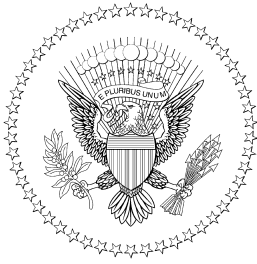


Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



Monday, February 18, 2008
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Editor's Note: The President was traveling to Cotonou, Benin, on February 15, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

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WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Week Ending Friday, February 15, 2008

The President's Radio Address

February 9, 2008

Good morning. One of the most important jobs of any President is to find good men and women to lead Government Agencies, preside over our courts, and provide vital services to the American people. So I have nominated talented individuals for these positions. Unfortunately, the Senate is not meeting its responsibility to consider these nominees in a timely manner. More than 180 of my nominees are waiting for confirmation. Some have been waiting for more than a year. As a result, careers have been put on hold; families have been placed in limbo; and our Government has been deprived of the service of these fine nominees.

On Thursday, I stood with many of these nominees at the White House. They are decent and talented people. The Senate needs to confirm them to address important issues, from the economy to public safety to national security.

One of the most important institutions for America's economy is the Federal Reserve. The Fed decides monetary policy, and it sets key interest rates that have an impact on homeowners and businesses across our country. Yet the Senate has been delaying three of my nominations to the Fed for nearly 9 months. My nominees have valuable experience and skills, and I urge the Senate to confirm them as soon as possible.

Another important institution is the Federal Aviation Administration. The FAA plays a vital role in keeping you safe when you fly. In October, I nominated Bobby Sturgell to lead the FAA. Bobby has nearly 20 years of cockpit experience from his time as a Navy fighter pilot, Top Gun instructor, and commercial airline pilot. He's committed to addressing problems that have caused airline delays, and I urge Senators to put politics aside and confirm him to office.

In this time of war, we need a strong Department of Justice. Yet the Senate has not voted on nominations for seven senior leadership positions at the Department. One of those vacancies is for Deputy Attorney General. The Deputy Attorney General helps lead efforts to detect and prevent terrorist attacks at home.

I've selected an outstanding nominee for this position, Judge Mark Filip. This former prosecutor has earned a reputation for being fairminded and dedicated. Several years ago, the Senate confirmed him unanimously for a lifetime position on the Federal bench. Now I ask Senators to confirm him once again so he can help keep our Nation safe.

As Senators confirm these nominees, they must also confirm judges to the Federal bench. I have nominated highly qualified individuals who will rule by the letter of the law, not the whim of the gavel. Unfortunately, the Senate continues to delay votes for 28 of my judicial nominees. Three of my nominees for the court of appeals have waited nearly 600 days. These delays are irresponsible; they undermine the cause of justice; and I call on the United States Senate to give these nominees the up-or-down vote they deserve.

When men and women agree to serve in public office, we should treat them with respect and dignity, and that means giving them a prompt confirmation vote. When the Senate fails to give nominees a timely vote, it leaves important positions in our Government vacant, and it makes it harder for Presidents of both parties to attract good men and women to serve in these vital posts.

By working together, Republicans and Democrats can chart a better course. We can bring every nomination to the floor for a vote and give the American people the kind of public servants they deserve.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 2:25 p.m. on February 7 in the Cabinet Room at the White

House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 9. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 8 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks Honoring President Abraham Lincoln's 199th Birthday

February 10, 2008

Welcome. Laura and I are glad you're here. Rex, thank you for taking the lead for Ford's Theatre. If any citizen wants to know how to make a solid contribution to Washington, DC, support Ford's Theatre; it's worth it. Members of my Cabinet, thanks for coming. Members of Congress, we're glad you're here. I've got two tasks. One is to present the Lincoln Medal and invite you to a buffet. *[Laughter]*

I really want to thank Richard for coming. I appreciate your words, Allen; thank you very much—and Craig Wallace. Avery, I've been subject to a few Presidential impersonations myself. *[Laughter]* I'm confident Abe would have liked it. *[Laughter]* I really appreciate you all coming. It's made this a very special evening. I do want to welcome all the Lincoln scholars here and all the Lincoln enthusiasts. We're really glad you're here.

I also am amazed that 200 years have gone by. It just doesn't seem all that long ago, does it? But it's fitting that we honor Abe Lincoln. He—of all the successors to George Washington, he—none had greater impact on the Presidency and on the country. And he remains a presence here in the House. I'm often asked, "Do you ever see Lincoln's ghost?" And I tell people, I quit drinking 22 years ago. *[Laughter]*

But his office is directly above us. At the Center Hall, there's a likeness in marble. His portrait hangs in the Oval Office, and there's a fabulous portrait of Abe Lincoln in the State Dining Room. And that's the way it should be. He was a fabulous man and a great President. His life was one of humble beginnings and steadfast convictions. And so we celebrate his deeds; we lift up his ideals; and we honor this good man.

And it's my pleasure tonight to honor two really fine Americans. Each year, Ford's The-

atre presents the Lincoln Medal to recognize high achievement and personal attributes that embody the character of the 16th President.

Dr. Ben Carson is the director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital. He is one of the most respected surgeons in the world. Twenty years ago, when a 70-member surgical team made history and separated a pair of Siamese twins, the gifted hands leading the team belonged to this good man. Raised with his brother and a single mother—who's here—Ben Carson didn't get much handed to him as he grew up. But his mother pushed him to learn and taught him to trust in the ways of heaven. From his days at Yale and the University of Michigan Medical School, colleagues have known Dr. Carson as both a skilled professional and a deeply reflective man.

His many current duties include service on the President's Council on Bioethics and a tireless commitment to helping young people find direction and motivation in life. He reminds them that all of us have gifts by the grace of the Almighty God. He tells them to think big, to study hard, and to put character first. He tells them to be nice because in his words, "If you're nice to people, then once they get over the suspicion of why you're being nice,"—*[laughter]*—"they will be nice to you." *[Laughter]* His example gives eloquent testimony to the value of perseverance and to the endless promise of America. So tonight we proudly honor Dr. Ben Carson.

President Ronald Reagan called Sandra Day O'Connor a person for all seasons, and few Americans have shown a broader range of talent. She is, after all, the only Supreme Court Justice ever inducted into the Cowgirl Hall of Fame. *[Laughter]* Born in El Paso, Texas, she spent much of her childhood on a ranch in Arizona, where from a young age, she learned to ride horses, mend fences, and shoot a rifle.

She was an academic star, attending Stanford Law School. It was a different era when she got out of law school. After all, not many law firms wanted to hire a woman. But with her intellect, independent spirit, and sense of adventure, Sandra Day O'Connor continued a steady rise in the world. She became

a State senator, a State court judge, and the first woman on the highest court in the land.

For 24 years, Justice O'Connor stood out as a careful, fairminded jurist. Sandra Day O'Connor is a great mom to her three sons, and she has been a blessing to her husband, John. This lovely lady remains one of the most admired women of our time. She's lived a great American life, and our Nation is proud to honor you once again, Justice. Welcome.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:54 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Rex W. Tillerson, vice-chairman, Ford's Theatre Society; historian Richard Norton Smith; Allen C. Guelzo, professor of history, Gettysburg College; and actors Craig Wallace and Avery Brooks. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Remarks on the 2008 Economic Report of the President

February 11, 2008

The President. I want to thank members of my economic team for submitting this Economic Report of the President. I'm about to sign it. And so I want to—Eddie, thank you for your good work, you and your team.

Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Edward P. Lazear. My pleasure.

The President. This report indicates that our economy is structurally sound for the long term and that we're dealing with uncertainties in the short term. And therefore, what should we do about it? Well, I am so pleased that the Congress and the administration worked closely together to pass a robust progrowth package to deal with the uncertainty. That package is about 160 billion-plus dollars. What that means is, it means that money will be going directly to America, workers and families and individuals. It also means that there is incentives for American businesses.

I'll be signing this bill soon. But if you're a taxpayer or if you're a—got income up to—earned income—I mean, credited income up to \$3,000, you can expect money back. And if you're a businessowner, you're going to get

some incentives to invest. And so you ought to be planning upon it—on investing now.

And so I really want to thank the Congress for getting this bill done, and I'm looking forward to signing it. It's going to help deal with the uncertainties in this economy.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:07 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to H.R. 5140.

Remarks at the Heart Truth Reception

February 11, 2008

Thank you all. Welcome to the White House. Laura and I are glad you're here, and thanks for coming. I welcome members of my Cabinet. I particularly want to thank all the healers and compassionate folks who help with heart disease. The Vice President sends his best. *[Laughter]*

All of us here are committed to America's heart health. I don't know if our fellow citizens know this, but this is American Heart Month. And it's a good time to remember that an estimated 80 million people across the United States suffer from heart disease. The disease is the number-one killer of American men and women. Many women, however, do not even know they're at risk, and so they don't take simple steps that can protect their health.

And that's where the Heart Truth Campaign comes in. Over the last 5 years, I appreciate the fact that you all have spread the word, and you represent thousands across our country who are doing so as well. You've helped women reduce the factors for heart disease, and that's a noble calling, an important contribution to our country. Every February, you encourage women to wear the red dress, which I appreciate. And I do want to thank the fashion industry for stepping up and—*[applause]*.

And the results are measurable. Women's awareness has been raised; women's lives have been saved. Earlier this month, I was in Kansas City, and I met a woman named Joyce Cullen. In 2003, Joyce saw coverage of Laura's visit to a Kansas City hospital. She just talked about the symptoms that—of

heart disease in women. It was just a simple explanation of what people should be aware of. She woke up with those symptoms shortly after Laura's visit. She went to the hospital. Her life was saved, and she's now a part of Heart Truth. And that's the effort in which you're involved—simple acts that are spreading across the country and saving lives.

My job today is not only to welcome you and to thank you but to introduce the Heart Truth's national ambassador. Laura is committed to the Heart Truth Campaign. She's a great First Lady, and she's always dear to my heart—the First Lady.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:40 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Statement on the Death of Representative Thomas P. Lantos

February 11, 2008

Laura and I are saddened by the death of our friend Congressman Tom Lantos.

Tom was a man of character and a champion of human rights. After immigrating to America more than six decades ago, he worked to help oppressed people around the world have the opportunity to live in freedom. As the only Holocaust survivor to serve in Congress, Tom was a living reminder that we must never turn a blind eye to the suffering of the innocent at the hands of evil men. I appreciate his vision in cofounding the Human Rights Caucus. I also appreciate his efforts to protect our environment, alleviate the sufferings caused by HIV/AIDS, and strengthen our friendships and alliances around the globe.

We will miss Tom's leadership in the Halls of Congress. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Annette, their daughters, and the rest of the Lantos family.

Statement on the Situation in Timor-Leste

February 11, 2008

I strongly condemn the violent attacks against Jose Ramos-Horta, President of

Timor-Leste, and Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao, Prime Minister of Timor-Leste. Laura and I offer our condolences to the families of those killed in the attacks, and we send our prayers for a rapid recovery to President Ramos-Horta and the others injured.

Those who are responsible must know that they cannot derail democracy in Timor-Leste, and they will be held accountable for their actions. The United States remains committed to working with the people of Timor-Leste to strengthen democracy there. I also offer my full support to the Government of Timor-Leste, the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste, and the International Stabilization Force as they work to maintain calm and security.

Memorandum on Federal Support for the AbilityOne Program

February 11, 2008

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Federal Support for the AbilityOne Program

Americans with disabilities make valuable contributions to our country's workforce that help keep our Nation the world's economic leader. Expanding employment opportunities for these individuals will help ensure that our economy is drawing on the talents and creativity of all its citizens and that America remains a place of opportunity for all. Supporting the AbilityOne Program is one good way to achieve this goal.

The AbilityOne Program (formerly the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Program) is a Federal initiative that works with public and private organizations to generate employment opportunities for Americans who are blind or have other disabilities. Nearly 43,000 individuals work in more than 600 community-based nonprofit agencies that serve people with a wide range of disabilities and sell products and services to the Federal Government through the AbilityOne Program.

The AbilityOne Program has taken steps to embrace successful business practices, including e-commerce and performance-based contracting. Strong support from Federal

customers is critical to fulfilling this important program's employment mission. Therefore, I encourage you to ensure that your agency's procurement officials acquire products and services provided by the AbilityOne Program, consistent with existing law.

Additional information about the AbilityOne Program may be obtained by contacting the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled or by visiting www.AbilityOne.gov.

George W. Bush

Memorandum on Implementation of Sections 603 and 604 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 2003 (Public Law 107-228)

February 11, 2008

Presidential Determination No. 2008-11

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Implementation of Sections 603 and 604 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 2003 (Public Law 107-228)

Consistent with the authority contained in section 604 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 2003 (Public Law 107-228)(the "Act"), and with reference to the determinations set out in the report to be transmitted to the Congress pursuant to section 603 of that Act regarding noncompliance by the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority with certain commitments, I hereby impose the sanction set out in section 604(a)(2), "Downgrade in Status of the PLO Office in the United States." This sanction is imposed for a period of 180 days from the date hereof or until such time as the next report required by section 603 of the Act is transmitted to the Congress, whichever is later. You are authorized and directed to transmit to the appropriate congressional committees the report described in section 603 of the Act.

Furthermore, I hereby determine that it is in the national security interest of the United States to waive that sanction, pursuant to section 604(c) of the Act. This waiver shall be effective for a period of 180 days from the date hereof or until such time as

the next report required by section 603 of the Act is transmitted to the Congress, whichever is later.

You are hereby authorized and directed to transmit this determination to the Congress and to publish it in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 12.

Remarks Following a Discussion With President Amadou Toumani Toure of Mali

February 12, 2008

President Bush. It's been a honor and a pleasure to welcome the President of Mali here to the Oval Office.

We discussed a variety of issues. I was touched by the President's concern about the life of the average citizen in Mali. We are partners with the President and the people of Mali through the Millennium Challenge Account. And one reason we worked with the Government is because they've agreed to fight corruption and support the education and health of its citizens. This is a country that's committed to the rights of its people, and we're proud to be standing side by side with you.

Two issues that are very important to this administration, Mr. President, were the issues that my wife, Laura, discussed when she came to your country. One is literacy, and two is the eradication of malaria. And I assured the President that our commitment remains strong to both important issues. And I thank him very much for his hard work in helping his citizens deal with HIV/AIDS.

And finally, the President and I spent a fair amount of time talking about the dangers of radicals and extremists associated with groups like Al Qaida. And we talked about the need for close cooperation to protect the innocent people from those who murder the innocent in order to achieve their dark political vision.

So it's been my honor to welcome a good man here to the Oval Office.

President Toure. Yes. First of all, I would like to convey to the President of the United

States the sympathies and solidarity of the people of Mali because of the destruction——

President Bush. Thank you.

President Toure. ——brought by the tornadoes in some of the Southern States of the United States.

And then I told Mr. President that we were sensitive and impressed by the impression that we had from the visit of Mrs. Laura Bush to Mali some time ago. Also, thank the President for the friendship between the people of the United States and the people of Mali and the cooperation between Mali and the United States that we do entertain on both sides since the independence of Mali in 1960.

But I could also come to the United States just to tell Mr. President, thank you, because the President had some initiatives not only for Mali but also for Africa, which we believe are historical initiatives, and which we do have the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the greater participation against the fight against AIDS through the Global Fund, the initiative of the eradication of malaria, and not to forget the Presidential initiative on literacy in Africa, which is very important in our view, because when you want to develop, you need to also improve basic education.

President Bush. That's right.

President Toure. So I emphasized to the President that—and I reaffirm—that Mali signed and Mali averred to all different initiatives on the fight against terrorism. So it is humanly inadmissible, unacceptable to see or to assist or to be indifferent to the suggestion that we are seeing to some practices which really do not deserve to exist.

So we had a fruitful exchange of views on our cooperation. So I said to Mr. President that I would like to thank him and also to convey all the gratitude of the people of Mali, but I emphasized also the fact that may God save Mali and the United States. President, thank you very much.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:33 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. President Toure spoke in French, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks at a Celebration of African American History Month

February 12, 2008

The President. Thank you all for coming. Good afternoon, and welcome to the White House. Laura and I are honored that you all came as we celebrate African American History Month. This is a month in which we recognize the many African Americans who've made great contributions to our country. We honor the talent and their courage. We renew our commitment to securing liberty and justice for every American. That's why we're here.

I appreciate many of the notables who have joined us. Madam Secretary, appreciate you coming—Mr. Secretary, Alphonso Jackson, and Marcia. Thanks for coming, Mr. Secretary. Proud you're here.

If I skip some of the notables, it's because I'm going to say something about them a little later on. [Laughter] So, Congressman, I'll be with you in a minute. [Laughter]

I appreciate Dr. Leonard Haynes, who's the Executive Director of the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities. I am proud—Doc, thanks for coming. I'm proud to welcome all the presidents from the Historically Black Colleges and Universities here today; really appreciate your service to the country.

I want to thank Ron Langston, National Director of the Minority Business Development Agency, Roslyn Brock, vice chairman of the NAACP. Roslyn, thank you for coming. Somewhere you are—there you are. I thank John Fleming, president, Association of the Study of African American Life and History. Yes, sir, Reverend Al Sharpton and his wife, Dominique; Reverend, it's good to see you.

Audience member. Daughter.

The President. Daughter. [Laughter] Daughter. [Laughter] I don't get them right all the time. [Laughter] But thank you for coming. And, Dominique, you're sure a lot prettier than your father. [Laughter]

Thurgood Marshall, Jr., we're proud you're here. Yes, thanks for coming. Good to see you, sir. State Representative Calvin Smyre of the State of Georgia, who is the president

of the National Black Caucus of State Legislators. Sure proud you're here.

Thank you all for coming. There's a lot of other notables here. Just consider yourself welcomed. [Laughter]

The theme of this year's African American History Month is a celebration of America's cultural diversity. It is a tribute to a scholar who deepened our appreciation for diversity, Carter G. Woodson. When Dr. Woodson began his career in the early 20th century, most Americans knew little about African American heritage. Dr. Woodson set out to correct that. His scholarship helped pioneer the field of African American studies. And by the time he passed away in 1950, the son of freed slaves had become known as the Father of Black History.

It is important for all our citizens to know the history of the African American struggle for equality. We must remember that the slave trade brought many Africans to America in chains, not by choice. We must remember how slaves claimed their God-given right to freedom. And we must remember how freed slaves and their descendants helped rededicate America to the ideals of its founding.

Our Nation has come a long way toward building a more perfect Union. Yet as past injustices have become distant memories, there is a risk that our society may lose sight of the real suffering that took place. One symbol of that suffering is the noose. Recently, there have been a number of media reports about nooses being displayed. These disturbing reports have resulted in heightened racial tensions in many communities. They have revealed that some Americans do not understand why the sight of a noose causes such a visceral reaction among so many people.

For decades, the noose played a central part in a campaign of violence and fear against African Americans. Fathers were dragged from their homes in the dark of the night before the eyes of their terrified children. Summary executions were held by torchlight in front of hateful crowds. In many cases, law enforcement officers responsible for protecting the victims were complicit in their deeds, and their deaths. For generations of African Americans, the noose was

more than a tool of murder; it was a tool of intimidation that conveyed a sense of powerlessness to millions.

The era of rampant lynching is a shameful chapter in American history. The noose is not a symbol of prairie justice but of gross injustice. Displaying one is not a harmless prank. Lynching is not a word to be mentioned in jest. As a civil society, we must understand that noose displays and lynching jokes are deeply offensive. They are wrong, and they have no place in America today.

This afternoon we honor four Americans who understand what this symbol represents and who are leading the way toward ending racial injustice across our land.

Congressman John Lewis earned his place in history long before winning a seat in the United States Capitol. As a young man, he became one of the leaders of the civil rights movement. He organized freedom rides and sit-ins and voter registration drives. One Sunday in 1965, he set out to lead a march from Selma to Montgomery. The marchers never made it past the rows of State troopers outside Selma, but their message made it all the way to Washington, DC. Five months later, Congress passed the Voting Rights Act. And more than 40 years later, John Lewis continues to inspire us, and we're blessed to have him here today.

William Coleman has lived a life of many firsts. After graduating first in his class from Harvard Law School, he went on to become both the first black American to clerk on the Supreme Court and the first to hold a Cabinet post in a Republican administration, as Secretary of Transportation under President Gerald Ford. William Coleman has also helped open doors of opportunities for others. He worked alongside Thurgood Marshall, father of this good man, on the legal team that triumphed in *Brown versus Board of Education*. This ruling exposed the fallacy of separate but equal, and it helped return America to the great truth that all men are created equal. For this, we owe William Coleman our lasting thanks. We're honored to have you today, sir.

Three years after *Brown versus Board of Education*, nine students in Little Rock stepped forward to test the Supreme Court's ruling. On September 25th, 1957, Federal

troops escorted them into the city's all-white Central High School. Once inside, the Little Rock Nine were spit on, harassed, and called names. One of the students was a senior named Ernest Green. As graduation day approached, some suggested it might be safer for Ernest to receive his diploma in the mail. Many people would have taken this advice, not Ernest Green. In May of 1958, Martin Luther King, Jr., was on hand to watch Ernest become the first African American to graduate from Little Rock's Central High School. We're honored to welcome Ernest Green to the White House during the 50th anniversary—[*applause*].

And finally, as a young boy, Otis Williams remembers his mother packing food for their move from Texas—oh, what a tragic mistake—[*laughter*—to Detroit. She did so because restaurants along the route refused to serve African Americans. In Detroit, Otis Williams grew up to become the leader of one of the most successful vocal groups in the history of our country, the Temptations. This group has recorded 37 top 40 singles, including 4 number-one hits on the pop charts. Their success paved the way for other African American artists. Their melodies continue bringing Americans of all races together to this day.

Otis can remember performing in a venue in South Carolina where blacks and whites in the crowd were separated by a barrier. The next year when the Temptations returned, the racial divide was gone. As Otis once put it, quote, "The highest achievement for me has been to have our music penetrate all kinds of barriers, for it to be colorless." The music of the Temptations has given countless Americans sunshine on a cloudy day—[*laughter*—and we cannot help ourselves from loving them. [*Laughter*]

Throughout American—African American History Month, we remember how individuals, African American leaders of all kinds helped bring our Nation together. We recognize our Nation still has a long way to go. But in the example of the leaders like those we honor today, we see strength greater than any division, and we see hope for a day when freedom rings from every mountainside and every corner of the country.

And now it is my great pleasure to introduce the Temptations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

Statement on Senate Passage of the Intelligence Reform Legislation

February 12, 2008

After a full debate, the Senate today cast a strong, bipartisan vote in support of legislation that will ensure that our intelligence professionals continue to have the critical tools they need to protect the Nation.

This good bill passed by the Senate provides a long-term foundation for our intelligence community to monitor the communications of foreign terrorists in ways that are timely and effective and that also protect the liberties of Americans. It will keep closed dangerous intelligence gaps that threatened our security. And this bill improves on the Protect America Act passed last summer by providing fair and just liability protection to those private companies who have been sued for billions of dollars only because they are believed to have done the right thing and assisted the Nation after the September 11th terrorist attacks.

I commend Senators from both sides of the aisle who came together to pass this important bill. I thank Leaders Reid and McConnell and the leaders of the Senate Intelligence Committee, Senators Rockefeller and Bond, for finishing work on this bill. Today the Senate demonstrated that protecting our Nation is not a partisan issue.

The House of Representatives now has an opportunity to put aside narrow partisan concerns and come together to pass this bipartisan bill and send it to my desk without delay. Our intelligence professionals and private sector partners need the certainty of long-term legislation that will allow us to keep programs in place to protect the Nation, so that the flow of critical intelligence information is not interrupted.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 3773.

Remarks on Intelligence Reform Legislation

February 13, 2008

Director, thank you for joining me. Good morning. At this moment, somewhere in the world, terrorists are planning new attacks on our country. Their goal is to bring destruction to our shores that will make September the 11th pale by comparison. To carry out their plans, they must communicate with each other, they must recruit operatives, and they must share information.

The lives of countless Americans depend on our ability to monitor these communications. Our intelligence professionals must be able to find out who the terrorists are talking to, what they are saying, and what they're planning.

To help our intelligence agencies do this, Congress passed the Protect America Act last year. Unfortunately, Congress set the law to expire on February the 1st and then failed to pass new legislation that would keep these tools in effect over the long run. And so at the 11th hour, Congress passed a temporary 15-day extension of the current law, which will expire at midnight this Saturday. I signed that extension. I did so to give Members of the House and the Senate more time to work out their differences.

Well, the Senate has used this time wisely. I am pleased that last night, Senators approved new legislation that will ensure our intelligence professionals have the tools they need to make us safer, and they did so by a wide, bipartisan majority. The Senate bill also provides fair and just liability protections for companies that did the right thing and assisted in defending America after the attacks of September the 11th.

In order to be able to discover enemy—the enemy's plans, we need the cooperation of telecommunication companies. If these companies are subjected to lawsuits that could cost them billions of dollars, they won't participate, they won't help us, they won't help protect America. Liability protection is critical to securing the private sector's cooperation with our intelligence efforts. The Senate has passed a good bill and has shown that protecting our Nation is not a partisan issue. And I congratulate the Senators.

Unfortunately, the House has failed to pass a good bill. And now House leaders say they want still more time to reach an agreement with the Senate on a final bill. They make this claim even though it is clear that the Senate bill, the bill passed last night, has significant bipartisan support in the House.

Congress has had over 6 months to discuss and deliberate. The time for debate is over. I will not accept any temporary extension. House Members have had plenty of time to pass a good bill. They have already been given a 2-week extension beyond the deadline they set for themselves. If Republicans and Democrats in the Senate can come together on a good piece of legislation, there is no reason why Republicans and Democrats in the House cannot pass the Senate bill immediately.

The House's failure to pass the bipartisan Senate bill would jeopardize the security of our citizens. As Director McConnell has told me, without this law, our ability to prevent new attacks will be weakened, and it will become harder for us to uncover terrorist plots. We must not allow this to happen. It is time for Congress to ensure the flow of vital intelligence is not disrupted. It is time for Congress to pass a law that provides a long-term foundation to protect our country. And they must do so immediately.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:01 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to H.R. 3773.

Remarks on Signing the Economic Stimulus Act of 2008

February 13, 2008

Thank you all. Sit down. Thank you all very much. Thanks for coming. Thanks for the warm welcome. I'm pleased to be joined by leaders of both parties to enact an economic growth package on behalf of the American people.

You know, a lot of folks in America probably were saying that it's impossible for those of us in Washington to find common ground, to reach compromise on important issues. I didn't feel that way; I know the leaders didn't feel that way. And as a result, we have come

together on a single mission, and that is to put the people's interests first. And I really do welcome the Members of Congress, and I thank you for your hard work.

Madame Speaker, I thank you for your leadership. Senator Reid, I thank you for your leadership as well. I appreciate very much the fact that the Vice President has joined us, along with Congressman Boehner, Congressman Hoyer, Senator Mitch McConnell, Congressman Roy Blunt, Congressman Jim Clyburn, and other Members of the House and the Senate. You're welcome here in the people's house any time.

I'm very grateful that members of my Cabinet have joined us. Secretary Paulson was the leader in the negotiations on this, and I thank you very much for your hard work, Mr. Secretary. You're earning your pay. *[Laughter]* Appreciate other members of my Cabinet who have joined us as well.

You know, I know a lot of Americans are concerned about our economic future. Our overall economy has grown for 6 straight years, but that growth has clearly slowed. And so in January, I—we had an important phone call with the leaders of the Congress to talk about whether or not we could come together to provide a booster shot for our economy, a package that is robust, temporary, and puts money back into the hands of American workers and businesses.

Congress passed a really good piece of legislation, and they did so in a very expeditious manner. The bill I'm signing today is large enough to have an impact, amounting to more than \$152 billion this year, or about 1 percent of GDP. The bill provides temporary tax incentives for businesses to make investments in their companies so that we create new jobs this year. The bill provides individual tax relief in the form of tax rebates. These rebates will amount to as much as \$600 for individuals and \$1,200 for married couples, with additional rebates for families with children.

The Members resisted the temptation to load up this bill with unrelated programs or unnecessary spending, and I appreciate that. I thank the Members for acting quickly. I thank them for acting to provide immediate tax relief to the American people.

There are other ways we can work together to help our economy through this rough patch. I know many Americans are worried about meeting their mortgages. My administration is working to address this problem. Last fall, for example, we brought together the HOPE NOW Alliance to help struggling homeowners avoid foreclosure. Yesterday Secretaries Paulson and Jackson joined HOPE NOW in announcing what is called Project Lifeline. It's a targeted outreach effort to help more at-risk homeowners.

Congress can also help by passing legislation to reform the regulation of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, to modernize the Federal Housing Administration, and to allow State housing agencies to issue tax-free bonds to help homeowners refinance their mortgages. I hope that Congress can act on these matters quickly.

Helping our economy requires us to take action. It is equally important that we not overreact. Our economic success is not the result of the wisdom of politicians in Washington, DC, but of the collective wisdom of the American people. Shopkeepers, farmers, laborers, entrepreneurs in the private sector have given us the most—the strongest and most resilient economic system in the world.

Over the past 7 years, this system has absorbed shocks: recession; corporate scandals; terrorist attacks; global war. Yet the genius of our system is that it can absorb such shocks and emerge even stronger. In a dynamic market economy, there will always be times when we experience uncertainties and fluctuations. But so long as we pursue progrowth policies that put faith in the American people, our economy will prosper, and it will continue to be the marvel of the world.

Now I'm honored to sign the Economic Stimulus Act of 2008.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:59 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. H.R. 5140, approved February 13, was assigned Public Law No. 110–185.

Executive Order 13460—Blocking Property of Additional Persons in Connection With the National Emergency With Respect to Syria
February 13, 2008

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) (IEEPA), the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 *et seq.*), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code,

I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, find that the Government of Syria continues to engage in certain conduct that formed the basis for the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13338 of May 11, 2004, including but not limited to undermining efforts with respect to the stabilization of Iraq. I further find that the conduct of certain members of the Government of Syria and other persons contributing to public corruption related to Syria, including by misusing Syrian public assets or by misusing public authority, entrenches and enriches the Government of Syria and its supporters and thereby enables the Government of Syria to continue to engage in certain conduct that formed the basis for the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13338. In light of these findings, and to take additional steps with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13338 of May 11, 2004, I hereby order:

Section 1. (a) Except to the extent provided in section 203(b)(1), (3), and (4) of IEEPA (50 U.S.C. 1702(b)(1), (3) and (4)), the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 (title IX, Public Law 106–387), or regulations, orders, directives, or licenses that may be issued pursuant to this order, and notwithstanding any contract entered into or any license or permit granted prior to the effective date of this order, all property and interests in property that are in the United States, that hereafter come within the United States, or that are or hereafter come within the possession or control of any United States person, including any overseas branch, of the following persons are

blocked and may not be transferred, paid, exported, withdrawn, or otherwise dealt in: persons determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, after consultation with the Secretary of State, to be responsible for, to have engaged in, to have facilitated, or to have secured improper advantage as a result of, public corruption by senior officials within the Government of Syria.

(b) The prohibitions in paragraph (a) of this section include, but are not limited to, (i) the making of any contribution or provision of funds, goods, or services by, to, or for the benefit of any person designated pursuant to this order, and (ii) the receipt of any contribution or provision of funds, goods, or services from any such person.

Sec. 2. Section 3(a)(iv) of Executive Order 13338 is hereby amended to read as follows:

“(iv) to be or to have been responsible for or otherwise significantly contributing to actions taken or decisions made by the Government of Syria that have the purpose or effect of undermining efforts to stabilize Iraq or of allowing the use of Syrian territory or facilities to undermine efforts to stabilize Iraq; or”.

Sec. 3. (a) Any transaction by a United States person or within the United States that evades or avoids, has the purpose of evading or avoiding, or attempts to violate any of the prohibitions set forth in this order is prohibited.

(b) Any conspiracy formed to violate any of the prohibitions set forth in this order is prohibited.

Sec. 4. For purposes of this order:

(a) the term “person” means any individual or entity;

(b) the term “entity” means a partnership, association, trust, joint venture, corporation, group, subgroup, or other organization; and

(c) the term “United States person” means any United States citizen, permanent resident alien, entity organized under the laws of the United States or any jurisdiction within the United States (including foreign branches), or any person in the United States.

Sec. 5. I hereby determine that the making of donations of the type specified in section 203(b)(2) of IEEPA (50 U.S.C.

1702(b)(2)) by, to, or for the benefit of, persons whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to section 1 of this order would seriously impair my ability to deal with the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13338 and relied upon for additional steps taken in Executive Order 13399 of April 25, 2006, and I hereby prohibit such donations as provided by section 1 of this order.

Sec. 6. For those persons whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to section 1 of this order who might have a constitutional presence in the United States, I find that, because of the ability to transfer funds or other assets instantaneously, prior notice to such persons of measures to be taken pursuant to this order would render these measures ineffectual. I therefore determine that for these measures to be effective in addressing the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13338 and relied upon for additional steps taken in Executive Order 13399, there need be no prior notice of a determination made pursuant to this order.

Sec. 7. The Secretary of the Treasury, after consultation with the Secretary of State, is hereby authorized to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, and to employ all powers granted to the President by IEEPA as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this order. The Secretary of the Treasury may redelegate any of these functions to other officers and agencies of the United States Government, consistent with applicable law. All executive agencies of the United States Government are hereby directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of this order and, where appropriate, to advise the Secretary of the Treasury in a timely manner of the measures taken.

Sec. 8. Nothing in this order is intended to affect the continued effectiveness of any rules, regulations, orders, licenses, or other forms of administrative action issued, taken, or continued in effect heretofore or hereafter under 31 C.F.R. chapter V, except as expressly terminated, modified, or suspended by or pursuant to this order.

Sec. 9. This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, instrumentalities, or entities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

George W. Bush

The White House,
February 13, 2008.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:37 a.m., February 14, 2008]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on February 15.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting an Executive Order
Blocking Property of Additional
Persons in Connection With the
National Emergency With Respect to
Syria**

February 13, 2008

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, as amended (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*)(IEEPA), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order taking additional steps with respect to the Government of Syria's continued engagement in certain conduct that formed the basis for the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13338 of May 11, 2004, including but not limited to its efforts to undermine the stabilization and reconstruction of Iraq.

This order will block the property and interests in property of persons determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, after consultation with the Secretary of State, to be responsible for, to have engaged in, to have facilitated, or to have secured improper advantage as a result of, public corruption by senior officials within the Government of Syria. The order also revises a provision in Executive Order 13338 to block the property and interests in property of persons determined by

the Secretary of the Treasury, after consultation with the Secretary of State, to be responsible for or otherwise significantly contributing to actions or decisions of the Government of Syria that have the purpose or effect of undermining efforts to stabilize Iraq or of allowing the use of Syrian territory or facilities to undermine efforts to stabilize Iraq.

I delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury the authority to take such actions, after consultation with the Secretary of State, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, and to employ all powers granted to the President by IEEPA as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of my order.

I wish to emphasize, as well, my ongoing concern over the destabilizing role Syria continues to play in Lebanon, including its efforts to obstruct, through intimidation and violence, Lebanon's democratic processes.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

George W. Bush

The White House,
February 13, 2008.

Memorandum on Implementation of Sections 603 and 604 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 2003 (Public Law 107-228)

February 13, 2008

Presidential Determination No. 2008-12

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Implementation of Sections 603 and 604 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 2003 (Public Law 107-228)

Consistent with the authority contained in section 604 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 2003 (Public Law 107-228)(the "Act"), and with reference to the determinations set out in the report to be transmitted to the Congress pursuant to section 603 of that Act regarding noncompliance by the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority with certain commitments, I hereby impose the sanction set out in section 604(a)(2), "Downgrade in Status of the PLO Office in the United States." This sanction is imposed for a period

of 180 days from the date hereof or until such time as the next report required by section 603 of the Act is transmitted to the Congress, whichever is later. You are authorized and directed to transmit to the appropriate congressional committees the report described in section 603 of the Act.

Furthermore, I hereby determine that it is in the national security interest of the United States to waive that sanction, pursuant to section 604(c) of the Act. This waiver shall be effective for a period of 180 days from the date hereof or until such time as the next report required by section 603 of the Act is transmitted to the Congress, whichever is later.

You are hereby authorized and directed to transmit this determination to the Congress and to publish it in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

Remarks on African Development and Upcoming Visit to Africa

February 14, 2008

I've been looking forward to coming to the museum, and there's an added benefit, and that is, I get to be introduced by my wife on Valentine's Day. [*Laughter*] Happy Valentine's.

This morning Laura and I join all Americans in honoring the life of Congressman Tom Lantos. In his remarkable 80 years, Tom Lantos survived the Nazi camps of Hungary to reach the Halls of Congress. As a Representative from California, he was a fearless defender of democracy, a powerful advocate of human rights, and a strong supporter of the fight against HIV/AIDS. Our prayers are with Annette and the Lantos family. We thank God for his service.

Five years ago, Laura and I made our first visit to Africa. Since then, as she mentioned, she's taken three more trips. And every time, she came back with fascinating stories, some of which she just shared with you. And tomorrow, as she mentioned, we're going back, and I'm really looking forward to it.

We're going to Benin, Tanzania, Rwanda, Ghana, and Liberia. Each of these countries is blessed with natural beauty, vibrant culture, and an unmistakable spirit of energy

and optimism. Africa in the 21st century is a continent of potential. That's how we view it. I hope that's how our fellow citizens view Africa. It's a place where democracy is advancing, where economies are growing, and leaders are meeting challenges with purpose and determination.

Our visit will give me a chance to meet with people who are making the transformation on the continent possible. I'm going to witness the generosity of the American people firsthand. It will give me a chance to remind our fellow citizens about what a compassionate people we are. And I will assure our partners in Africa that the United States is committed to them today, tomorrow, and long into their continent's bright future.

And so I thank you for giving us a chance to come and visit with you. You could call this the sendoff speech.

I really want to thank Mark Dybul. I love to support people who are making history. I can't think of any more noble history than to be leading the compassionate effort of the American people to help save lives. And, Ambassador, you're doing a fabulous job.

I also want to welcome Admiral Tim Ziemer. Admiral, good to see you. He's in charge of making sure that we meet our goals in reducing the scourge of malaria. Thanks for coming. You and Dybul are results-oriented people. Let me say, I'm a results-oriented President, and so when I meet with you, I ask you, what are the results? *[Laughter]* And you'll hear in a minute, they're very positive.

I appreciate very much Dr. Samper and his wife, Adriana, for welcoming us. Thank you for leading this important institute.

I also want to thank Sharon Patton, the Director of the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art. Thanks for welcoming us. It's not so easy, like, to welcome the President. *[Laughter]* It turns out, the entourages are probably bigger than the visitors to your museum—*[laughter]*—but thank you for coming. This is an important part of the Washington scene. I'd urge our fellow citizens to come to this important museum. I want to thank the board members of the Smithsonian National Museum of Africa Art who have joined us today.

I welcome Jendayi Frazer, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs. Are you going on the trip? Yes. Better get home and pack. *[Laughter]* Thanks for coming. I'm proud to work with you.

Henrietta Fore, Administrator of USAID, is with us. Henrietta, thanks for coming.

I better be careful about how I say this for fear of having a huge burst of applause, but I'd like to introduce the Director of the Peace Corps—*[applause]*—Ron Tschetter. Ron, thanks for coming. It's good to see you, sir. And I appreciate you bringing the five-person cheering section with you. *[Laughter]* There seems to be a groundswell here. *[Laughter]*

I welcome the members of the diplomatic corps. Thanks for coming.

And finally, I do also want to do what Mark did, and thank Chuck Dages of Warner Brothers for this trailer. It's good. I appreciate your support.

The museum is a testament to America's long connection to Africa. At least that's how I view it. Africa is the birthplace of humanity, the home of great civilizations, and the source of enduring achievements in culture and art. Africa has also witnessed some of mankind's most shameful chapters, from the evils of the slave trade to the condescension of colonialism. Even the joy of independence, which arrived with such promise, was undermined by corruption, conflict, and disease. Just a decade ago, much of Africa seemed to be on the brink of collapse, and much of the world seemed content to let it collapse.

Today, that's changing. A new generation of African leaders is stepping forward and turning their continent around. International organizations and faith-based groups and the private sector are more engaged than ever. And in one of the major priorities of my Presidency, the United States has fundamentally altered our policy toward Africa.

America's approach to Africa stems from both our ideals and our interests. We believe that every human life is precious. We believe that our brothers and sisters in Africa have dignity and value because they bear the mark of our Creator. We believe our spirit is renewed when we help African children and families live and thrive.

Africa is also increasingly vital to our strategic interests. We have seen that conditions on the other side of the world can have a direct impact on our own security. We know that if Africa were to continue on the old path of decline, it would be more likely to produce failed states, foster ideologies of radicalism, and spread violence across borders.

We also know that if Africa grows in freedom and prosperity and justice, its people will choose a better course. People who live in societies based on freedom and justice are more likely to reject the false promise of the extremist ideology. Citizens who see a future of opportunity are more likely to build hopeful economies that benefit all the people. Nations that replace disease and despair with healing and hope will help Africa do more than just survive; it will help Africa succeed.

For all these reasons, America has dramatically increased our commitment to development in Africa. We have also revolutionized the way we approach development. Too many nations continue to follow either the paternalistic notion that treats African countries as charity cases or a model of exploitation that seeks only to buy up their resources. America rejects both approaches. Instead, we are treating African leaders as equal partners, asking them to set clear goals and expecting them to produce measurable results. For their part, more African leaders are willing to be held to high standards. And together we're pioneering a new era in development.

The new era is rooted in a powerful truth: Africa's most valuable resource is not its oil; it's not its diamonds; it is the talent and creativity of its people. So we are partnering with African leaders to empower their people to lift up their nations and write a new chapter in their history.

First, we are working to empower Africans to overcome poverty by helping them grow their economies. After a long period of stagnation, many of Africa's economies are springing to life. As a whole, sub-Saharan Africa is projected to grow nearly 7 percent this year. The economies of Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Tanzania are among the fastest growing in the world. And across Africa, poverty is beginning to decline. Don't get me

wrong; it's still a poor place, but poverty is beginning to decline.

This resurgence shows the strength of the entrepreneurial spirit in Africa. America is working to help unleash that spirit across the continent. Along with our fellow G-8 nations, we have relieved some \$34 billion in debt from African nations in the past 18 months. That is roughly the same level of debt that was canceled in the previous 11 years combined. We have also made historic increases in foreign aid. In my first term, we more than doubled development assistance to Africa, part of the largest expansion of American development assistance since the Marshall Plan. At the beginning of my second term, I promised to double our assistance again by 2010. And the budget I sent Congress last week will ensure that we meet this commitment.

And just as important, we're changing the way we deliver assistance. We created what's called the Millennium Challenge Account, which offers financial support to the world's most promising developing nations—nations that fight corruption, nations that govern justly, nations that open up their economies, and nations that invest in the health and education of their people.

America is serving as an investor, not a donor. We believe that countries can adopt the habits necessary to provide help for their people. That's what we believe. And we're willing to invest in leaders that are doing just that. So far, more than two-thirds of the MCA's \$5.5 billion is being invested in Africa. And on my trip next week, I will sign the largest project in the program's history, nearly \$700 million compact with Tanzania.

Other nations are seeing the benefits of these agreements. They are moving ahead with the tough economic, political, and social reforms necessary to compete for a compact of their own. In fact, there is now more competition for funds than there are funds available, which ought to say two things: One, that this is evidence that the American taxpayers are getting good value for their dollars. In other words, if nations are willing to fight corruption, work on rule of law, support their people and not themselves, then it

makes sense to invest with them. And secondly, it is evidence that Congress needs to fully fund this important initiative.

The best way to generate economic growth in Africa is to expand trade and investment. When businesses in Africa can sell their products and services around the globe, they create a culture of self-reliance and opportunity. One of the most powerful incentives for trade is the African Growth and Opportunity Act. And I appreciate the fact that Congress has extended this good law. Since 2001, exports from sub-Saharan Africa to the United States have tripled. It's also important for our citizens to know that U.S. exports to sub-Saharan Africa have more than doubled.

On my visit to Ghana, I will meet entrepreneurs who are benefiting from new access to U.S. markets. My message to them will be clear, just like it is to the Congress: For the benefit of Africans and for the benefit of Americans alike, we must maintain our commitment to free and fair trade.

Attracting foreign capital is another key to growth. In recent years, African nations have taken impressive steps to improve their investment climates. According to a World Bank report, 16 countries in sub-Saharan Africa recently adopted reforms to make it easier to start a business and to register property. That may sound simple to Americans, but these are important steps to be able to attract capital for investment purposes. When investors look for a promising market, they are increasingly turning to Africa. And in a hopeful sign, private capital flows to sub-Saharan Africa now exceed development assistance.

We've taken several steps to build on this progress. Last year, we launched the Africa Financial Sector Initiative. As part of this effort, our Overseas Private Investment Corporation mobilized \$750 million in investment capital for African businesses. Today I'm announcing that OPIC will support five new investment funds that will mobilize an additional \$875 million, for a total of more than \$1.6 billion in new capital.

And next week, I'm going to sign a bilateral investment treaty with Rwanda. This will be America's first such treaty in sub-Saharan Africa in nearly a decade. It reflects our shared commitment to systems of fair and open in-

vestment. It will bring more capital to Rwanda's dynamic and growing economy.

Look, the idea of somehow being able to help people through just giving them money isn't working. That's why I appreciate the efforts of Rob Mosbacher and OPIC, recognizing that when you invest in capital—invest capital, you create jobs. Paternalism has got to be a thing of the past. Joint venturing with good, capable people is what the future is all about.

But in the long run, the best way to lift lives in Africa is to tear down barriers to investment and trade around the world. And we have an opportunity to do that through the Doha round of trade talks. Look, Doha is important to enhance trade, but if you're truly interested in eliminating poverty, we ought to be reducing tariffs and barriers all across the globe. The United States stands ready to cut farm subsidies and agricultural tariffs and other trade barriers that disadvantage developing countries. On the other hand, we expect the rest of the world, especially the most advanced developing countries, to do the same. And if we both make good-faith efforts, we can reach a successful Doha agreement this year.

Secondly, we're working to empower Africans to alleviate hunger, expand education, and fight disease. America is proud to be the world's largest provider of food assistance, including emergency food stocks that have saved lives in places like Ethiopia or Sudan and other African nations. It's a noble effort on our people's part. I don't know if—most Americans don't understand that we're the world's largest provider of food to feed the hungry, but we are.

Yet our ultimate objective is to do more than respond to the hungry; it is to help African countries feed their own people. So I have proposed that America purchase crops directly from farmers in Africa, instead of just shipping food assistance from the developed world. This initiative would build up local agriculture markets. It would help break the cycle of famine. And it deserves the full support of the United States Congress.

We're also focusing on education. I'm looking forward to seeing the President of Tanzania; he's a good guy. Here's what he said: He said, "It's an indisputable fact that

education is key to development.” Across Africa, students are eager to learn, and often they lack quality teachers and just basic supplies. Things we take for granted in America are just lacking in parts of Africa. So in 2002, I launched the Africa Education Initiative, the goal of which is to distribute more than 15 million textbooks, train nearly a million teachers, and provide scholarships for 550,000 girls by 2010. And we’re headed to achieving that goal. In other words, these just weren’t empty words; these were concrete, solid goals being funded as a result of the generosity of the Congress and the American people.

Last year, I also announced a new International Education Initiative, which will help make basic education available to 4 million people in Ghana, Liberia, and other nations. Laura and I are looking forward to talking to the leaders of Ghana and Liberia about this important, transformative initiative.

With both these steps, we are matching the enthusiasm of African educators with the generosity of our taxpayers, and we believe strongly that this will open up the door to opportunity for millions. The good news is, so do the leaders of the countries we’re going to visit.

The greatest threat to Africa is disease. The greatest threat for a successful Africa is the scourge of HIV/AIDS and malaria. Two out of every three people afflicted with HIV/AIDS live in sub-Saharan Africa. The disease is the leading cause of death in the region. Just a few years ago, there were fears that HIV/AIDS could wipe out much of the continent’s population, with death rates that would rival the Black Plague of the Middle Ages.

We responded. We responded with the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. It’s the largest international health initiative in history to fight a single disease. In 2002, we pledged \$15 billion over 5 years to support HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and care. We set some clear principles on how that money would be spent. We put local partners in the lead because they know their people and their needs. We opened the funding to faith-based groups, healers willing to deliver medicine to remote villages by bicycle or on foot. We stressed the importance of changing

behavior so that fewer people are infected in the first place.

And the results are striking. When I visited sub-Saharan Africa 5 years ago—or when we visited 5 years ago, 50,000 people were receiving medicine to treat HIV/AIDS. And when we return this week, there will be more than 1.3 million.

One person who knows the benefits of the emergency plan is Tatu Msangi. She’s a single mother from Tanzania. When she became pregnant, Tatu went to a clinic run by a Christian group, souls showing up to love a neighbor just like they’d like to be loved themselves. You know, it didn’t take a Federal law to say, go to Africa to provide love for Tatu; it took a higher calling. These goals responded.

She learned she was HIV-positive and enrolled in a program designed to prevent mother-to-child transmission. She went on to deliver a healthy, HIV-free girl named Faith. I will see Tatu next week in Tanzania, but it’s not going to be the first time I met her. See, a few weeks ago, she and Faith endured a rather windy State of the Union Address. She sat with Laura in the box, here in the Capital of the Nation that helped save their lives.

In all, the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief has benefited tens of millions in Africa. Some call this a remarkable success. I call it a good start. Last May, I proposed to double our Nation’s initial pledge to \$30 billion over the next 5 years. The people on the continent of Africa have to know they’re not alone. The G-8 has shown leadership by agreeing to match our \$30 billion pledge. The private sector has made generous contributions as well. Think of what Warner Brothers has done, for example. And now the time has come for Congress to act. Members of both parties should reauthorize the emergency plan, maintain the principles that have made it a success, and double our commitment to this noble cause.

Malaria is another devastating killer. In some African countries, malaria takes as many lives as HIV/AIDS. And the vast majority of those taken by malaria are children under the age of 5. Every one of these deaths is unnecessary because the disease is entirely

preventable and treatable. So in 2005, America launched a 5-year, \$1.2 billion initiative to provide the insecticide-treated beds, indoor spraying, cutting-edge drugs that are necessary to defeat this disease. It's not a complicated strategy. It doesn't take a lot of medical research. We know how to solve the problem. That's why I put the admiral there. He knows how to solve problems. He can get us from point A to point B in a straight line—well, nearly straight line. *[Laughter]* And so we set a historic goal—if you have a treatable problem on hand, then you're able to set measurable goals—and the goal is to cut the number of malaria-related deaths in 15 African nations by half. That's the goal.

Like the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the malaria initiative empowers leaders on the ground to design strategies that work best for their nations. For example, President Yayi of Benin has called the fight against malaria “a fight against misery.” With the help of the malaria initiative, he's leading a campaign to deliver insecticide-treated bed nets to children under 5 in Benin. I'm looking forward to hearing how that's going when we meet him on Benin on our first stop. I can't wait to find out how well this initiative is doing.

Like the emergency plan, the malaria initiative has been matched by G-8 nations, which have pledged to cut malaria deaths by half in an additional 15 countries. This initiative has also been greeted with generous support from the private sector, faith-based groups, and Americans who want to do something to save somebody's life. You can buy a \$10 bed net and ship it to Africa to save a life. It doesn't take much money, but it takes a big heart. One of the interesting gifts Laura and I got a couple of years ago for Christmas was bed nets in our name. It made us feel great.

Like the emergency plan, the malaria initiative is producing undeniable results. In just over 2 years, the initiative has reached more than 25 million people. According to new data, malaria rates are dropping dramatically in many parts of Africa. If we stay on this path, an extraordinary achievement is within reach: Africa can turn a disease that has taken its children for centuries into a thing of the past. And wouldn't that be fan-

tastic? And so Laura and I are going to spend time with these leaders, saying, what a noble opportunity; what a great goal; what a great way to serve humankind.

Finally, we're working to empower Africans to end conflicts, strengthen democracy, and promote peace. When I took office, Africa was home to six major conflicts, in Angola, Burundi, Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and southern Sudan. We concluded that the best way to broker peace was to support the efforts of African leaders on the ground, instead of dictating solutions from Washington, DC. And today, every one of them has made progress toward peace and stability.

For example, the United States worked closely with Nigeria to help end the Liberian civil war. When the international community called for Charles Taylor to step down in 2003, the President of Nigeria provided a plane to take him in exile. When U.S. marines deployed to Liberia, Nigerian peacekeepers deployed at the same time. And today, Liberia's long war is over. And next week in Monrovia, Laura and I will meet with Africa's first democratically elected woman President, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.

Even without major conflict or civil war, security challenges remain in Africa, and we're working closely with local partners to address them. The Department of Defense has established a new African Command, which will work closely with African governments to crack down on human trafficking, piracy, and terrorism across the continent. We are employing diplomatic tools as well.

In eastern Congo, we worked with leaders on the ground to broker the recent agreements to demobilize all remaining armed groups. And we stand ready to help all sides to implement them.

In Kenya, we are backing the efforts of former U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan to end the crisis. And when we're on the continent, I've asked Condi Rice—that would be Secretary Rice—to travel to Kenya to support the work of the former Secretary-General and to deliver a message directly to Kenya's leaders and people: There must be an immediate halt to violence; there must be justice for the victims of abuse; and there must be a full return to democracy.

In Darfur, the United States will continue to call the killing what it is, genocide. We will continue to deliver humanitarian aid. We will continue to enforce sanctions, tough sanctions, against the Sudanese Government officials, rebel leaders, and others responsible for violence. We expect other nations to join us in this effort to save lives from the genocide that is taking place. We will use all our diplomatic resources to urge full deployment of an effective United Nations force. The decision was made to count on the United Nations to provide the force necessary to protect people, and so we're going to support their efforts. I must confess, I'm a little frustrated by how slow things are moving. And yet we will support their efforts to find forces necessary to make a robust contribution to save lives.

On this trip, I'm going to visit with brave peacekeepers from Rwanda, a nation that knows the pain of genocide and was the first country to send troops into Darfur. Other nations need to follow Rwanda's example. Other nations need to take this issue seriously, just like the United States does, and provide more manpower for this urgent mission. And when they do, I pledge America will provide the training and equipment necessary to deploy the peacekeepers to Darfur.

America also stands with all in Africa who live in the quiet pain of tyranny. We will confront tyranny. In Zimbabwe, a discredited dictator presides over food shortages, staggering inflation, and harsh repression. The decent and talented people of that country deserve much better. America will continue to support freedom in Zimbabwe. And I urge neighbors in the region, including South Africa, to do the same. We look forward to the hour when this nightmare is over and the people of Zimbabwe regain their freedom.

These are great challenges, but there is even greater cause for hope. In the past 4 years alone, there have been more than 50 democratic elections in Africa. Thriving free societies have emerged in nations with Islamic majorities, Christian majorities, majorities of other beliefs, which is a powerful rebuke to the ideology of the extremists. In many nations, women have exercised the right to vote and run for office. Rwanda now has the highest percentage of female legisla-

tors in the world. Overall, more than two-thirds of the nations of sub-Saharan Africa are free. And for the rest, the direction of history is clear, so long as the United States does not lose its nerve and retreat into isolationism and protectionism. The day will come when a region once dismissed as the "Dark Continent" enjoys the light of liberty.

The United States must remain fully committed to the new era of development that we have begun with our partners in Africa. It's in our national interest we do so. I'm going to work closely with the G-8 nations to ensure they keep their promises as well. Congress must continue to show its commitment by fully funding the development programs I described today. You see, saving lives is a calling that crosses partisan lines. It remains equally worthy in both good economic times and times of economic uncertainty.

Across Africa, people have begun to speak of the "Lazarus effect," where communities once given up for dead are coming back to life. This work of healing and redemption is both a matter of conscience and a wise exercise of American influence. The work is not done. In the face of the needs that remain, it's important for the African people to believe the American people are not going to turn away. That's part of the purpose of our trip. The changes taking place in Africa don't always make the headlines. So don't be frustrated, Mark. That means the work is quiet, but it is not thankless.

Last November, I met a woman from Zambia named Bridget Chisenga. Bridget's husband died of AIDS, and she expected to meet the same fate. Then she went to a clinic operated by Catholic Relief Services, funded by the American people. Today, Bridget is healthy. She has a job at the clinic, where she helps provide AIDS medicine to others. I want our fellow citizens to hear what she said: "This face is alive and vibrant because of your initiative. I would like to thank you."

Americans have heard similar words of gratitude and hope in the past. They were said about the people who liberated the concentration camps and saved the blockaded city of Berlin and stood firm until the prisoners in the gulags were set free. This spirit of purpose and compassion has always defined America. And that is why the people

of Africa can be certain they will always have a friend and partner in the United States of America.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:13 a.m. at the National Museum of African Art. In his remarks, he referred to Rear Adm. Tim Ziemer, USN, (Ret.), U.S. Malaria Coordinator; Cristian Samper, Acting Secretary, Smithsonian Institution; Chuck Dages, executive vice president, emerging technology, Warner Bros. Home Entertainment Group; President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete of Tanzania; former President Charles Taylor and President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia; former President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria; and President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Remarks on Intelligence Reform Legislation and an Exchange With Reporters

February 14, 2008

The President. Good afternoon. This Saturday at midnight, legislation authorizing intelligence professionals to quickly and effectively monitor terrorist communications will expire. If Congress does not act by that time, our ability to find out who the terrorists are talking to, what they are saying, and what they are planning will be compromised. It would be a mistake if the Congress were to allow this to happen.

Members of Congress knew all along that this deadline was approaching. They said it themselves. They've had more than 6 months to discuss and deliberate, and now they must act and pass legislation that will ensure our intelligence professionals have the tools they need to keep us safe.

Earlier this week, the Senate did act and passed a strong bill and did so with a bipartisan majority. The Senate bill will ensure that we can effectively monitor those seeking to harm our people. The Senate bill will provide fair and just liability protection for companies that assisted in the efforts to protect America after the attacks of September the 11th. Without this protection, without this liability shield, we may not be able to secure the private sector's cooperation with our in-

telligence efforts. And that, of course, would put the American people at risk.

Now it's the House's turn to act. It is clear that the Senate bill would pass the House with bipartisan support. Republicans and Democrats in the Senate can put partisanship aside and pass a good bill. There's no reason why the House cannot do the same and pass the Senate bill immediately.

Our Government has no greater responsibility than getting this work done, and there really is no excuse for letting this critical legislation expire. I urge congressional leaders to let the will of the House and the American people prevail and vote on the Senate bill before adjourning for their recess. Failure to act would harm our ability to monitor new terrorist activities and could reopen dangerous gaps in our intelligence. Failure to act would also make the private sector less willing to help us protect the country, and this is unacceptable. The House should not leave Washington without passing the Senate bill.

Now, I am scheduled to leave tomorrow for a long-planned trip to five African nations. Moments ago, my staff informed the House leadership that I'm prepared to delay my departure and stay in Washington with them if it will help them complete their work on this critical bill.

The lives of countless Americans depend on our ability to monitor terrorist communications. Our intelligence professionals are working day and night to keep us safe, and they're waiting to see whether Congress will give them the tools they need to succeed or tie their hands by failing to act. The American people are watching this debate as well. They expect Congress to meet its responsibilities before they leave town on a recess.

I'll answer a few questions. Ben [Ben Feller, Associated Press], if you've got a question, I'll be prepared to answer.

President's Upcoming Visit to Africa/ Intelligence Reform Legislation

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. It appears with that deadline approaching that the House and the White House might be seen as being engaged in a game of chicken here, playing politics with an important intelligence law. If the law expires and something happens, wouldn't you be at least partly to

blame? And on your Africa trip, if you have to delay, do you think that you would be shortening your trip at all?

The President. As to the latter, the delay depends on whether the House acts, of course, and they got plenty of time to get this done. But if we have to delay, we'll delay. But I'm going to go to the countries that I said I'd go to.

And to the first case, whether or not this is politics, I certainly hope not. I can assure you, Al Qaida in their planning isn't thinking about politics. They're thinking about hurting the American people again.

Who's to blame? Look, these folks in Congress passed a good bill last—late last summer. In other words, they analyzed the situation; they said there's a threat; and they agreed to give our professionals the tools they needed to do the job. The problem is, they let the bill expire.

My attitude is, if the bill was good enough then, why not pass the bill again? I mean, the threat hasn't gone away. Secondly, they've had plenty of time to think about how to address the issue. Thirdly, the Senate led the way; the Senate showed how to pass a good bill with a bipartisan majority. And the truth of the matter is, if there was a willingness to get this problem solved, all the leadership would have to do is submit the Senate bill for a vote.

So we'll see what happens. My attitude is, now is the time to get the job done. There's been plenty of time to think about it, plenty of time to debate it, and there's a good way forward. And hopefully the House leadership will put this bill for a vote and let the Members vote as they so desire.

Mike [Mike Emmanuel, FOX News].

Terrorist Intelligence Surveillance Program/War on Terror

Q. Mr. President, I realize this is a sensitive matter, but I'm wondering if there's a way you can spell out for the American public what the practical impact may be, if this law expires, on our intelligence professionals, say, next week.

The President. Well, I hope it doesn't. But clearly, there will be a gap. And of course, we won't be able to assess that gap until the time. Step one is, I guess you got

to come to the conclusion that there's a threat to America or not a threat. I mean, evidently, some people just don't feel that sense of urgency. I do. And the reason I do is I firmly believe that there's still people out there who would do us harm.

Secondly, I know that the tools that I've just described are necessary to protect us. Why? Because we need to know what people are saying, what they're planning, and what they're thinking. And the tool that I have just described has been very effective.

Thirdly, people are wondering why companies need liability protection. Well, if you co-operate with the Government and then get sued for billions of dollars because of the co-operation, you're less likely to cooperate. And obviously we're going to need people working with us to find out what the enemy is saying and thinking and plotting and planning.

And so it's a—to me, it's a—I guess one way to look at it is, some may not feel that same sense of urgency I do. I heard somebody say, "Well, this is just pure politics." No, this is what is necessary to protect the American people from harm. And I recognize there hasn't been an attack on our country, but that does not mean that there's not still an enemy that lurks, plans, and plots.

And one of the reasons we've been effective is because we put new tools in place that give our professionals that which is necessary to protect us. This is a different kind of threat than we've ever faced before. It's a different kind of war that we're fighting, and it requires a different approach.

Again, I'll repeat to you that the Congress took a look at this issue and decided that the tools were necessary to give to our professionals last—late last summer. And if it was necessary late last summer, why is it not necessary today? What has changed? Well, the threat hasn't gone away. It's still there; it's still real; and we better be worried about it as a nation. And the House has now got time to go out and get the deal done.

Yesterday—a couple of days—votes ago in the Senate made it abundantly clear that Republicans and Democrats can come together and put a good piece of legislation together and get it passed. And the House leadership has an opportunity to do that now.

Listen, thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to H.R. 3773.

Statement on the Third Anniversary of the Death of Former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri of Lebanon

February 14, 2008

Today marks the third anniversary of the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri. The terrorist attack that killed Prime Minister Hariri, Minister Basil Fuleihan, and many other innocent victims was the spark that launched a transformation in Lebanon, as the Lebanese people demanded an end to the Syrian occupation and the restoration of their sovereignty.

Since the assassination of Prime Minister Hariri, many other Lebanese patriots have been murdered by those who seek to use violence and intimidation to derail progress toward a free, independent, and prosperous Lebanon. It is vital that the perpetrators of these attacks be brought to justice, and I, therefore, call upon the international community to redouble its support for the Special Tribunal for Lebanon. The United States support for the Government and people of Lebanon remains firm and unwavering.

Syria, Iran, and their allies must end their efforts to undermine Lebanon's legitimate Government and to interfere in its political process. The Lebanese deserve a President elected in accordance with their Constitution, without preconditions and in an environment free from fear and intimidation.

The foundation of freedom in Lebanon, which Mr. Hariri helped lay, remains strong. We will continue to support the people of Lebanon as they work to rid the country of terrorism and violence and exercise their democratic freedoms in peace.

Interview With Matt Frei of BBC World News America

February 14, 2008

President's Upcoming Visit to Africa

Mr. Frei. Mr. President, thanks for joining us. You're famous for saying that you don't believe in opinion polls.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Frei. Do you have any idea how you rate in the countries that you're going to be visiting in Africa?

The President. No, sir, I don't.

Mr. Frei. Well, I've got news for you, and it's good news. You rate pretty well, sort of in the average 80s. Is that one of the reasons why you're going there? This is one part of the world where you're still very popular.

The President. I go where needed. And, no, I'm going there because I've got a firm, heartfelt commitment to the continent of Africa—and had ever since I became President. It's in our interests, national interests that we help people who are suffering from disease and hunger and hopelessness. The only way a radical can recruit is to find somebody that's hopeless. I mean, their vision is, like, really dark and dim.

Plus, I believe to whom much is given, much is required. And America has been given a lot, and it's required of us to help those who suffer. So mine is a mercy—a mission of mercy and a mission of the cold realism of the world in which we live—based upon the realism in the world in which we live.

President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

Mr. Frei. Your administration has given \$15 billion to treat AIDS in Africa, which is an unprecedented amount of money, and you want to double that amount yet again. This is a huge commitment, and yet the administration and you, personally, don't seem to be getting a lot of credit for it.

The President. Yes. You know, this is kind of tied to your first question about polls. Polls are nothing more than just like a poof of air. What matters is results. And ultimately, people will be able to make an objective judgment of a President and his administration and, in this case, a country's commitment.

And so all I care, really, about is the results of the programs.

I hope by now people have learned that I'm not one of these guys that really gives a darn about elite opinion. What I really care about is, are we saving lives? And in this case, we are. As I mentioned in my speech—that you kindly listened to—when I first went to sub-Saharan Africa, 50,000 people were receiving antiretrovirals; today, 1.3 million. And that's a lot in a very quick period of time. But there's still so much more suffering, and that's why I've called for a doubling of aid.

The good news is, it's not just America. As I mentioned in my speech, the G-8 nations also are supporting this very important initiative. And, you know, it's a—it's just—in other words, this isn't a paternalistic effort; this is an effort of mercy.

Mr. Frei. But it has made a huge difference, hasn't it? So why not take some credit for it?

The President. Because it's just not my nature. I really—you just got to understand about me, I'm more interested in seeing results and sharing the credit with the American people. I mean, this is not a George Bush effort. I just happen to be the leader of a nation that's willing to fund this kind of money. And so I praised Congress in my speech; I praised the American people in my speech. After all, they're the ones who are funding the effort.

Darfur

Mr. Frei. You were very tough in your speech about Darfur. And yet again, you called what's happening there genocide.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Frei. Is enough being done by your administration to stop that?

The President. I think we are, yes. You know, I had to make a seminal decision, and that is whether or not I would commit troops into—U.S. troops into Darfur. And I was pretty well backed off of it by a lot of folks here in America that care deeply about the issue. And so once you make that decision, then you have to rely upon an international organization like the United Nations to provide the oomph, the necessary manpower.

And in my speech today, I did call it genocide again; I think we're the only nation that

has done so. Secondly, I did remind people that we're sanctioning leaders, that we have targeted Sudanese companies and individuals, including a rebel leader who have yet to be constructive in the peace process. We're beginning to get a sense that these sanctions are affecting behavior. We're trying to ask others, by the way, to do the same thing, some of whom are reluctant, some who aren't. And then finally, I pledged that we'll help move troops in. And as I also said—you might remind your listeners—that I'm frustrated by the pace.

U.S. Role in Darfur

Mr. Frei. I'll get onto that in a minute, but, I mean, "genocide" is such a loaded—it's such an important word. And you have committed troops, American troops, around the world in other cases, Iraq, most famously, Afghanistan. Why not in this case?

The President. Well, that's a good question. I mean, we're committing equipment, training, help, movement. I think a lot of the folks were concerned about America into another Muslim country. Some of the relief groups here just didn't think the strategy would be as effective as it was. I mean, I actually, believe it or not, listen to people's opinions and chose to make this decision. It's a decision that I'm now living with, and it's a decision that requires us to continue to rally the conscience of the world and get people to focus on the issue.

You know, you're right. I mean, we sent marines into Liberia, for example, to help stabilize the country there. And Liberia's on my itinerary, where I'll meet with the first woman elected President in Africa's history. But I just made the decision I made.

Steven Spielberg/2008 Beijing Olympics/China's Role in Darfur

Mr. Frei. Yesterday Steven Spielberg, the Hollywood director, pulled out of the Beijing Olympics over Darfur. He said the Chinese aren't doing enough to stop the killing in Darfur.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Frei. Do you applaud his move?

The President. That's up to him. I'm going to the Olympics. I view the Olympics as a sporting event. On the other hand, I

have a little different platform than Steven Spielberg, so I get to talk to President Hu Jintao. And I do remind him that he can do more to relieve the suffering in Darfur.

There's a lot of issues that I suspect people are going to opine about during the Olympics. I mean, you got the Dalai Lama crowd; you've got global warming folks; you've got Darfur. And I just—I am not going to go and use the Olympics as an opportunity to express my opinions to the Chinese people in a public way because I do it all the time with the President. I mean, so people are going to be able to choose—pick and choose how they view the Olympics.

U.S. Foreign Policy/War on Terror

Mr. Frei. The Chinese Government has been saying, in part in response to this, that America is trapped in cold war thinking.

The President. Well, I think that's just a brush-back pitch, as we say in baseball. It's a—America is trapped in this notion that we care about human life; we respect human dignity—and that's not a trap; that's a belief—and that many of us in this country recognize that the human condition matters to our own national security.

See, I happen to believe we're in an ideological struggle. And those who murder the innocent to achieve political objectives are evil people, but they have an ideology. And the only way you can recruit for that ideology is to find hopeless folks.

I mean, who wants to join an ideology that say, women don't have rights; you can't express yourself freely; religious beliefs are—the only religious belief you can hold is the one we tell you; and, oh, by the way, it's great; you can be a suicider. Hopeless people are the ones who get attracted by that point of view. And therefore, it's in the world's interest, from a national security perspective, to deal with hopelessness.

And it happens to be in our moral interest. I repeat to you: I believe to whom much is given, much is required. It happens to be a religious notion, but it should be a universal notion as well. And I believe America's soul is enriched, our spirit is enhanced when we help people who suffer.

Rwanda/Darfur

Mr. Frei. I mentioned the genocide thing also because your predecessor, President Clinton, said that the one thing—one of the key things that keeps him up at night is that he didn't do enough over Rwanda to stop the killing there. Is it possible that Darfur might become your Rwanda?

The President. I don't think so. I hope—I certainly hope not. I mean, Rwanda was, I think, 900,000 people in a very quick period of time of just wholesale slaughter. And I appreciate President Clinton's compassion and concern. And I'm comfortable with making a decision that I think is the best decision and comfortable with the notion that once that decision is made, we're keeping the world's focus as best as we can on that, amongst other issues.

Zimbabwe/South Africa

Mr. Frei. You also had some very strong language today about Zimbabwe—

The President. Yes, I did.

Mr. Frei. —which is an issue that certain—Britain and the United States care deeply about. Again, this has been going on for years. What can be done to stop the crisis in Zimbabwe?

The President. Yes, I—first is call the—is to speak to the conscience of the world and remind people the facts. I mean, Zimbabwe was the breadbasket of southern Africa, and today, it's in line for food aid. Zimbabwe was a—is now a place where people are repressed because of their beliefs. And you're right; there is not a lot of outcry. And it's a frustrating—look, not everything is perfect in this world, and it just requires constant focus.

And one way to do it is for the American President to speak out or the British Prime Minister to speak out. And, as you know, I mentioned South Africa. I have great respect for the people of South Africa. I just happen to believe their Government can do more to enhance a free society in their region. Yes, it's just—there's a lot of frustrations in this world, and there's a lot of hope in this world as well.

President's Legacy

Mr. Frei. You're nearing the end of your second term and, I guess, one can call it legacy time. Whatever you do and say about Africa, there's only one country, really, that the wider world will associate with you, and that equation is, Bush equals Iraq.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Frei. Are you happy about that?

The President. Well, I mean, that's what the current elite would like everybody to think about, and that's fine. I think history will have a—when history marches on, there will be a little more objective look about the totality of this administration.

Of course, our change in the way we did aid in Africa is substantial and different, and lives will have been saved. Dealing with liberating 25 million in Afghanistan is part of what I hope people think of when they look at my Presidency. Being the first President to propose a two-state solution on Israel and Palestine—I mean, there's a lot of other issues. And I'm happy with Iraq. The right—the decision to move Saddam Hussein was right, and this democracy is now taking root. And I'm confident that if America does not become isolationist and allow the terrorists to take back over, Iraq will succeed.

U.S. Troop Levels in Iraq

Mr. Frei. Are you—do you regret, rather, I should say, that you didn't listen to your—some of your commanders earlier to send more troops to Iraq to achieve the kind of results that we're seeing now to some extent?

The President. You know, my commanders didn't tell me that early. My commanders said, we got the right level of troops. You know, wars—it's easy to second—the tactical decisions of war, and I fully understand and expect that to happen. All I can do is base decisions on the considered judgment of the experts. And I did. And I take full responsibility for every military decision that's been made in Iraq.

But I'm pleased with what's happening now. And the world is beginning to recognize that the decision to send more troops—was a pretty tough decision at the time—is providing enough security for the politics to take place. And this morning—you're the first reporter I've been able to describe these con-

versations to, but I did speak to the Prime Minister, the Speaker, and two Deputy Speakers to congratulate them on a series of substantial legislative achievements that are beginning to say to the world and, more importantly, the Iraqi people, reconciliation is happening, and the legislative body is beginning to function, which is good news.

U.S. Surveillance Reform Legislation and Interrogation Techniques

Mr. Frei. The Senate yesterday passed a bill outlawing waterboarding. You, I believe, have said that you will veto that bill. Does that not send the wrong signal to the rest of the world?

The President. No, look, that's not the reason I'm vetoing the bill. The reason I'm vetoing the bill—first of all, we have said that whatever we do is for legal—will be legal. Secondly, they are imposing a set of standards on our intelligence communities, in terms of interrogating prisoners, that our people will think will be ineffective.

And to the critics, I ask them this: When we, within the law, interrogate and get information that protects ourselves and possibly others and other nations—to prevent attacks—which attack would they had hoped that we wouldn't have prevented? And so the United States will act within the law, and we'll make sure our professionals have the tools necessary to do their job within the law.

Now, I recognize some say that these terrorists really aren't that big a threat to the United States anymore. I fully disagree. And I think the President must give these professionals, within the law, the necessary tools to protect us. So we're having a debate not only on how you interrogate people; we're having a debate in America on whether or not we ought to be listening to terrorists making phone calls in the United States. And the answer is, darn right we ought to be.

War on Terror/Guantanamo Bay Detainees

Mr. Frei. But given Guantanamo Bay, given also Abu Ghraib, given renditions, does this not send the wrong signal to the world?

The President. It should send the signal that America is going to respect law but is going to take actions necessary to protect

ourselves and find information that may protect others. Unless, of course, people say, “Well, there’s no threat. They’re just making up the threat. These people aren’t problematic.” But I don’t see how you can say that in Great Britain, after people came and blew up bombs in subways. I suspect the families of those victims understand the nature of killers.

And so what people got to understand is, we’ll make decisions based upon law. We’re a nation of law. Take Guantanamo—look, I’d like it to be empty. On the other hand, there’s some people there that need to be tried. And there will be a trial, and they’ll have their day in court, unlike what they did to other people.

No, there’s great concern about—and I can understand this—that these people be given rights, but they’re not willing to grant the same rights to others. They’ll murder, but you got to understand, they’re getting rights. And I’m comfortable with the decisions we’ve made, and I’m comfortable with recognizing this is still a dangerous world.

U.S. Foreign Policy

Mr. Frei. Can you honestly say, Mr. President, that today, America still occupies the moral high ground?

The President. Absolutely. Absolutely. We believe in human rights and human dignity. We believe in the human condition. We believe in freedom. And we’re willing to take the lead; we’re willing to ask nations to do hard things; we’re willing to accept responsibilities. And, yes, no question in my mind, this is a nation that’s a force for good. And history will judge the decisions made during this period of time as necessary decisions. And I firmly believe that we are laying the foundation for peace.

People have written off the Middle East—it’s impossible to have—change the conditions there; let’s just ignore it, or let’s promote stability, which was part of the foreign policy of the past. I chose a different course. Stability didn’t work. Stability created the conditions that were ripe for these terrorists to emerge and recruit. I happen to believe free societies provide hope. And I would hope that people in Europe, for example, understand that freedom has led to peace—and

ought to be supporting the freedom movements and not shy away from the responsibility of the comfortable to help those who long for freedom.

And it’s hard work. It’s really hard work, and it doesn’t happen instantly. You know, we live in a world—like, in all due respect to 24-hour news, we live in a world where everything is, like, instant. But the work we’re doing is—it takes patience, but most importantly, it takes faith in the universality of freedom that exists in every heart.

And so, yes, I’m not only happy to defend decisions; I’m confident that they will lead to a better tomorrow.

Mr. Frei. Mr. President, I gather we’ve run out of time. Thanks for doing this.

The President. Thank you, sir. You bet.

Mr. Frei. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 11:12 a.m. in the Library at the White House for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia; Prime Minister Gordon Brown of the United Kingdom; Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq; and Speaker Mahmud al-Mashhadani, First Deputy Speaker Khalid al-Atiya, and Second Deputy Speaker Arif Tayfur of the Iraqi House of Representatives. He also referred to H.R. 2082. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 15.

Interview With Foreign Radio Journalists

February 14, 2008

The President. Thank you all. Just a couple of comments. I’m very much looking forward to the trip. This will be my second trip to the continent of Africa, my wife’s fifth trip. The reason why I’m looking forward to it is I want the people on the continent of Africa to know that the American people care deeply about the human condition; that when we see suffering, it troubles our conscience, and we want to help. I believe to whom much is given, much is required. A lot has been given to America, and therefore, a lot is required of us to deal with human misery in the form of hunger and disease and hopelessness.

And so this is going to be a trip that I bring the good will of American people, with

a strategy to help nations deal with the problems they have. I appreciate the leadership on the continent of Africa, and I'm looking forward to working with the leaders there as partners in solving some of the problems that I believe can be solved.

And so thank you for coming. I'd be glad to answer questions.

Democracy in Benin/U.S. Foreign Policy in Benin

Q. I'm Jean Jonas from Benin.

The President. Yes, sir. First up.

Q. Well, people from my country are very delighted to welcome you on Saturday. And I wish to say what they are expecting from you and from America. You, President Bush, have said that the best way we can build a peaceful world for the future is to share the principle of freedom with other nations. I took this from the U.S. Government site—this is a word I appreciate. But we highly appreciate how your Government fight poverty and encourage growth building. But we would like all this take place in a perfectly democratic context. What will be the implication of your trip to Benin, in terms of guaranteeing a perfect democracy for building hope and prosperity?

The President. Democracy is a commitment by government and by people. The people of Benin have committed to democracy. However, to achieve a perfect democracy is very difficult. In my country, we're a great democracy. We were imperfect. After all, we enslaved people. And democracy is work and requires a lot of work. And it requires support from—to help leaders deal with everyday problems.

One such problem in Benin is malaria. Your President has made a strong commitment to help eradicate malaria. Today in a speech that inaugurated my trip—or kicked off my trip, I talked about your President's commitment to provide nets to every child 5 and under. That's a strong commitment. We have got what's called Millennium Challenge Account programs. These are significant aid programs, but they're given to countries that adhere to rule of law and fight corruption and invest in the health and education of their people.

This is a different type of foreign policy. It's a different type of foreign aid. Foreign aid in the past was just, here, take and spend. This is foreign policy that reinforces the conditions necessary for just and peaceful societies to develop. And Benin is such a country. And so I'm looking forward to confirming our desire to help and reinforcing the President's desire to achieve a democracy in which people have got confidence.

Yes, ma'am, Yvonne.

U.S. Foreign Policy in Africa

Q. I'm Yvonne from Tanzania. I was happy to hear about you congratulating President Kikwete, calling him a good guy, because I agree he's a good guy as well. *[Laughter]*

The President. Well, actually, that's just Texas vernacular, you know, it's not a very—*[laughter]*—it's not diplomatic talk, but, you know—*[laughter]*—he is a good guy.

Q. He's a good guy, yes, and we're happy to receive the MCC money, which we're about to receive when you come down to Tanzania. Now my question is that Tanzania is among 15 countries that have benefited from the U.S. initiative on HIV/AIDS, PEPFAR program, as well as the malaria initiative. But being an undeveloped country, while—would expect that to see more assistance in terms of helping poor countries such as Tanzania develop economically.

So I'd like to know, as you're winding your term in office, what commitment has America made to ensure that developing countries such as Tanzania is assisted in terms of trade and development issues and private sector development as well?

The President. That's good. First of all, just in general, our commitment to the continent of Africa was doubled when I first came into office, and then when I got—started my second term, doubled again.

Secondly, I do agree that the most substantive way to help any developing nation is through the development of commerce and wealth as a result of growing industry and businesses, both small and large. And the best way to foster that is through trade. And that's why AGOA, passed by my predecessor, reauthorized during my Presidency, is a great source of hope for people on the

continent of Africa because they now have a market in which to sell.

Today in my speech, I talked about this statistic: Exports to the United States from the continent of Africa, sub-Saharan Africa, have tripled. Exports from the United States to sub-Saharan Africa have doubled. In other words, this trade has been good. One way to firm up the commitment to make sure that our Nation remains nonprotectionist—in other words, a free trading nation—is to complete the Doha round. That's a difficult set of negotiations. The United States has made it clear that we will reduce our agricultural subsidies, but in return, we expect other developed nations—and developing—large developing nations—to also reduce their tariffs and subsidies so that I can come to the Congress and say, here's an agreement that is fair for everybody.

And so the other thing we can do is—so, our assistance aid, by the way, is helping—in some cases helps business. One way to do that is through OPIC. And I announced today a new multimillion dollar—hundreds of millions of dollars of OPIC-type investment funds that will be available for African businesses.

What's interesting is, capital inflows into Africa now exceed grants, development aid. And that's important because capital inflows means jobs and commerce and hope and small businesses. So our plan is a plan that hopefully will sustain the gains that have been made. It's not like a one-time shot. It's got structural implications.

The other thing is, is that you can't have a hopeful economy if your people can't read. And so education is a vital link to providing hope. And we've got a strong education initiative on the continent—and started early in my administration; we're following through on it. We're trying to get, I think, like, 12 million textbooks and train 900,000 teachers and provide scholarships to 550,000 girls, all aiming to provide a basis by which these investments and these capital flows will actually be able to take hold—and that is an educated workforce, an educated population.

Albert.

Millennium Challenge Grants/ Democracy in Africa

Q. Mr. President—

The President. You're living in Rwanda now?

Q. Yes, I do.

The President. Good.

Q. And I hope I'll be there before you reach, so I can welcome you.

The President. Thank you, sir.

Q. You somehow already replied to the question I wanted to ask you, but I can maybe define it a bit more. It is clear that the increase of support of your administration—your two mandates—increased a lot. And don't you think the U.S. should maybe also develop a higher level political strategy on Africa, that would benefit the U.S. and Africa?

The President. That's a very interesting question. A couple of approaches to aid in the past; one was, "We're feeling terrible for you. Here's money," and not much asked in return. The other approach oftentimes has been, "You've got resources; we want them. We'll exploit them and leave behind something that really doesn't benefit the people." I know those are extreme cases, but nevertheless, if you really think about the history of supporting Africa, it's one way to characterize how things were approached. Some of it had to do with the guilt of colonialism; some of it had to do with just the gluttony of need for raw materials. In either case, it didn't work.

So we've taken this approach that said we will invest in countries where leadership has made a firm commitment to some basic principles: rule of law; fighting corruption; investment in people through health and education programs; and adherence to the marketplace. Nations that have received Millennium Challenge grants have met a test. In other words, there is a criterion to qualify for the money.

What's happening, Albert, is that other nations desirous of a Millennium Challenge grant ask, "What did you do to get your grant," to other leaders. And so the habits of a just society become an integral part of the receiving of help. We're more than willing to help, but in this case, we're saying the help has got to be to reinforce those decisions by leaders that'll have a long-lasting impact

toward a free society. There's nothing more debilitating to a society than corruption. If the people think that the leadership is there to enrich themselves, they'll have no trust in government. There will be no trust in form of—any form of government.

And so one of the criterion for Millennium Challenge is honesty. We want the leadership and government to be honest with the people. And when we first put out—when I first put out this initiative, I was criticized by some. That's just part of the job, evidently. And it was, "How dare you insist upon conditions for your aid." And my answer is, how can we not? Shouldn't we expect good leadership? Shouldn't we have faith in people from a different part of the world demanding the same things that we expect of our Government?

The answer is, absolutely we should hold people up to a high standard. Absolutely we should expect leaders to adhere to some basic principle. And absolutely we should trust people to want to live in a free society.

And so we changed the policy. Not only did we have a more robust approach to the issues facing Africans than ever before in our Nation's history, by a significant amount, but we have a strategy to do just what you asked. How do we make sure that a free society is lasting, that it's not just a moment—you know, let's just do what old George wants us to do, and then he'll go away and then societies can revert back its norm. And so we have—there's a constant evaluation of results based upon high standards.

Edwin. How are you?

U.S. Role in Africa

Q. Thank you very much. I'm fine.

The President. Yes, good, me too.

Q. Mr. President, I'm impressed by your policy statement on Africa today.

The President. Were you listening?

Q. Yes, for the—yes.

The President. You were the only people in this room; the rest of them fell asleep back there. *[Laughter]*

Q. But just what I've from the—what I've listened to here now, I'm mostly impressed; it's quite encouraging. But I just want to know, what is the motivating factor for the increasing interest in Africa?

The President. Why?

Q. The motivating factor of the interest in Africa. Well, somebody may say it's the new oil finds or the fight against terrorism or we want to promote democracy.

The President. Yes. A couple of things, Edwin; first of all, my passion toward Africa has been sustained throughout 7 years. In other words, my speech today, if you listened carefully to it, indicated a strategy that was first adopted early in my administration.

Secondly, there are two reasons why. Now, one, conditions of life overseas matters to the security of the United States. In other words, if there's hopelessness, then it's liable that extremists who are recruiting people to create havoc not only in their respective countries or neighborhoods but also in our country—if there's hopelessness, they have a better chance to recruit. So it's in our national security interest, Edwin, that we deal with the conditions that enable ideologues—the ideologues of hate to recruit.

Remember that the ideology that is prevalent, that uses murder as a weapon, cannot recruit in hopeful places. I mean, who would want to follow somebody that says, "Follow me. My vision is—if you're a female, follow me. My vision is, you have no rights"? Or, "If you disagree with my religious interpretations, you'll be whipped in the public square." So it's in our national interests.

Equally, if not more important, it is in our moral interests that we help people. I firmly believe—as I said earlier, I firmly believe in the admonition that to whom much is given, much is required. I believe that is a principle by which people should make decisions in their individual lives and for the collective conscience of the United States. It is in our moral interest that we help a brother and sister who's dying of AIDS. And by helping that soul, it really helps ourselves.

America's generosity has been prevalent throughout the decades. And every time America reaches out to help a struggling soul, we find that we're a better nation for it. And so my interest and my focus and my insistence upon results on the continent of Africa are based on those two premises.

The other thing, Edwin, I will tell you is that I've got a lot of resources—or we have a lot of resources at our disposal. And the

idea of an entire generation of people dying because of HIV/AIDS troubled my heart. And I felt like America could do something about it. Fifty thousand people were receiving antiretroviral drugs when we first started PEPFAR. Today, 1,300,000 people are receiving antiretrovirals in a very short period of time.

And it's not enough. It's just a beginning. And so you say, "Why, Mr. President, do you feel that way?" It's because I couldn't live with myself if I didn't develop an effective strategy and call upon the American people to help. And the good news is, the American people have responded—\$15 billion over 5. We're now going to double our commitment.

Equally important, other nations have stepped up. The G-8 has committed to match the U.S. So all of a sudden, the strategy—and most of these strategies, Edwin, are really based upon—oftentimes when you see human suffering, it's based upon something that affects your heart. And so that's why I've made the decisions I made.

Patience. You've been very patient so far.

Liberian Refugees in the U.S.

Q. Well, Mr. President, I would like to thank you for considering Liberia as one of the countries you are going to be visiting this time.

The President. Yes, ma'am.

Q. And the Government and the people of Liberia do appreciate all that you've done for us. Now, Mr. President, last year, your administration extended by 1 year the temporary protective status of hundreds of Liberians. Now what happens when you leave office?

The President. Yes.

Q. Is your Government considering anything permanent for them, like what most host countries did for Liberian refugees, integrating them locally, those who wanted to stay. And those who wanted to go back home, taking them back home? Because this might—it will definitely allow these Liberians to continue to contribute to the growth of the economy of the country and also support their families back home.

The President. Interesting; yes, thank you for that. I did extend TPS to Liberians here in America for, I think, 18 months. And there

are no plans to make it permanent. I would hope that many of the Liberians who have come and been fine contributors here in America think about going home to help this young country get on its feet after unspeakable violence and terrible times.

You've got a great President, in my judgment. I gave her the National Medal of Freedom. After all, she's the first woman President on the continent of Africa. And she—you know, in my speech today, I said, Africa's greatest resource is not oils or diamonds or rubber; it's really people.

And so, my hope, of course, is that people that have been here trying to save themselves from the violence go help this young—not young, but this country get back on its feet.

Donaig.

Darfur and Chad

Q. Mr. President—

The President. What kind of name is that, Donaig?

Q. Actually, I'm French, but it's a Celtic name.

The President. Really?

Q. Yes.

The President. That's a pretty name.

Q. The situation in Darfur has always been a matter of great concern for you. U.N. officials say that the situation on the ground has been worsening over the last few days. There's also been very heavy fighting in Chad. Do you think there's a link between the two, between Darfur and Chad?

The President. I do, yes.

Q. And where do we go from there?

The President. I appreciate that. I do think there's a link, first of all, and I think that—let me just step back and say that the United States has called the situation in Darfur a genocide. And I made a decision early on that we would work through the United Nations to help expedite troops that would help alleviate the suffering and provide some breathing space, hopefully, for the negotiations between rebel groups and the Government.

Unfortunately, the rebel groups that were one time three, are now a multiple of three. And unfortunately, a government that could have made a difference early on in Khartoum chose not to do so.

So the United States continues to work with the international community to put pressure on the Sudanese Government. I have issued very harsh sanctions against individuals and Sudanese companies. I also did so against at least one rebel leader I'm aware of, because I wanted to send a signal that your behavior is causing there to be some consequences. We're continually working with other nations to get them to take the same tough approach—nations throughout the world. Some are reluctant to move; some are anxious to help.

In terms of the conditions on the ground, one thing the United States has done is we're providing enormous amounts of aid and, obviously, are concerned as to whether or not that aid makes it into the camps.

Secondly is, I have told the folks at the United Nations that we would provide training and equipment to expedite the movement of troops. The question is, will the troops show up? One way I can help call the world to action is when I'm in Rwanda to thank the troops of Rwanda, the Kagame Government, for being so proactive.

I'm frustrated by the pace of development on the ground. I am not pleased that other nations—some other nations don't take necessary steps to pressure the Government. I am—I've named another Envoy to the Sudan, whose job it is to really help bring a negotiating framework that will work.

And again, I'll repeat to you, one of the unfortunate issues has been that the rebel groups have gone from 3 to more than 10—12, I think it is, or 18, if I'm not mistaken. And there needs to be the U.S. and others to pull the groups together so that there is somebody to negotiate with—that can speak with—more likely with a unified voice.

And I do believe that the instability in Darfur affects Chad and French interests. And I do thank the Sarkozy Government for being a responsible nation, rallying EU forces to come and provide some help.

And it's a very unfortunate, sad situation that is frustrating. And on the other hand, there are some hopeful moments, such as the fact that many in the world are providing help for the people in the camps. The problem is the people who are in the camps. And

obviously, we'd like them to get back to their villages.

Scott.

Zimbabwe

Q. In your first trip to Africa, you embraced President Mbeki as the honest broker in Zimbabwe. It looks like President Mugabe is a month away from being reelected. So, what now?

The President. Well, obviously, we're disappointed that the situation in Zimbabwe since my first trip has gotten worse. And it's very important for people to recognize types of government can affect the well-being and welfare of a country. Zimbabwe used to be a net exporter of food. Today, it is a net importer of food. Mr. Mugabe has ruined a country, and we have—we and, frankly, Great Britain have been the most vociferous advocates for change, and we still are advocates for change.

I was hoping that the South African Government would have been more proactive in its intercession to help the people of Zimbabwe. It's not anti-anybody; it's pro-people, and that has yet to happen, admittedly.

One more round here real quick. Yes, Jean.

U.S. Trade With Africa

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Is that "Jean?"

Q. Jean Jonas. I will—

The President. Like they say "Juan"—[laughter]—where I'm from?

Q. Mr. President, I will recommend you, during your short visit to my country, to have a taste in our juicy, tasty, and nicely perfumed pineapples.

The President. Pineapples.

Q. Yes. And then you will figure out that it will be an opportunity for all the American people to have a taste—[inaudible].

The President. Yes, that's a smart move. That's good marketing. [Laughter] It's called a taste test. [Laughter]

Q. But, yet, my country does not benefit much from—

The President. From AGOA?

Q. Yes.

The President. Why? Because fruits are not a part of the AGOA——

Administration official. Pineapples can be imported under AGOA.

The President. So then what we're going to have to do is, I'm going to have to talk to your President and point out the opportunities that pineapples are a part of the AGOA trade list that can enter into the United States relatively duty free.

Q. Yes, but apart from the pineapple, we have so many things and so many products that can profit from the AGOA but do not——

The President. You need some export credit—I mean, not export credit, you need some help in developing industries that know how to export. Yes, I'll be glad to talk to the President about that. There are several ways the U.S. can help. Some grant money that encourages people to learn how to be an exporting company, microloans can also help. And so can OPIC, which is a way for people to get the capital necessary to be able to develop an infrastructure so that they can take the pineapple from the field, do whatever you're supposed to do, put it in a crate and ship it to the United States for sale—if you know how to market.

In other words, this is a—and so, yes, we'd like to help enterprise. The whole purpose of our strategy, which is commerce, is much more effective than aid to governments. It's got a more lasting impact. And one of the things I'm going to do in Ghana is visit entrepreneurs that are taking advantage of marketplace access. And I'm confident I'm going to hear from leaders in the region saying, "That's fine; you're talking about nice things, and we like AGOA, but you've got to do something about your agriculture, because it provides a distinct disadvantage for our farmers."

And my answer is going to be, we're more than willing to do so, but we expect other partners in the world to do the same thing. We expect there to be fairness. And this is a tough issue to get all countries to agree to have equity when it comes to reducing our respective subsidies and tariffs, including African nations.

One of the things I point up to African leaders—point out to African leaders is that

oftentimes it is virtually impossible to ship goods from one African country to the next because there are high intra-Africa tariffs and barriers to trade. And so it's a—trade is complicated, and we just want to be treated fairly in America. In order to get something passed, it has to be viewed as a fair and equitable transaction, and I believe we can achieve such a thing. I'm looking forward to that pineapple. [Laughter]

Yvonne.

Government Corruption/Millennium Challenge Corporation

Q. Mr. President, your Government has been supporting Tanzania address the issue of corruption as well as good governance through the MCC initiative and through the Threshold Program. And it is now been eligible to receive the funds, but what's going to happen once you step down to make sure what is being done—to make sure that it's going to be sustainable——

The President. That's a good question.

Q. ——it won't end with you.

The President. You're right; my Presidency does end. And that's one of the great things about American democracy: There will be a peaceful transfer of power. And yet I'm hopeful that we leave behind an institution such as the Millennium Challenge Corporation, which has a monitoring device that will more likely assure the people of Tanzania that today's anticorruption measures are for real and lasting.

It's a very interesting question. I mean, you know, today's concern about corruption may not be tomorrow's. I suspect any American President is going to be worried about corruption, particularly since we've changed how aid is granted in the first place. And so the fact that the Millennium Challenge exists will make it more likely future administrations will ask the very same questions we've asked.

Albert.

Democratic Republic of the Congo/Rwanda

Q. Mr. President——

The President. Your thing turned off there, by the way, Yvonne. It clicked off. I

think yours did. Anyway, far be it for me to interfere with your—

Q. Mr. President, you will see when you visit Rwanda that 14 years later, after the genocide, Rwanda has incredibly developed. But for development in Rwanda, one of the things that are key—that is key is security. And when you started your first mandate, there was already a threat, and 8 years later, the threat is still there, Mr. President. What do you forecast for the future?

The President. I presume you're referring to those groups that exist—

Q. FDLR.

The President. —in your neighbor.

Q. Yes. And which are even listed as terrorist organizations, even by the U.S.

The President. Right, right, right, right; we're working with President Kabila on a disarmament program. We've been very engaged diplomatically in the eastern part of the Congo. I've talked to him about this personally. Our diplomats out of the State Department and on the ground are very actively engaged in getting people to honor the agreement. And I fully understand the issue and the concerns.

Q. Because we don't want to be dragged again—

The President. Back into the—no, no question. First of all, the amazing thing is, is that the recovery of your country. And I'm really looking forward to going. President Kagame has been a very strong leader in the right sense of the word. To be able to come from where you were to where you are today is pretty remarkable. I think I said Rwanda is one of the fastest growing economies in the world, if I'm not mistaken. Now, obviously that's really good news, and, of course, one of the things that's going to matter is that the people benefit from that economic vitality and growth.

But you're right, it's one of the ongoing issues that I talked about in my speech today, and the reason I did so is I wanted the President and the people of Rwanda to know that we understand the seriousness of this issue; that nobody wants a replay of a very difficult—very terrible period in your history.

Edwin.

Africa-U.S. Relations/Trade

Q. Yes, Mr. President, your planned visit to Africa shows that the continent has become important to you and your country. Well, that's why the administration has set up AFRICOM for development but not for war—

The President. Africa for development but not for war.

Q. War, war fighting, and then the AGOA, Millennium Challenge Account, all for development—but to the ordinary African, he or she can see these things clearly or feel the impact well, maybe because of the gravity of the situation or poverty. And one way you made mention of it is to trade, not just aid. But we have problem with the African culture produced cotton and all that, because of the subsidies here, the effects are depressed prices back in Africa. What's official—what are you doing to solve this problem of subsidies? Is delicate issue.

The President. Well, thank you. First of all, if you're a mother who's worried about a child dying of malaria, and you see a net provided by an American child, then all of a sudden, the—you get a direct connection between the hearts of Americans and your life. So in other words, you asked me whether—how does the average person sometimes feel the effects of American commitment to the continent?

And my answer to you—and I'll answer the subsidy thing—but my answer to you is, first of all, it's a very important question, because oftentimes, years ago, aid would never make it beyond the palaces. They would kind of end up in a handful of people's pockets. And our program, Edwin, is really aimed at focusing on individuals. If you believe every human life has dignity, therefore, your programs ought to reflect that concept. And the way you do that is you make sure that the aid gets to the people. In this case, we're focusing on problems that affect the people most directly.

And so, at Christmas, I got a—a couple years ago, I got nets given in my name or in Laura's name to families on the continent of Africa. I'll never know who they were, and they probably don't know who I am, but the idea that an American family decided to spend money on a Christmas gift aimed at

helping a stranger is really an important part of an effective foreign aid policy.

Secondly, our AIDS initiative works very closely with the leaders to design programs that meet the needs of the country—not meet our needs but meet your needs. But the other thing that comes with the AIDS program is a great outpouring of faith-based groups from America. There are thousands of my citizens, Edwin, that would—that long to spend time in parts of Africa delivering help to a total stranger. Other countries—I'm sure that happens, but I happen to say that this is the greatest strength of America.

And so there will be hopefully somebody in a village in Ghana that runs into one of these missionaries on a mission of love, that will see the direct help of an AIDS program or a malaria program and education benefits. It may not be that somebody recognizes that a teacher has been trained by U.S. dollars, but our policy is to—we're more focused on the person learning. Maybe there will be a benefit to the United States, a direct benefit, where somebody says, wow, this is great; America did this. On the other hand, our focus is more on making sure that the child learns to read in the first place, because our overall objective is a hopeful society and a peaceful society.

To subsidies—I fully understand the angst about the leadership—by the leadership on U.S. subsidies. And I've said I'm more than willing to—on the Doha round—by the most effective place—first of all, AGOA has helped address that to a certain extent. One way it has—because it's opened up markets. On the other hand, it has not made your farmers feel more comfortable because of the—in their view, that the United States farming is not only efficient, but there's a subsidy to make it even more competitive. I understand that.

In order to deal with this issue, however, there has to be full reciprocity by developing—large developing and developed nations. In other words, the United States farmer is willing to take less of a subsidy if his—can be assured that his product will get a fair hearing in somebody else's market—particularly those that can afford to buy crops on a large scale—and that's not the case. Same thing if we reduce our subsidies on

agriculture; we expect other nations to be more opening to manufactured goods and services.

And it's a very complex issue, but it's one that we're trying to work through. And hopefully, if we can get a successful Doha round, your very question will be answered in a way that is hopeful to the farmers there in Ghana.

Patience. Patience, where were you educated? I know I'm not supposed to be asking questions, but—[laughter].

Growth of Liberia

Q. Some part of my education was in Nigeria.

The President. Oh, really? Interesting.

Q. Yes. Well, sir—

The President. Are you living—

Q. I'm living in Liberia right now.

The President. Are you? Good. How's it going?

Q. Good.

The President. Is the capital, like, improving—

Q. Well, we're sort of, like, accelerating—

The President. This is off the record, right? [Laughter]

Q. —road construction work, so you can have a safe—

The President. Well, you don't need to worry about me. [Laughter]

Q. We're rushing up everything so you can—

The President. You're building things because of my arrival? Maybe I ought to come every other month. [Laughter]

Q. Okay. [Laughter]

The President. Is there noticeable construction now—

Q. Yes.

The President. —besides my trip?

Q. Yes. Yes. From 2003 to date, there has been an increase in road construction. We've got infrastructure—

The President. Can you see it; a big difference?

Q. Yes, you can. Yes, you can.

The President. Are people feeling safer?

Q. Yes. People are feeling safer. Those on the ground are feeling safer.

The President. Particularly in the city?

Q. But, like, for Liberians here in America—I have been talking to most of them—for them to go back home and join in this young democracy.

The President. Thank you.

Security Situation in Africa

Q. And some of the things they've been saying is the security. And some of them went back, after the first bout of war and were forced to come back. Now they keep saying security, and each time, I say, we have the U.N. mission down there. But right now the U.N. mission is gradually drawing down faces.

Now, will your Government consider establishing AFRICOM in Liberia, which would consolidate security there? You know, like a couple of the subregions bring in investment into Liberia, which is what mostly Liberia needs right now.

The President. First of all, AFRICOM is a brand new concept aimed at strengthening nations' capacities to deal with trafficking or terror, but also to help nations develop forces capable of doing the peacekeeping that unfortunately too often is needed on the continent.

Secondly, we are in the process of evaluating exactly how AFRICOM will work. Now, because it's a new concept, it was a brand new military-type command—and, by the way, it's going to be more than just military; there will be a State Department component with it, which makes it a very interesting issue. And so we're in the process of determining where and how AFRICOM should be situated on the continent. I'm not avoiding—I guess I'm avoiding your answer, but I don't mean to be avoiding it. I'm just telling you exactly where we are in the process.

And obviously, if there is going to be a physical presence on the continent of Africa in the forms of a headquarters that you just described, obviously we would seriously consider Liberia. Liberia is a friend. The President has made it abundantly clear to me that she would like us to seriously consider Liberia, and I have told her I would.

I just want to make sure people understand that the makeup and the construct of AFRICOM is still really being thought through, because, as I mentioned to you, this

is not—I mean, when you think of, you know, U.S. command structures, you think military, which is fine. But this is a different military mission than Central Command, for example. And as I told you, there's going to be a strong State Department component with it, and we're in the process of making sure we understand what that integration means and then evaluating if and where the facilities will be built. It's on my radar screen.

Donaig.

Kenya's Presidential Election

Q. About Kenya, Mr. President, there's been a month-and-a-half now of continuous ethnic violence. Who won this election, and what should be done to stop this violence?

The President. Yes. I don't think we can say we're certain to who won the election. That's part of the problem. Secondly, there is a way forward, which is for the parties to come together in good faith and work out a way forward until there are new elections, the date of which would be determined by the parties.

I don't think the United States ought to go in, or anybody else, to say, "You must have an election now." But I do think we can go in and help Kofi Annan convince the parties to work together in a cooperative way so that the people can see there's a way forward. And to this end, when I'm in Rwanda, I'm going to ask Condi to go over to Kenya and sit down with the leaders in Kenya to see if we can't help Kofi advance the—Kofi Annan advance the way forward.

Situation in the Horn of Africa

Q. One of the U.S. counterterrorism efforts in Africa has centered on the Horn. Any concern about the continuing instability in Somalia and, again, worsening relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea, the impact that that has not only on stability on the Horn but counterterrorism efforts?

The President. Yes, we're concerned about instability anywhere, really, but instability is what—and confusion and chaos and fear is the conditions under which a group like Al Qaida can thrive. That's why they like to kill people, innocent people, to create doubt about existing security, to create fear among the population. So any time you see

that kind of instability, we're deeply concerned about it.

Secondly, there have been Al Qaida—some Al Qaida operating out of Somalia, and therefore, when you know some Al Qaida have been in and out of Somalia and there is some chaos and confusion, the conclusion is, we better be worried about it and do something about it. And we are. We've got cooperative arrangements in the region that will make it more likely for us to be able to provide protections for the people in the region and ourself.

In terms of—yes, and we're also conscious of Ethiopia and Eritrea's border dispute. And I'm constantly talking to Condi about making sure that we're on top of the situation as the best we can make a positive contribution. I feel pretty comfortable that the State Department and our Embassies are fully aware of the issues on the border and are making sure that the respective leaders understand the position of the U.S., which is to solve this thing through mediation and not stack up the troops to the point where they get—where some spark ignites some kind of border dispute.

But the Horn is an area of deep concern for the U.S. We actually happen to have a base there as well, in Djibouti. And we take the issues there seriously and are very engaged with it on a regular basis.

Okay, here's what we're going to do: We'll get a picture, unless you don't want one. *[Laughter]*

NOTE: The interview began at 1:18 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to President Thomas Yayi Boni of Benin; President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete of Tanzania; President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia; President Paul Kagame of Rwanda; U.S. Special Envoy to Sudan Richard S. Williamson; President Nicolas Sarkozy of France; President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe; President John Agyekum Kufuor of Ghana; President Joseph Kabila of the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and former Secretary-General Kofi Annan of the United Nations. A reporter referred to President Thabo Mvuyelwa Mbeki of South Africa. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 15. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Memorandum on Assignment of Function Regarding Medicare Funding

February 14, 2008

Memorandum for the Secretary of Health and Human Services

Subject: Assignment of Function Regarding Medicare Funding

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 301 of title 3, United States Code, you are directed to perform the function of the President as described under section 802 of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-173, 31 U.S.C. 1105(h) (1)).

You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:44 a.m., February 15, 2008]

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 15, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on February 19.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Congressional Leaders

February 15, 2008

This morning I spoke to the president of Northern Illinois University. I told the president that a lot of folks today will be praying for the families of the victims and for the Northern Illinois University community. Obviously a tragic situation on that campus, and I ask our fellow citizens to offer their blessings, blessings of comfort and blessings of strength.

We also just discussed a serious problem facing our country, and that is the fact that House leaders blocked a good piece of legislation that would give our intelligence community the tools they need to protect America from a terrorist attack.

The American citizens must understand—clearly understand that there is still a threat on the homeland, there's still an enemy

which would like to do us harm, and that we've got to give our professionals the tools they need to be able to figure out what the enemy is up to so that we can stop it.

The Senate passed a good bipartisan bill that makes sure our intelligence community has the tools necessary to protect America from this real threat. And I want to thank you all and thank the Democrats in the United States Senate who worked closely with Mitch and John to get a strong piece of legislation, with a 68-vote majority, out of the Senate.

And this bill comes to the House of Representatives, and it was blocked. And by blocking this piece of legislation, our country is more in danger of an attack. By not giving the professionals the tools they need, it's going to be a lot harder to do the job we need to be able to defend America.

People say, "Oh, it doesn't matter if this law hasn't been renewed." It does matter; it matters for a variety of reasons. It matters because the intelligence officials won't have tools necessary to get as much information as we possibly can to protect you. And it matters because these telephone companies that work collaboratively with us to protect the American people are afraid they're going to get sued. And the American people have got to understand, these lawsuits make it harder for us to convince people to help protect you. And so by blocking this good piece of legislation, our professionals tell me that they don't have all the tools they need to do their job.

And so now the House and Senate are off on a 12-day recess without getting the people's business done. And when they come back from that 12-day recess, the House leaders must understand that the decision they made to block good legislation has made it harder for us to protect you, the American people, and we expect them to get a good bill to my desk—which is the Senate bill—as soon as possible.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:55 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to John G. Peters, president, Northern Illinois University. He also referred to H.R. 3773.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon of the United Nations

February 15, 2008

President Bush. Mr. Secretary-General, welcome back to the White House. Thank you for your efforts to make the United Nations a constructive force for good.

I appreciate your tireless work to help solve some of the real humanitarian crises that we face, such as the crises in Sudan, the issues in Burma. I appreciate very much your leadership when it came to Kenya, and thank you for going to support former Secretary-General Annan.

I thank you very much for the leadership that you've shown in Iraq. This young democracy is beginning to gain confidence and make progress, and the U.N. mission there has been very constructive.

I appreciate very much your desire to help the poor and feed the hungry. And on my trip to Africa this week, that's exactly the same message I'll be taking, that the American people are a compassionate people and a decent people who want to help moms with—deal with malaria or families deal with HIV/AIDS, the need to feed the hungry.

So I'm honored you're here. I appreciate your vision. And thank you for your leadership and your friendship.

Secretary-General Ban. Thank you very much. Thank you very much, Mr. President and ladies and gentlemen. Thank you very much for your warm welcome and strong support you have shown me during last 1 year while I was carrying out my duty as Secretary-General. It has been instrumental and very much appreciated.

I've been trying my best to make United Nations more trust-proof, transparent, and accountable and more effective organization. This effort will continue. At the same time, with your strong support and international community, I've been doing my best to address all these regional country issues, starting from the situation in Darfur, Lebanon, Myanmar, and also Kenya. There are so many problems that challenge at this time. I'm committed to address these issues.

At the same time, I've been able to again raise awareness and the political will in addressing global challenges such as climate change. And I need your strong support as we are going through this year, a midpoint year, to realize Millennium Development Goals by 2015. We are going to focus on food situation and agriculture, education, health, and all this, statistical systems, infrastructure of Africa.

In that regard, your visit to African states at this time will be very important and historic. I hope you will be able to discuss with African leaders on how to realize this Millennium Development Goals, how to help people overcome abject poverty and sanitation, access to educational opportunities.

In that regard, I wish you all the best, that this is a very great opportunities. And it would be also very much important for international community to sustain the momentum established in Bali December last year in climate change. I'm going to build up on this Bali roadmap so that we will be able to achieve this globally accepted framework, replacing this Kyoto Protocol.

The United States is the country with the most innovative for technology and financing capacities. I count on your leadership and active participation. I do appreciate your constructive engagement in this, starting from high-level meeting September last year and the major economies meeting in September in Washington and in Honolulu this year. I count on your leadership.

All in all, I need your strong support, because I believe a stronger partnership between the United Nations and United States is the crucial, the important element in carrying out this—my duty as Secretary-General and also making United Nations organization more strengthened in carrying out common challenges we share together.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

President Bush. Thank you, sir. Yes, thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:09 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Executive Order 13461—Providing an Order of Succession Within the Department of Health and Human Services

February 15, 2008

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, 5 U.S.C. 3345 *et seq.*, it is hereby ordered that:

Section 1. Subject to the provisions of section 3 of this order, the officers named in section 2, in the order listed, shall act as and perform the functions and duties of the Office of the Secretary of Health and Human Services (Secretary), if they are eligible to act as Secretary under the provisions of the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, during any period in which the Secretary has died, resigned, or become otherwise unable to perform the functions and duties of the office of Secretary.

Sec. 2. Order of Succession.

- (a) Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services;
- (b) General Counsel of the Department of Health and Human Services;
- (c) Assistant Secretary (Resources and Technology);
- (d) Assistant Secretary (Planning and Evaluation);
- (e) Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services;
- (f) Commissioner of Food and Drugs;
- (g) Director of the National Institutes of Health;
- (h) Assistant Secretary for Family Support;
- (i) Other Assistant Secretaries of the Department of Health and Human Services appointed by the President, in the order in which they shall have taken the oath of office as such;
- (j) Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and
- (k) Director, Region 4.

Sec. 3. Exceptions.

- (a) No individual who is serving in an office listed in section 2 of this order in an acting capacity, by virtue of so serving, shall act as Secretary pursuant to this order.

(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of this order, the President retains discretion, consistent with the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, to depart from this order in designating an acting Secretary.

Sec. 4. Revocation. Executive Order 13250 of December 28, 2001 (Providing An Order of Succession Within the Department of Health and Human Services), and the President's memorandum of March 19, 2002 (Designation of Officers of the Department of Health and Human Services), are hereby revoked.

George W. Bush

The White House,
February 15, 2008.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:50 a.m., February 19, 2008]

NOTE: This Executive order will be published in the *Federal Register* on February 20.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

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.

February 9

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

February 10

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

February 11

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had separate telephone conversations with Annette Lantos, wife of Representative Thomas P. Lantos, and Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi to express his condolences for the death of Representative Lantos. Then, in the National Security Adviser's office, he dropped by a meeting between National Se-

curity Adviser Stephen J. Hadley and Prime Minister Salam Fayyad of the Palestinian Authority.

The White House announced that the President will meet with United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the White House on February 15.

February 12

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, at the historic Evermay house, the President attended a Republican National Committee luncheon.

During the day, in the Roosevelt Room, the President attended National Security Adviser Stephen J. Hadley's meeting with the Helping to Enhance the Livelihood of People (HELP) Around the Globe Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Peter E. Cianchette to be Ambassador to Costa Rica.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jeffrey Robert Brown to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund as well as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund.

The President announced his intention to nominate the following individuals to be members of the National Institute for Literacy Advisory Board: Perri Klass; Katherine Mitchell; Eduardo J. Padron; Alexa E. Posny; Timothy Shanahan; and Richard Kenneth Wagner.

The President announced his intention to nominate Hyepin Christine Im and Layshae Ward to be members of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

February 13

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

February 14

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had separate telephone conversations with Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq and Speaker Mahmud al-Mashhadani, First Deputy Speaker Khalid

al-Atiya, and Second Deputy Speaker Arif Tayfur of the Iraqi House of Representatives.

In the evening, in the Blue Room, the President and Mrs. Bush hosted a Valentine's Day social dinner followed by a performance in the East Room by entertainer Denise Thimes.

The President announced his intention to nominate Stephen J. Nolan to be Ambassador to Botswana.

The President announced his intention to nominate Joseph Evan LeBaron to be Ambassador to Qatar.

The President announced that he has named Christopher Michel as Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy Director of Speechwriting.

The President announced that he has named Sara Armstrong as Special Assistant to the President.

The President announced that he has named Meghan Clyne as Special Assistant to the President for Speechwriting.

The President announced that he has named Matthew Latimer as Special Assistant to the President and Deputy Director of Speechwriting.

The President announced that he has named Mark J. Webber as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for South and Central Asian Affairs in the National Security Council.

February 15

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had a telephone conversation with Northern Illinois University President John G. Peters to express his condolences for the victims of the February 14 campus shooting. Then, in the Oval Office, he met with Minister of Foreign Affairs Saud al-Faysal bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Cotonou, Benin, arriving the following morning.

The White House announced that the President and Mrs. Bush will welcome His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI to the White House on April 16.

The President announced his intention to nominate Joseph A. Benkert to be Assistant

Secretary of Defense (Global Security Affairs).

The President announced his intention to nominate Carol Dillon Kissal to be Inspector General of the Small Business Administration.

The President announced his designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to Seoul, Republic of Korea, to attend the inauguration of President Lee Myung-bak on February 25: Condoleezza Rice (head of delegation); Alexander R. Vershbow; Wendy Cutler; Gen. Burwell B. Bell; Andy Groseta; William R. Rhodes; and Hines Ward.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

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

Submitted February 12

Jeffrey Robert Brown, of Illinois, to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund for a term of 4 years, vice Thomas R. Saving.

Jeffrey Robert Brown, of Illinois, to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund for a term of 4 years, vice Thomas R. Saving.

Hyepin Christine Im, of California, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for the remainder of the term expiring October 6, 2008, vice Henry Lozano, resigned.

Hyepin Christine Im, of California, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for a term expiring October 6, 2013 (reappointment).

Perri Klass,
of New York, to be a member of the National
Institute for Literacy Advisory Board for a
term expiring November 25, 2009, vice Wil-
liam T. Hiller, term expired.

Katherine Mitchell,
of Alabama, to be a member of the National
Institute for Literacy Advisory Board for a
term expiring November 25, 2010, vice Mark
G. Yudof, resigned.

Eduardo J. Padron,
of Florida, to be a member of the National
Institute for Literacy Advisory Board for a
term expiring November 25, 2009, vice Juan
R. Olivarez, term expired.

Alexa E. Posny,
of Kansas, to be a member of the National
Institute for Literacy Advisory Board for a
term expiring November 25, 2008, vice Carol
C. Gambill, term expired.

Timothy Shanahan,
of Illinois, to be a member of the National
Institute for Literacy Advisory Board for a
term expiring November 25, 2010 (re-
appointment).

Richard Kenneth Wagner,
of Florida, to be a member of the National
Institute for Literacy Advisory Board for a
term expiring November 25, 2009 (re-
appointment).

Layshae Ward,
of Minnesota, to be a member of the Board
of Directors of the Corporation for National
and Community Service for a term expiring
December 27, 2012, vice Mimi Mager, term
expired.

Withdrawn February 12

Warren Bell,
of California, to be a member of the Board
of Directors of the Corporation for Public
Broadcasting for a term expiring January 31,
2012, vice Kenneth Y. Tomlinson, resigned,
which was sent to the Senate on January 9,
2007.

Patricia Mathes,
of Texas, to be a member of the National
Institute for Literacy Advisory Board for a

term expiring November 25, 2007, vice Mark
G. Yudof, resigned, which was sent to the
Senate on January 9, 2007.

John L. Palmer,
of New York, to be a member of the Board
of Trustees of the Federal Old-Age and Sur-
vivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal
Disability Insurance Trust Fund for a term
of 4 years (reappointment), which was sent
to the Senate on January 9, 2007.

John L. Palmer,
of New York, to be a member of the Board
of Trustees of the Federal Supplementary
Medical Insurance Trust Fund for a term of
4 years (reappointment), which was sent to
the Senate on January 9, 2007.

John L. Palmer,
of New York, to be a member of the Board
of Trustees of the Federal Hospital Insur-
ance Trust Fund for a term of 4 years (re-
appointment), which was sent to the Senate
on January 9, 2007.

Thomas R. Saving,
of Texas, to be a member of the Board of
Trustees of the Federal Supplementary Med-
ical Insurance Trust Fund for a term of 4
years (reappointment), which was sent to the
Senate on January 9, 2007.

Thomas R. Saving,
of Texas, to be a member of the Board of
Trustees of the Federal Old-Age and Sur-
vivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal
Disability Insurance Trust Fund for a term
of 4 years (reappointment), which was sent
to the Senate on January 9, 2007.

Thomas R. Saving,
of Texas, to be a member of the Board of
Trustees of the Federal Hospital Insurance
Trust Fund for a term of 4 years (reappoint-
ment), which was sent to the Senate on Janu-
ary 9, 2007.

Submitted February 14

Jeffrey Robert Brown,
of Illinois, to be a member of the Board of
Trustees of the Federal Supplementary Med-
ical Insurance Trust Fund for a term of 4
years, vice Thomas R. Saving.

David Gustafson,
of Virginia, to be a Judge of the U.S. Tax
Court for a term of 15 years, vice Carolyn
P. Chiechi, term expired.

William T. Lawrence,
of Indiana, to be U.S. District Judge for the
Southern District of Indiana, vice John Dan-
iel Tinder, elevated.

Joseph Evan LeBaron,
of Oregon, a career member of the Senior
Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor,
to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Pleni-
potentiary of the United States of America
to the State of Qatar.

Stephen James Nolan,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior
Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor,
to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Pleni-
potentiary of the United States of America
to the Republic of Botswana.

Elizabeth Crewson Paris,
of the District of Columbia, to be a Judge
of the U.S. Tax Court for a term of 15 years,
vice Joel Gerber, retired.

Samuel W. Speck,
of Ohio, to be a Commissioner on the part
of the U.S. on the International Joint Com-
mission, United States and Canada, vice
Dennis L. Schornack.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

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.

Released February 11

Transcript of remarks by National Security
Adviser Stephen J. Hadley to the Center for
International Security and Cooperation *

* These remarks were delivered on February 8
and released by the Office of the Press Secretary
on February 11.

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Sec-
retary Dana Perino

Transcript of a press briefing by Chairman
of the Council of Economic Advisers Edward
P. Lazear on the Economic Report of the
President

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit by
United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-
moon

Fact sheet: The Economic Report of the
President

Fact sheet: The Heart Truth: Helping Pre-
vent Heart Disease in Women

Released February 12

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Sec-
retary Dana Perino

Advance text of the President's remarks on
African American History Month

Released February 13

Transcript of a press briefing by National Se-
curity Adviser Stephen J. Hadley on the
President's trip to Africa

Transcript of remarks by Senator Mitch
McConnell of Kentucky and Representative
John A. Boehner of Ohio following a meeting
with the President

Statement by the Press Secretary on the Ex-
ecutive order blocking property of persons
in connection with the national emergency
with respect to Syria

Statement by the Press Secretary on House
of Representatives action on intelligence re-
form legislation

Fact sheet: The House Must Act Quickly To
Pass Bipartisan Senate FISA Modernization
Bill

Fact sheet: Bipartisan Growth Package Will
Help Protect Our Nation's Economic Health

Released February 14

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Sec-
retary Dana Perino

Statement by the Press Secretary on intel-
ligence reform legislation

Statement by the Press Secretary on the House of Representatives vote to hold two top White House officials in contempt

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 4253

Fact sheet: Congress Must Act Now To Ensure That We Have the Tools To Keep America Safe

Fact sheet: U.S. Africa Policy: An Unparalleled Partnership Strengthening Democracy, Overcoming Poverty, and Saving Lives

Released February 15

Transcript of a press gaggle by Deputy Press Secretary Scott M. Stanzel

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI to the White House

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 3541 and S. 781

Acts Approved by the President

Approved February 13

H.R. 5140 / Public Law 110–185
Economic Stimulus Act of 2008

Approved February 14

H.R. 4253 / Public Law 110–186
Military Reservist and Veteran Small Business Reauthorization and Opportunity Act of 2008

Approved February 15

H.R. 3541 / Public Law 110–187
Do-Not-Call Improvement Act of 2007

S. 781 / Public Law 110–188
Do-Not-Call Registry Fee Extension Act of 2007