

like powerplants and airports and subways. We have given intelligence and law enforcement professionals new tools like the PATRIOT Act, and we continue to work with Congress to modernize the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

The actions we and our partners around the world have taken have helped disrupt plots and save lives. Here's how the NIE report put it, quote: "We assess that greatly increased worldwide counterterrorism efforts over the past 5 years have constrained the ability of Al Qaida to attack the U.S. homeland again and have led terrorist groups to perceive the homeland as a harder target to strike than on 9/11."

The NIE report also cites some setbacks. One of the most troubling is its assessment that Al Qaida has managed to establish a safe haven in the tribal areas of Pakistan bordering Afghanistan. Last September, President Musharraf of Pakistan reached an agreement that gave tribal leaders more responsibility for policing their own areas. Unfortunately, tribal leaders were unwilling and unable to go after Al Qaida or the Taliban.

President Musharraf recognizes the agreement has not been successful or well-enforced and is taking active steps to correct it. Earlier this month, he sent in Pakistani forces to go after radicals who seized control of a mosque, and then he delivered a speech vowing to rid all of Pakistan of extremism. Pakistani forces are in the fight, and many have given their lives. The United States supports them in these efforts. And we will work with our partners to deny safe haven to the Taliban and Al Qaida in Pakistan or anywhere else in the world.

Nearly 6 years have passed since 9/11. And as time goes by, it can be tempting to think that the threat of another attack on our homeland is behind us. The NIE report makes clear that the threat is not behind us. It states that Al Qaida will continue to, and I quote, "focus on prominent political, economic, and infrastructure targets with the goal of producing mass casualties, visually dramatic destruction, significant economic aftershocks, and/or fear among the U.S. population." It goes on to say that Al Qaida will continue to seek chemical, biological, radio-

logical, or nuclear material to use in these attacks.

The men who run Al Qaida are determined, capable, and ruthless. They would be in a far stronger position to attack our people if America's military, law enforcement, intelligence services, and other elements of our Government were not engaged in a worldwide effort to stop them. We will meet the responsibility that history has given us; we will adapt to changing conditions; and we will not let up until our enemies are defeated and our people are secure.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:50 a.m. on July 20 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 21. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 20 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

### **Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Temporary Transfer of the Powers and Duties of the President of the United States**

*July 21, 2007*

*Dear Madame Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)*

This morning I will undergo a routine medical procedure requiring sedation. In view of present circumstances, I have determined to transfer temporarily my Constitutional powers and duties to the Vice President during the brief period of the procedure and recovery.

In accordance with the provisions of Section 3 of the Twenty-Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution, this letter shall constitute my written declaration that I am unable to discharge the Constitutional powers and duties of the office of the President of the United States. Pursuant to Section 3, the Vice President shall discharge those powers and duties as Acting President until I transmit to you a written declaration that I am able to resume the discharge of those powers and duties.

Sincerely,

**George W. Bush**

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Robert C. Byrd, President pro tempore of the Senate.

### **Letter to Congressional Leaders on Resuming the Powers and Duties of the President of the United States**

July 21, 2007

*Dear Madame Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)*

In accordance with the provisions of Section 3 of the Twenty-Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution, this letter shall constitute my written declaration that I am presently able to resume the discharge of the Constitutional powers and duties of the office of the President of the United States. With the transmittal of this letter, I am resuming those powers and duties effective immediately.

Sincerely,

**George W. Bush**

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Robert C. Byrd, President pro tempore of the Senate.

### **Statement on the Death of King Mohammad Zahir Shah of Afghanistan**

July 23, 2007

Laura and I are saddened by the death of Mohammad Zahir Shah, who was King of Afghanistan from 1933 to 1973.

Zahir Shah was a monumental figure in Afghan history, and his life spanned vast changes in that country's political system. He returned to Afghanistan as an ordinary citizen in 2002, shortly after the Taliban regime was removed from power, and continued to play an important part in the life of his country. Zahir Shah supported the goal of a representative and freely elected government in his homeland, and he encouraged Afghanistan toward democracy and stability. His presence in Afghanistan as a private citizen and "Father of the Nation" for the past sev-

eral years has been an important factor in rebuilding Afghanistan.

On behalf of the American people, Laura and I extend our condolences to Mohammad Zahir Shah's family and to the people of Afghanistan.

### **Remarks to Military Personnel and Their Families at Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina**

July 24, 2007

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thank you, Colonel. Thanks for the hospitality and kind introduction. I'm proud to be with the men and women of the Air Force, the Navy, the Marines, the Army, and the Coast Guard. Thanks for serving. Thanks for wearing the uniform of the United States of America.

I'm proud to be back here in the great State of South Carolina. I'm proud to be with some of the Palmetto State's finest citizens. I'm glad to be eating lunch with you. The food is pretty good, Colonel. [*Laughter*] I always like a good barbecue. [*Laughter*]

I also am proud to be with the military families. You know, our troops are obviously engaged in a tough struggle, tough fight, a fight that I think is noble and necessary for our peace. And so are our families. Our military families endure the separations. They worry about their loved ones. They pray for safe return. By carrying out these burdens, our military families are serving the United States of America, and this country is grateful to America's military families.

I appreciate Colonel Millander leading the 437th Airlift Wing here at the Charleston Airbase. Thank you for the tour. Nice, big airplanes carrying a lot of cargo. [*Laughter*] And it's good to see the amazing operations that take place here to keep our troops supplied.

I'm honored here to be with Deb as well. That's Red's wife. I call him Red; you call him Colonel. [*Laughter*] He did a smart thing; he married a woman from Texas. So did I. [*Laughter*] And Laura sends her very best to you all. I'm proud to be here with Mark Bauknight—Colonel Bauknight, acting commander of the 315th Airlift Wing, and his wife, Leslie.