know that even though I’m quite critical of the delay in the supplemental funding, I respect the Democratic leadership in Washington. We have fundamental disagreements about whether or not helping this young democracy is—the consequences of failure or success, let’s put it that way. It’s also very important in this debate to understand that even though we have our policy differences—particularly as the young lad that you are—that we don’t think either of us are not patriotic citizens, okay?

So when you hear the debate, in my perspective, it’s because of—I just disagree with the notion that when we have troops in harm’s way that there ought to be a kind of

political process with strings attached to a piece of legislation that goes to fund our troops. As I say, there's ample time to discuss right or wrong. I don't believe there's ample time to delay funding for men and women who have volunteered.

Secondly, I feel very strongly—wait a minute—[*applause*]*—this is a sober forum—* or a forum of sober people, I hope. [*Laughter*] There is a—I have a fundamental problem with a—look, a lot of people didn't like the strategy. In other words, people said, "You shouldn't have done that, Mr. President." And I fully understand that aspect of it. I also found it quite ironic that the general I asked to lead the strategy, a counterinsurgency expert, David Petraeus, gets approved by the United States Senate 81 to nothing, and then, on his way over, they begin to micromanage his ability to follow through on the strategy.

So we have just a policy difference. When it's all said and done, I believe these troops will get the money they need. I think you're going to see there to be a continual debate on this subject. Interestingly enough, I said in a forum yesterday in Ohio and I'll share with you now, I thought at this point this year, I would be announcing troop reductions in Iraq, because I felt—this is, again, a year ago—I felt that the Iraqi Government was better prepared to be able to handle their own security. And by the way, they want to handle their own security. The Prime Minister is constantly saying, "Let me do more of it." We just believe he's not quite ready to do so and that it's in our interest to help him to be able to take on more of the security challenges. And I thought we'd be reducing troops.

And then what happened was, the Samarra bombing took place by Al Qaida, which caused there to be a sectarian outrage. And because the Government was ill-prepared to provide enough security in the capital, people began to use militias to provide security. And the sectarian outrage, the killing started to get out of hand. And I had a decision to make: withdraw from the capital and just kind of hope for the burnout theory—as you know, I was worried about chaos, and into chaos comes more extremists—or reinforce. I chose to reinforce, all aiming to get to a

position where we'll be able to reposition our forces.

I liked what James A. Baker and Lee Hamilton suggested. I thought that was a good suggestion. And that is to be in a position at some point in time where our troops are embedded with the Iraqi units—in other words, there's Iraqi units providing security with a handful of U.S. troops helping them learn what it means to be a good military. That's not a given. It's hard to have a good military. It's hard to have a chain of command with logistical support and maintenance support. And we're good at it, and we can help others become good at it. And embedding troops and training troops makes sense for me. I like the idea of having our troops on the over-horizon presence, to be able to help bail out extreme situations. I really want to make sure that our special ops stays on the hunt for Al Qaida in Iraq. We can't let Al Qaida develop another safe haven. Listen, we spent a lot of energy to drive Al Qaida out of Afghanistan; we don't want them to be able to establish a same type of safe haven in Iraq. That's where I would like to be.

I made the judgment, along with our military commanders, we could not get there until we provided enough security. And I fully understand this is a rough war. As I mentioned in my speech—let me put it more bluntly: The enemy has got an advantage. They know that a spectacular bombing is going to make it on the news, and it shakes people's conscience, and it should. Ours is a nation that has deep compassion for human life and human dignity.

But they also know it makes people question whether or not we can succeed in Iraq. Remember, we believe most of the spectaculars, like the ones you saw—we don't have—I can't tell you for certain Wednesday's bombing was Al Qaida. In other words, I don't have the—I can speculate. But I can tell you a lot of the spectacular bombings have been Al Qaida. A lot of the suicide bombings have been Al Qaida. That's why I said Al Qaida is the main threat for peace, because what they're trying to do is shake the confidence of the Iraqi people and their Government and the coalition's ability to provide security, and shake our confidence.

And, you know, as I say, it is tempting to think, well, just pull out of there and everything is going to be fine. I firmly believe, however, that one of the lessons of September the 11th is that if we were to concede Iraq to basically Al Qaida, in a sense, that they would follow us here, that oceans no longer protect us. And it's also important for you to know that my thinking was deeply affected on September the 11th, 2001. And therefore, a lot of the core of my thinking is to work to protect the United States as my most solemn obligation.

Yes, sir.

**Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom**

**Q.** [Inaudible]

**The President.** No, thank you. Good question. His question was, one, the relationship with Tony Blair; two, they have reduced their troops in Basra, in southern Iraq, and has that affected our relationship.

First, I have found Tony Blair to be a stand-up man. He's the kind of person who keeps his word. He's a strategic thinker. He thinks beyond the moment, to be able to try to project out beyond the current, so that the decisions that we have made jointly are decisions that end up yielding a long-term peace.

He, of course, like a good ally, informed me of his Government's intentions to reduce their presence in Basra. I concurred with him because the conditions on the ground were such that he didn't need to keep as many troops there as were initially stationed there. Secondly, what's interesting, as he made the announcement on Basra, he also made the announcement that they're going to send more troops into Afghanistan. Blair knows what I know—Prime Minister Blair knows what I know, that we're in a global war and that we think about Afghanistan and Iraq as separate wars—they're of the same war; they're just different theaters of this war.

He also knows what I know, that we have got to work really closely and share intelligence, and that's one of the reasons I appreciate Pete so much. He understands the intelligence business as a key component of keeping the country safe. We've got to share intelligence. This is—Tony Blair is the Prime

Minister of a country which has been attacked; so has ours. And—no, I appreciate you bringing him up; he's solid. And in my judgment, the world needs courageous leadership, people like Tony Blair.

Yes, sir.

**Iran and Syria/Spread of Democracy in the Middle East**

**Q.** Thank you, Mr. President. What's the next step for the United States, or even the United Nations, in dealing with the belligerent behavior of Iran with regards to nuclear development?

**The President.** Yes, thank you. Excellent question. You go to school here?

**Q.** No. [Laughter]

**The President.** I was going to say, give the man an "A."

First of all, you do understand Iran is a Shi'a nation primarily. Interestingly enough, though, only 50 percent of the nation is Persian. A great portion of Iran is Azeri, Baloch, other kinds of nationalities make up their country.

The Iranians have defied international organizations in an attempt to enrich uranium and—we believe, because they want to have a nuclear weapon. And I believe this challenge is one of the most significant challenges we face—"we," the free world, face. There's a lot of reasons why.

One, just as an example, you really don't want a regime that funds terrorist organizations like Hizballah to have a nuclear weapon as a part of their capacity to create the conditions, for example, of diplomatic blackmail. Secondly, the current leader of Iran has—I can't remember exactly his words, but the sum of them were that the destruction of one of our allies was important to them—that would be Israel.

Third, it's ironic, isn't it, that any time a democracy begins to take hold in the Middle East, extremist groups prevent that democracy from moving forward. One such democracy is Lebanon, a wonderful little country. And yet there is a Syrian influence—Syria uses not only their own agents inside the country but Hizballah to destabilize this young democracy. And Hizballah is funded by Iran. In other words, the Iranian regime's

current posture is to destabilize young democracies, and they're doing so in Iraq as well.

So our objective is to rally the world to make it clear to the current regime that if they continue their practices they will continue to be isolated. And we're making interesting progress. We've passed several U.N. Security Council resolutions, the primary benefit of which is to say to the Iranian regime, and equally importantly the Iranian people, that countries as diverse as the United States and China and Russia and parts of Europe will isolate you, will deny you, the Iranian people, the benefits that you deserve. Iran is a proud country with a great tradition and good, hard-working people. And yet their Government is making decisions that endanger peace and, at the same time, will continue to lead to isolation. And so, should the Iranian people worry about isolation? I think so, because you're missing economic opportunities. You're missing the chance to improve your lives. You're missing the chance to enhance your country's great history.

The choice is up to the Iranian Government as to whether or not they will be accepted into the family of nations, all aimed at promoting peace and economic prosperity. They've made a bad choice up to now. And so we'll continue to work hard with the rest of the world, all aiming at solving this very difficult problem diplomatically.

Yes, ma'am.

### ***Iraq Study Group/Situation in the Middle East***

**Q.** [Inaudible]

**The President.** Sure.

**Q.** I think that's a great idea. I was wondering, we did have a group—a commission, I believe, here, that was discussing how to solve our Iraq problems, but we really haven't implemented the advice from—

**The President.** Baker-Hamilton.

**Q.** —Baker-Hamilton commission. I was wondering how we were going to be able to convince the countries that participate in this conference in Egypt that we will actually consider implementing their advice—

**The President.** That's a good question. First, there was a couple of aspects of Baker-

Hamilton—a lot of it had to do with troop posture. And Baker-Hamilton recommended that, as I described, a troop presence to help keep the territorial integrity of Iraq, to embed, to train, to be over the horizon, to chase down extremists. That's pretty much what they recommended, and I agree. The problem is—and by the way, on, like, page 70-something in their book, they said: And the United States may have to increase troop levels necessary to be able to get there. And that's what I did. [Applause] Wait a minute, wait a minute—because I realize that we couldn't be in a position on the troop postures they recommended if the capital went into flames. That's a judgment I made.

By the way, with the advice of a lot of people—and just so you know, I spend a lot of time listening to our military. I trust our military; I like our military; I'm impressed by our military. I spend a lot of time talking to Condi Rice. I spend a lot of time talking to allies in the Congress, and I spend a lot of time listening to and talking to people who have a different point of view.

It was after this considered judgment that I made that decision, all aiming at some point in time. Now, the problem is, the Congress, many of whom think that it's a good idea, however are unwilling to allow conditions on the ground to make the decisions as to when we can ever get there. I don't have that luxury. I must allow conditions on the ground to dictate our position in order to make decisions.

Now, a lot of what Baker-Hamilton talked about was—or some of what they talked about was the diplomatic initiatives. There were—they talked about a regional conference, and we're happy to participate. They also suggested that the United States enter into bilateral negotiations with Syria, for example. And this is where I have a disagreement. As you know—as you may or may not know, when I was a younger lad, Jimmy Baker was in Houston and a good friend of my family's, and in spite of my deep affection for him, I invited him into the Oval Office and said, "I disagree with you." And he said, "Fine, I disagree with you." [Laughter]

And the reason I do is because—now, there's a difference between a regional conference, in my judgment, and—I'll tell you

what I hope we can gain out of that—but I do want to address why it’s—I think it would be counterproductive at this point to sit down with the Syrians, because Syria knows exactly what it takes to get better relations with the United States. It’s not as if they haven’t heard what we’re for, and we’re for making sure they leave the Lebanese democracy alone. They have undermined Lebanon’s democracy. When the United States and France worked together on a U.N. resolution, the U.N. demanded that they leave Lebanon. They did, but they’re still meddling.

Secondly, there’s a man who was assassinated, named Hariri. It’s very important that there be a full investigation of the Hariri murder, and they know we expect them to support that investigation. We believe they’re hindering that investigation right now. Thirdly, they’re providing safe haven for—I’ll just say they’ve got— Hamas and Hizballah have got centers of influence in Damascus. That’s unacceptable to the United States. We have made it clear to them that in order for them to have better relations that they must rid their capital of these organizations, all aimed at wreaking havoc in the Middle East and preventing, for example, the development of a peaceful Palestinian state that can live with Israel, side by side in peace.

And finally, Syria is a transit way for suicide bombers heading into Iraq. In sum, they have been particularly unhelpful in achieving peace we want. Now what happens when people go sit down with Bashar Asad, the President of Syria, he walks out and holds a press conference, and says, “Look how important I am; people are coming to see me; people think I’m vital.” But he hasn’t delivered on one request by the free world.

I asked our security folks, the national security folks to give me a list of all the foreign advisers and foreign secretaries of state and all the people that have gone to see Bashar Asad. And every time they send one in there, we say, why, why are you sending somebody there; what is your intention; what have you asked them to do? They all say basically what I just said, and nothing has happened. And my attitude is, is that I think talks would be counterproductive. I’m interested not in process. I’m interested in results. I’m inter-

ested in this leader turning Syria into a positive influence for peace, not an obstructionist to peace.

On Iran, I said we’ll talk to Iran, but they’ve got to suspend their enrichment. Diplomacy works when people sit down at the table and need something from you. That’s how diplomacy works. It is, in my judgment, just talking for the sake of talking doesn’t yield positive results often. As a matter of fact, it can reaffirm behavior that is not in our interests. So we’ve said to the Iranians, we will talk with you, but first do what the world has asked you to do, and suspend the enrichment of uranium.

As I said in my talk here, and I’m speaking to you—I’m also speaking to the Iranian people. They must know that our beef with Iran is not with the people of Iran; it’s with the Government of Iran that continues to make decisions that isolates you from the opportunities of a fantastic world.

Now, what do we hope to gain out of the regional conference? It’s very important for us, first of all, for the Iraqi democracy to gain acceptance. This is a new Government. Remember, these folks were run by a tyrant for years, and now we’re watching the emergence of a new government that has not been in office for a year yet, by the way. We’ve been there for more than a year, but the Constitution was passed in ’05, late ’05; the new Government was seated in June of ’06. So Prime Minister Maliki—and it’s important, I think, for the world to recognize, or the region to recognize that he was duly elected by the people of Iraq and represents the will of the Iraqi citizens. It’s important for people to express their support for this new Government.

Let me just talk about a couple of countries. One, Saudi Arabia. My friend, His Majesty, the King, kindly forgave 80 percent of the debt in the run-up to this conference; 80 percent of Saudi debt to Iraq was forgiven. That’s a strong gesture. It’s a gesture that I’m confident will spread good will in Iraq. And so the conference can be a success on that alone.

I will tell you, however, that His Majesty is skeptical about the Shi’a government in Iraq. And it’s going to be very important for Prime Minister Maliki to follow through on

the new de-Ba'athification law, for example, which reaches out to Sunnis. People say, what does that mean? Well, the law was passed that basically said, if you were a member of the Ba'ath party, you couldn't participate in much of civil society. And in some Provinces, that is—that's precluded people from being school teachers. In other words, in order to be a teacher, you had to sign up for Saddam's deal, and yet you might not have been a political person. And so what a lot of folks are watching is to see whether or not there's going to be a reconciliation with the Sunnis who have been affected by the de-Ba'athification.

The oil revenue sharing is a very interesting aspect, and this is what people are watching for, because most of the oil is in Shi'a land or with the Kurds. And therefore, an equitable sharing agreement of the people's resources throughout society will send a signal that this Government is not going to take unnecessary retribution against peaceful Sunnis. And so the benchmarks that I described are important for America, but they're also important to make sure that further regional conferences are successful.

And so I talked to Condi about this last night—as a matter of fact, this very subject, about what constitutes success. And first of all, it's successful to have people come to the table and discuss Iraq and its new form of government. In other words, the region recognizes there is a new government when they come, and that's vital. And then we'll see whether or not some of the pledges, reconstruction pledges, will be met. Excellent question.

Yes, sir.

### **Public Opinion on Iraq**

**Q.** Mr. President, thanks for coming to the west coast, first.

**The President.** Looking for the surfboard. [Laughter]

**Q.** You mentioned in your comments, sir, about the American patience. What's the Prime Minister's take on that? What is his understanding of American patience?

**The President.** Well, he is—you know, I don't know, I think he's concerned about his own country's patience, first and foremost. He's having a tough time. I will give you my

take on patience. I think that if the American people fully understand the stakes of failure, they'll understand why we're doing what we're doing. And my own view of patience is that a President—and I believe Tony Blair agrees with this—must make decisions on certain principles and not try to chase opinion polls. If you make decisions based upon the latest opinion poll, you won't be thinking long-term strategy on behalf of the American people.

And Tony Blair understands that as well. At least that's what I get from him. That's—when I talk to him, that's the impression I get.

There weren't opinion polls when Abraham Lincoln was the President. Believe me, I'm not comparing myself to him, but I just don't think a President like Abraham Lincoln made a decision about whether all men were created equal based upon an opinion poll. [Laughter] Nor do I make an opinion about my strong belief that freedom is universal, and there's no debate. I believe in the universality of liberty, and I believe liberty has got the capacity to help transform parts of the world into peaceful parts of the world.

That's what I described to you at the end of—what happened at the end of World War II and at the end of the Korean conflict. I firmly believe in the power of freedom, and I firmly believe that everybody wants to be free. As a matter of fact, to take it a step further, I believe there's an Almighty, and I believe a great gift to each man, woman, and child in this world is freedom. That's what I believe. It is a principle from which I will not deviate.

People said to me—the guy asked a question the other day, you don't like the opinion polls and all that stuff—I said, any politician who says they don't want to be popular, you know—you can't win if, like, 50-plus-one don't like you for a moment. [Laughter] You can't make your decisions, however, based on something that just changes; it just, poof. And when it's all said and done, I fully understand that some of the decisions I have made have created a lot of national debate. But I want you to know something, that when I go home and look in the mirror in Crawford, Texas, after my time, I will be able to have said, he didn't change his principles

to be the popular guy, you know, he stood for what he believed.

***Spread of Democracy in the Middle East/  
U.S. Foreign Policy***

**Q.** Mr. President, I really appreciate your emphasis on the universality of freedom. I'm wondering if and how the United States can promote liberal democratic reform in countries like Saudi Arabia and whether you could address specifically whether it is, perhaps, American support for these autocratic regimes that are creating such an Islamic backlash against the United States?

**The President.** That is a—boy, I don't want to be Mr. Gratuitous, say, fabulous question, but it's really one of the fundamental questions that has caused a lot of debate in Washington, DC, about my freedom agenda.

There are some who say that promoting democracy and liberty in the Middle East is a waste of time. I happen to believe that, kind of, managing stability doesn't address the root cause of the problems that caused 19 kids to get on an airplane and kill 3,000 of our citizens. And so part of our strategy to defend the country is the promotion of freedom around the world. I also, in my second Inaugural Address, believe in the interests of the United States to challenge tyranny wherever we find it. As an aside, and I'm not suggesting my friends here, the scribblers over here are saying this, but some have called him hopelessly idealistic to believe in the power of freedom to transform parts of the world that seem impervious to liberty.

I believe it is the only realistic way to protect ourselves in the long term, and that is to address the conditions that create hatred, envy, and violence.

The other thing that's important to note is that societies, depending upon their past, take a while to achieve freedom as we define it. In other words, some move at snail's pace, some move, obviously, quicker. And all the societies will reflect their own traditions and histories. So when you hear me talk about the freedom agenda, it's not like, I expect Jefferson democracy to be blooming in the desert.

Secondly, friendship with leaders makes it easier to have a frank and candid discussion

in a way that doesn't offend. And my friend—I do have a good, very close relationship with King Abdallah of Saudi Arabia, and I'm proud of that relationship. It gives me a chance to be able to share with him ideas about—in a private way, obviously not so private now—[laughter]—why I believe giving people more voice in the affairs of their Government is in the interests of their Government. Same with my friend President Mubarak of Egypt. I have made it clear, for example, that—and by the way, the Egyptians had a Presidential election that was quite modern and different. And I don't believe that it's going to be possible to be able to have a less-free Presidential election during the next round.

And so there is progress being made toward more liberty, in a part of the world that most people said had no chance to be a place for democracy to take hold. I will give you the—in Yemen there was an election that was supervised by international bodies. They came out and said, it's a fair election. There are women now serving in Kuwait Parliament. Jordan, the King of Jordan is making moves toward liberalizing his society. I think, slowly but surely—and by the way, this is a long process. Remember, I talked about the aftermath of the Korean war. This is like—we're talking 55 years later. It takes a while.

And the fundamental question facing the country is, will we be engaged in the Middle East helping moderates defeat and fight off radicals—hopefully not militarily every single time, hopefully rarely militarily—but by defeating an ideology with forms of government. And it's really going to be an interesting debate. I have staked my claim for the first part of the 21st century. I will tell you, I am worried about our country becoming isolationist and protectionist. We have been through isolationist and protectionist spells in our history. One of my concerns is that people say, "It is not worth it to be engaged as heavily as we are in parts of the world," particularly the Middle East. I'm concerned about that. I'm concerned because I believe it will be missed opportunity to help people realize that—if you've got a Muslim brotherhood doing a better job of providing health care and education, the way to deal with that is to do a better job than they are, as opposed

to ignoring the realities on the ground. And that's what open societies that have got an election process force people to do.

I was criticized by some that upon insisting that the Palestinian elections go forward. I believe elections are the beginning of the reform process, not the end. I believe elections have the capacity to show the elite what's right and what's wrong. And I believe the Hamas elections in the Middle East made it clear that the Palestinians are sick and tired of corruption and government that was not responding to their needs.

I wasn't happy with the outcome of the election—sometimes that happens, you're not happy with the outcome of elections. [Laughter] But I was inspired by the fact that the Palestinians went to the polls and said, in the fairest way possible, "We're sick of it. Arafat has let us down; no peace. We want to live in peace. Where's the prosperity? Let's get us another bunch in there and see if they can do the job." The problem is, is that the new crowd they have in there refuses to recognize Israel's right to exist, which runs contrary to our policy. And therefore, we will continue to take the posture we're taken, because we're interested in peace.

I'm interested in helping the Palestinians develop a Palestinian state. It's all along the same agenda, by the way, which is the freedom agenda. I believe the only way for Israel to have secure peace in the long run is for there to be a democracy living side by side with Israel in peace. I'm afraid that Israel will ultimately be overrun by demographics in order for her to remain a Jewish democratic state. And yet Hamas wins. And you can't expect a Israeli democratic elected official to negotiate with a group of people who have avowed to destroy them.

And hopefully, at some point in time, the situation will get clarified, if the Palestinian people have another right to express themselves, and that right ought to be, are you for a state or not for a state? Are you going to have people that prevent a better future for emerging from you? By the way, this all started with the elections. And they said, "Oh, you shouldn't have elections; you shouldn't have been fighting against them." Why would I fight against elections? I'm for elections. I think elections are important for

society. I think—and I think they're equally important here as they are in the Middle East.

And the fundamental question, really, facing in the long term on this is, will the United States believe that the value system that has enabled our country, by the way, to emerge—and it took us 100 years to get rid of slavery, for example. Far be it from us to say we're perfect. We had a great Constitution, but our history has been scarred by treating people like chattel, with slavery, which is an abhorrent part of our past. But nevertheless, it takes a while, and it takes patience. But it also takes great faith and certain value systems to help societies emerge.

The other question is on trade. And by the way, I happen to believe isolationism and protectionism go hand in hand. As you know, I'm an open-market trader. I believe in free trade. I think competition and trade not only helps the United States, I think it's the best way to alleviate poverty around the world. And that doesn't mean you don't enforce trade agreements. Recently we've enforced trade agreements with China—not trying to shutdown trade, but trying to enhance trade, trying to make trade more palatable to people in the United States, recognizing that there is such thing as fair trade as well as free trade.

But I'm concerned about people saying, "Well, it's just not worth it; shut her down; let's make it harder to trade." There's going to be some interesting trade votes coming up in front of the Congress here—free trade agreement with Peru and Colombia are coming up. And we'll find out whether or not the leadership and both Republicans and Democrats are truly committed to not only our neighborhood but trading in a way that enhances prosperity for both sides of the equation.

We're in the middle of negotiations on the Doha round of WTO. I hope some of you are concerned about world poverty. I certainly am. And the best way to deal with world poverty is to encourage prosperity through trade and opening up markets. And we're in complex negotiations, and I'm dedicated to getting this round completed in a way that meets our interests, but also meets other interests.

I want to share with you one other thing, then I've got to get out of here. You know, Laura says, "You get up there and all you do is talk, and you love to hear yourself talk." [Laughter] I want to share one other aspect of our foreign policy. I believe to whom much is given, much is required. And I want to share something about this great, generous nation, for which you deserve a lot of credit.

Whether it be on HIV/AIDS or malaria, the United States is in the lead. And when I got elected, I was deeply concerned about the fact that an entire generation of folks on the continent of Africa could be wiped out by a disease that we could not cure but halt. And I set up what's called the Global Fund for AIDS. And yet it kind of sat there empty. It was a deal where everybody could contribute, and then the United States would match to try to encourage commitments, but it didn't fill up. And so I went to Congress and asked that they spend your money on a unilateral initiative where we would take on I think the 17 most or 19 most affected countries in the world and deliver antiretroviral drugs.

Foreign policy is more than military. It is more than just spreading freedom. It's also, in my judgment, in our interest to base it upon that admonition, if you're blessed, you ought to help others. And as a result of the American people, we spread antiretrovirals or got antiretrovirals to 850,000 people. That's up from 50,000 in 3 years.

We're all interconnected in this world. What happens overseas matters here at home, from a security perspective, but I also believe it matters here at home from the perspective of keeping our spirits strong. It's in the interest of this country that we be engaged in freeing people from tyranny, the tyranny of government and the tyranny of disease and hunger.

I appreciate you giving me a chance to come and visit with you. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:02 p.m. at East Grand Rapids High School. In his remarks, he referred to Larry Fisher, associate principal, East Grand Rapids High School; Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq; Mahmud al-Mashhadani, Speaker of the Iraqi House of Representatives; Fouad Ajami, di-

rector, Middle East Studies Program, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University; former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; President Mahmud Ahmadi-nejad of Iran; and King Abdallah II of Jordan.

## **Proclamation 8129—National Day of Prayer, 2007**

*April 20, 2007*

*By the President of the United States of America*

### **A Proclamation**

A prayerful spirit has always been an important part of our national character, and it is a force that has guided the American people, given us strength, and sustained us in moments of joy and in times of challenge. On this National Day of Prayer, we acknowledge God's grace and ask for His continued guidance in the life of our Nation.

Americans of many faiths and traditions share a common belief that God hears the prayers of His children and shows grace to those who seek Him. Following the tragedy at Virginia Tech, in towns all across America, in houses of worship from every faith, Americans have joined together to pray for the lives that were lost and for their families, friends, and loved ones. We hold the victims in our hearts and pray for those who suffer and grieve. There is a power in these prayers, and we can find comfort in the grace and guidance of a loving God.

At this important time in our history, we also pray for the brave members of our Armed Forces and their families. We pray for their safety, for the recovery of the wounded, and for the peace we all seek.

The Congress, by Public Law 100–307, as amended, has called on our Nation to reaffirm the role of prayer in our society and to respect the freedom of religion by recognizing each year a "National Day of Prayer."

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 3, 2007, as a National Day of Prayer. I ask the citizens of our Nation to give thanks, each according to his or her own faith, for the freedoms and blessings we have received and for God's

continued guidance, comfort, and protection. I invite all Americans to join in observing this day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

**In Witness Whereof**, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:29 a.m., April 23, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on April 24.

### **The President's Radio Address**

*April 20, 2007*

Good morning. This week, the thoughts and prayers of millions of Americans are with the victims of the Virginia Tech attacks. We mourn promising lives cut short. We pray for the wounded. And we send our love to those who are hurting.

The day after the attack, Laura and I attended a memorial service on the campus in Blacksburg. We met with faculty members who lost students and colleagues and shared hugs with grieving moms and dads, including parents who had lost their only child. We offered what words of comfort we could, and we were moved by the solidarity and strength of spirit we found. We wanted everyone at the university to know that this tragedy saddened our entire Nation and that the American people stand with them in an hour of darkness.

We can never fully understand what would cause a student to take the lives of 32 innocent people. What we do know is that this was a deeply troubled young man, and there were many warning signs. Our society continues to wrestle with the question of how to handle individuals whose mental health problems can make them a danger to themselves and to others.

Colleges and State and local officials are now confronting these issues, and the Federal Government will help. I've asked top officials at the Departments of Education, Justice, and Health and Human Services to pro-

vide the Virginia Tech community with whatever assistance we can and to participate in a review of the broader questions raised by this tragedy.

I have directed these officials to travel to communities across our Nation to meet with educators, mental health experts, and State and local officials. I have asked the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Mike Leavitt, to summarize what they learn and report back to me with recommendations about how we can help to avoid such tragedies.

This week at Virginia Tech, we saw a glimpse of humanity at its worst, and we also saw humanity at its best. We learned of students who risked their own safety to tend to wounded classmates. We heard of a teacher who used his body to barricade a classroom door and gave his life so his students could escape through windows. And we saw the good people of Blacksburg embrace victims of this tragedy and help their neighbors endure and heal and hope.

That hope was expressed in a letter written by a Virginia Tech graduate shortly after the attack. He wrote: "Today there is pain everywhere in our community and our hearts are troubled. Yet I am certain our university will persevere." He continued, "Evil can never succeed, not while there are men and women like the people of Virginia Tech, who reach every day for success and endeavor for the improvement of the human condition across the planet."

This week, we reflect on what has been lost and comfort those enduring a profound grief. And somehow we know that a brighter morning will come. We know this because together Americans have overcome many evils and found strength through many storms. And we know there will be a day, as promised in Scripture, when evil will meet its reckoning and when every tear shall be wiped away.

May God bless those who mourn, and may God bless our wonderful country. Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7 a.m. on April 20 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 21. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 20. The Office of the

Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

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### **Digest of Other White House Announcements**

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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 issue.

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#### ***April 14***

In the morning, at Camp David, MD, the President had an intelligence briefing.

#### ***April 15***

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush returned to Washington, DC.

#### ***April 16***

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had a video teleconference with Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq. He then had a telephone conversation with Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales.

In the afternoon, the President had a briefing on the shootings at Virginia Tech.

The President announced his intention to nominate Reuben Jeffery III to be Under Secretary of State (Economic, Energy, and Agricultural Affairs), and to be U.S. Alternate Governor of the following organizations: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development; the Inter-American Development Bank; the African Development Bank; the African Development Fund; the Asian Development Bank; and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

#### ***April 17***

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Roosevelt Room, he participated in a meeting with families to discuss taxes.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Blacksburg, VA. He then met with Charles W. Steger, president, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Later, at Cassell Coliseum, the President

and Mrs. Bush met with survivors and family members of victims of the Virginia Tech shootings of April 16.

Later in the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush visited and added their names to a campus memorial for the victims of the Virginia Tech shootings. He then participated in separate interviews with Katie Couric of CBS News, Brian Williams of NBC News, and Charles Gibson of ABC News. Later, he and Mrs. Bush returned to Washington, DC.

#### ***April 18***

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he toured the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

In the afternoon, in the Cabinet Room, the President met with congressional leaders to discuss emergency supplemental appropriations.

The President announced his intention to nominate Frederick B. Cook to be Ambassador to the Central African Republic.

The President announced his intention to nominate Joseph A. Ereli to be Ambassador to Bahrain.

The President announced his intention to nominate Richard B. Norland to be Ambassador to Uzbekistan.

The President announced his intention to nominate Alan J. Patricof to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Millennium Challenge Corporation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Phillip Jackson Bell, Franklin G. Gale, and Lee J. Lofthus as members of the Board of Directors of the Federal Prison Industries, Inc.

#### ***April 19***

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan. Later, he had an intelligence briefing.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Dayton, OH, where, upon arrival in the afternoon, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Bob Rehmert.

Later in the afternoon, the President traveled to Tipp City, OH. Later, he returned to Washington, DC. He then had a telephone conversation with Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales.

**April 20**

Later in the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Grand Rapids, MI, where, upon arrival in the afternoon, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Chuck Hinken. He then traveled to East Grand Rapids, MI.

Later in the afternoon, the President met with family members of soldiers killed in Iraq. He then visited the gravesite of President Gerald R. Ford. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced that he has named Thomas P. Bossert as Special Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Senior Director for Preparedness Policy.

The President announced that he has named Elizabeth H. Dial as Special Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs.

The President announced that he has named Eric Draper as Special Assistant to the President and White House Photographer.

The President declared a major disaster in Maine and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by flooding on March 16–18.

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**Nominations  
Submitted to the Senate**

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The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

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**Submitted April 16**

Dennis R. Schrader, of Maryland, to be Deputy Administrator for National Preparedness, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security (new position).

**Submitted April 18**

Frederick B. Cook, of Florida, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Central African Republic.

Joseph Adam Erel, of the District of Columbia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Reuben Jeffery III, of the District of Columbia, to be an Under Secretary of State (Economic, Energy, and Agricultural Affairs), vice Josette Sheeran Shiner.

Reuben Jeffery III, of the District of Columbia, to be U.S. Alternate Governor of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development for a term of 5 years; U.S. Alternate Governor of the Inter-American Development Bank for a term of 5 years; U.S. Alternate Governor of the African Development Bank for a term of 5 years; U.S. Alternate Governor of the African Development Fund; U.S. Alternate Governor of the Asian Development Bank; and U.S. Alternate Governor of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, vice Josette Sheeran Shiner.

Richard Boyce Norland, of Iowa, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Uzbekistan.

**Withdrawn April 18**

Enrique J. Sosa, of Florida, to be a member of the Reform Board (Amtrak) for a term of 5 years, vice Linwood Holton, term expired, which was sent to the Senate on January 9, 2007.

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**Checklist  
of White House Press Releases**


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The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

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**Released April 16**

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Press Secretary Dana Perino

**Released April 18**

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Press Secretary Dana Perino

Statement by the Deputy Press Secretary: Zimbabwe's Independence Day

Fact sheet: Stop the Genocide in Darfur

**Released April 19**

Transcript of a press gaggle by Deputy Press Secretary Dana Perino

**Released April 20**

Transcript of a press gaggle by Deputy Press Secretary Dana Perino

Statement by the Deputy Press Secretary on the President's reaction to Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales's testimony before the Senate

Statement by the Deputy Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Maine

Fact Sheet: Earth Day 2007

Fact Sheet: Update on the New Iraq Strategy

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**Acts Approved  
by the President**


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**Approved April 20**

H.R. 1132 / Public Law 110-18  
National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program Reauthorization Act of 2007