

Jillian Kinsella, fiancée of Cpl. Chad M. Watson, USMC.

Statement on Armenian Remembrance Day

April 24, 2008

On this day of remembrance, we honor the memory of the victims of one of the greatest tragedies of the 20th century, the mass killings and forced exile of as many as 1.5 million Armenians at the end of the Ottoman Empire. I join the Armenian community in America and around the world in commemorating this tragedy and mourning the loss of so many innocent lives.

As we reflect on this epic human tragedy, we must resolve to redouble our efforts to promote peace, tolerance, and respect for the dignity of human life. The Armenian people's unalterable determination to triumph over tragedy and flourish is a testament to their strength of character and spirit. We are grateful for the many contributions Americans of Armenian heritage have made to our Nation.

We welcome the efforts by individuals in Armenia and Turkey to foster reconciliation and peace and support joint efforts for an open examination of the past in search of a shared understanding of these tragic events. We look forward to the realization of a fully normalized Armenia-Turkey relationship.

The United States is committed to a strong relationship with Armenia based on shared values. We call on the Government of Armenia to take decisive steps to promote democracy and will continue our support for Armenia to this end. We remain committed to serving as an honest broker in pursuit of a lasting and peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

On this solemn day of remembrance, Laura and I express our deepest condolences to Armenian people around the world.

Remarks on the National Economy

April 25, 2008

Good morning. It's obvious our economy is in a slowdown. But fortunately, we recognized the signs early and took action. I signed

an economic growth package that will provide tax rebates to millions of American families and workers to boost consumer spending.

On Monday, the Treasury Department will begin delivering the first of these tax rebates by direct deposit. During the first week alone, nearly 7.7 million Americans will receive their tax rebates electronically. Then on May 9th, the IRS will begin mailing checks to millions more across America.

By this summer, the Treasury Department expects to have sent rebates to about 130 million American households. These rebates will provide eligible Americans with payments of up to \$600 a person, \$1,200 for couples, and \$300 per child.

If you've already filed your income tax return, your rebate is on the way. Even if you don't owe any income taxes, you may still be eligible for a check, but you need to file a form with the IRS. And it's not too late to do so. Now, you can find out information as to how to proceed by calling your local IRS office, or go to the IRS web site.

We want to make sure everyone who's eligible for a check gets one on a timely basis. This money is going to help Americans offset the high prices we're seeing at the gas pump; at the grocery store. And it will also give our economy a boost to help us pull out of this economic slowdown.

I'm pleased that the Treasury Department has worked quickly to get the money into the hands of the American people. Starting Monday, the effects of the stimulus will begin to reach millions of households across our country.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:16 a.m. on the South Grounds at the White House.

Remarks During a Visit to the Northwest Boys & Girls Club in Hartford, Connecticut

April 25, 2008

Entertainer Melinda Doolittle. I would love—actually, Mr. President, I know that you went to Africa. I got a great chance to go to Africa with your wife and kind of see firsthand in Zambia what the disease does

to people and how much they are appreciative of getting these bed nets. I know you got to travel, so I'd love it if you'd share some things—[*inaudible*—of that.

The President. Sure. I think the thing that I would start with was how appreciative people in Africa were of the fact that total strangers cared about their lives. You see, if you are a mother who is holding a baby that is sick because of a mosquito bite, it creates a lot of hopelessness, and you really wonder whether anybody cares. And the fact that total strangers would come together—in Boys and Girls Clubs or basketball teams or singers—and care about them really lifts their spirits.

And so it's been a—been really interesting to travel to Africa and see how appreciative the people in Africa are of the United States and the citizens. Isn't it interesting that—there's a call to love your neighbor like you'd like to be loved yourself, and that's what you're doing. And I'm here really to thank all the people, not only here but across the country, for being so supportive of a humanitarian effort that is worthy of a great nation.

So the trip was great. It was really a lot of fun. You know what it's like there.

Ms. Doolittle. I do; I do.

The President. It's a bit exciting, isn't it?

Ms. Doolittle. Yes, and I think the thing that struck me the most is that in the midst of all of that devastation that you may see in any country, they are the most joyful people you will ever meet in your entire life. And that also is infectious. So that is one thing that I wanted to catch going out of Africa, is that joy that they had in the midst of all that they were going through. So these are people that absolutely love life; they cherish it. And we get to help them cherish that life a little longer. So it's a wonderful, wonderful thing to do.

I would love to have you two come up and look at these bed nets and kind of—

The President. Yes, why don't we get a team picture?

Ms. Doolittle. —kind of see—

The President. I don't think there's enough cameras here. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:30 a.m.

Remarks on Malaria Awareness Day in Hartford

April 25, 2008

Thank you all. Thank you very much. Thank you for the kind introduction, Roxanne. She wrote it—read it just like I wrote it. [*Laughter*] It's good to be with you. I appreciate the—being here at the Boys and Girls Club here in Hartford. I really enjoyed being with the boys and girls of the Boys and Girls Club. Thank you for greeting us.

I—we do have something in common—at least I do—with the Boys and Girls Club. As Roxanne noted, the Boys and Girls Club were born in Connecticut. Well, so was I, just a little different date, you know. [*Laughter*] The Boys and Girls Clubs are 102. My daughters think I act like I'm 102 at times. [*Laughter*] But I really thank you all for greeting me.

I want to thank the members of this club for your compassionate work in the fight against malaria. And that's what I want to spend some time talking about today. I appreciate being joined by Melinda Doolittle of American Idol. I've gotten to know Melinda because Melinda is not only a great talent; Melinda has got a huge heart. And it's interesting, isn't it, that she has garnered all this publicity and acclaim, all to channel it into helping other people. And I love your example, and I thank you for your leadership.

And I'm also honored to be up here with Tamika Raymond, as well as Charlie Villanueva. They know something about the State of Connecticut because they were stars on their respective University of Connecticut Husky basketball teams. They are professional athletes, one with the Milwaukee Bucks and the other with the Connecticut Sun. But more importantly, they're using their presence on the court to be able to advance important issues. And, in my judgment, a great issue to advance is saving people's lives. And that's what we're here to celebrate today.

Sorry my wife isn't with me. She is a huge supporter of the malaria initiative. She cares a lot, like the people on this stage care a lot, about the human condition here in America and elsewhere. She's getting ready to be the mother of the bride—[*laughter*]—which