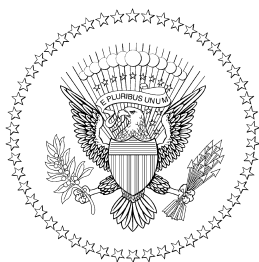


Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



Monday, August 11, 2008
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Contents

Addresses and Remarks

See also Meetings With Foreign Leaders
Alaska, military personnel and their families at
Eielson Air Force Base—1092

China

Dedication ceremony for the U.S. Embassy
in Beijing—1115

2008 U.S. summer Olympic team in
Beijing—1116

Radio address—1091

South Korea, military personnel at U.S. Army
Garrison—Yongsan—1100

Thailand

Lunch with Burmese activists in Bangkok—
1108

Remarks in Bangkok—1104

Interviews With the News Media

Interview with foreign radio journalists in
Bangkok, Thailand—1110

Interviews With the News Media—Continued

News conference with President Lee of South
Korea in Seoul, South Korea, August 6—
1095

Meetings With Foreign Leaders

South Korea, President Lee—1094, 1095

Thailand, Prime Minister Samak—1102

Statements by the President

International Convention Against Doping in
Sport—1094

10th anniversary of terrorist attacks against
U.S. Embassies in Africa—1115

Supplementary Materials

Acts approved by the President—1119

Checklist of White House press releases—
1118

Digest of other White House
announcements—1117

Nominations submitted to the Senate—1118

Editor's Note: The President was in Beijing, China, on August 8, 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.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Week Ending Friday, August 8, 2008

The President's Radio Address

August 2, 2008

Good morning. This weekend marks the beginning of August, the month when many Americans take their summer vacation. This year, however, the high price of gas is taking a toll on summer travelers. Congress is now taking a month-long recess of its own. Unfortunately, Democratic leaders are leaving town without taking any action to ease the burden of high gas prices on families across America.

The fundamental source of high gas prices is the fact that supply is not keeping pace with demand. To reduce pressure on prices, we need to increase the supply of oil, especially oil produced here at home. So in June, I called on Congress to lift the legislative ban that prevents offshore exploration of parts of the Outer Continental Shelf, or OCS. But the leaders of the Democratic Congress have refused to allow a vote. Lifting the ban on this offshore exploration would benefit our economy in two important ways.

First, lifting the ban would allow our Nation to take advantage of a large and reliable source of domestic oil. Experts believe that these restricted areas could eventually produce about 18 billion barrels of oil; that's almost 10 years worth of America's current oil production.

Second, lifting the ban would create new opportunities for American workers and businesses. On Tuesday, I visited the Lincoln Electric Company in Cleveland, Ohio, a business that produces welding products used for offshore exploration. If Congress were to permit this exploration, it would mean new jobs at businesses like Lincoln Electric. American drivers are counting on Congress to lift the ban on offshore exploration, and so are American workers.

Bringing these resources on line will take time, and that means that the need for congressional action is urgent. I've lifted the ex-

ecutive restrictions on offshore exploration. This means that the only thing now standing between the American people and these vast oil resources is the United States Congress. The sooner Congress lifts the ban, the sooner we can get this oil from beneath the ocean floor to your gas tank.

We also need to take other essential steps to strengthen domestic oil production. Congress needs to pass legislation that allows us to tap the extraordinary potential of oil shale, permits exploration in currently restricted areas of northern Alaska, and enables the expansion of America's domestic refining capacity.

It appears that the leaders of the Democratically controlled Congress will let the entire summer pass without voting on any of these vital steps to help reduce pressure on gas prices. This failure to act is unacceptable to me and unacceptable to the American people. So when they return from their summer break, Democratic leaders should show that they've heard the frustration of the American people by allowing a vote on offshore exploration. If Congress does not act, they will owe families across America an explanation for why they're ignoring their concerns.

I know that high energy prices are making this a difficult time for many of our citizens, but it is important to remember that these high prices were not inevitable. They are partially the result of policy choices that have been made over the years by the United States Congress. Now Congress has an opportunity to begin reversing that damage. By opening up new resources at home, we can help bring energy costs down, and that will help ensure that our economy remains the strongest, most vibrant, and most hopeful in the world.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10 a.m. on August 1 in Walkers Point, ME, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 2. The transcript was made

available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 1 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks to Military Personnel and Their Families at Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska

August 4, 2008

The President. Thank you all. Thank you for the warm welcome. I am honored to be with you. No better place to refuel an airplane than right here. I appreciate you all coming out. I'm traveling today with the First Lady of the United States, Laura Bush; our daughter Barbara Bush.

I've just got one thing to ask the folks here at Eielson. Iceman Team, ready to go?

Audience members. At 50 below!

The President. Absolutely! I thank the Iceman Team for joining us. I also want to thank the Arctic warriors of Fort Wainwright for being here as well.

You know, I've been to a lot of military bases around the world. I don't think I've ever been to one where a moose can cause a traffic jam or a base where the snowmobile is considered a lawn ornament. *[Laughter]* And for you moms and dads out there, it must be a little strange in the summertime to say to your children, "Make sure you get home before dark." *[Laughter]*

I want to thank General Graper and his wife Melinda for their hospitality, and thank you for your service to our country, General. I want to thank Colonel Tim Jones, U.S. Army garrison commander of Fort Wainwright, and Theresa. I want to thank Colonel Wenke and his wife Wendy from the mighty 168th Air Fueling Wing.

The United States military has had no better supporter and stronger friend than Senator Ted Stevens. Thank you for coming, Senator; thank you for bringing your daughter. Nothing wrong with a father bringing his daughter to an event like this.

I'm also pleased that the Governor of the great State of Alaska, Governor Sarah Palin, and her husband Todd are with us today too.

I first want to say something to our military families. I can't thank you enough for all the

sacrifices you have given. There is no question, we have the finest military in the world, and one reason why is because we've got the finest military families in the world. These have been tough times on our families, and I want to thank you for staying in the fight.

I'm also proud to be here with people who have volunteered in the face of danger. There is no more important mission than to protect the United States from harm. Many of you volunteered after the attacks on the homeland on 9/11/2001. You understand what I know: That it is best to defeat the enemy overseas so we do not have to face them here in the United States.

We have been unrelenting in our efforts to protect America, and I want to thank you for your service. There is no finer honor than being the Commander in Chief of a fine group of men and women, and I'm proud to be in your midst.

I want to thank the members of the 354th Fighter Wing. I appreciate what you do; I appreciate your efforts. I want to thank you for keeping us safe on the Nation's western flank. I thank you for your training missions. The people in the lower 48 send their very best.

I want to thank the more than 200 airmen from Eielson who are deployed around the world, many in the Middle East. Their service in Afghanistan and Iraq and elsewhere is making this Nation safer. And for the family members of those airmen, God bless you, and thank you for standing with your loved one.

Eielson is also the home of the "Guardians of the Last Frontier," the men and women of the Alaska Air National Guard 168th Air Refueling Wing. I'm an old Guard pilot myself. I want to thank the pilots who are here, and I thank those who help these planes stay in the air. Your contributions to Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom are significant and important.

I want to thank the soldiers from Fort Wainwright. I'm proud to be standing with the men and women of Task Force 49 and the mighty Stryker Brigade. You got to know the folks from Task Force 49 are pretty tough; after all, they train in 50 below and they fight in 120 above. *[Laughter]*

I appreciate what you're doing to support our missions, and I fully understand that a Stryker brigade will soon deploy to Iraq. The other day I made it clear that our policy on rotations is now 12 months in, 12 months out. I know the Stryker brigade from Fort Wainwright was one of the first brigades to extend, and I understand it puts stress on the families. Because of the progress we're making in Iraq, there's now certainty in the rotations.

Deployments are difficult, but they are necessary. We are a nation at war. Oh, some in America say, "This is a simple law enforcement matter; dealing with these extremists who would do us harm is law enforcement." Well, if it's a law enforcement matter, that means you react after the crime. I think it's important, and I know most of you here think it's important, to stop the crime from happening in the first place.

And therefore, the United States, today and tomorrow, must stay on the offense and keep the pressure on this enemy and bring them to justice so they don't hurt the American citizen again. And we've got no greater asset than the United States military.

The Stryker brigade that's heading into Iraq will be heading into a different situation than the previous Stryker brigade when they first went into Iraq. About a year ago, people thought Iraq was lost and hopeless. People were saying, "Let's get out of there; it doesn't matter to our national security." Iraq has changed—a lot—thanks to the bravery of people in this hangar and the bravery of troops all across our country. The terrorists on the run—the terrorists will be denied a safe haven, and freedom is on the march. And as a result, our children are more likely to grow up in a peaceful world. And I thank you for your service, and I thank you for your sacrifice.

It is important for the United States of America never to forget the transformative power of liberty. I believe there's an Almighty, and I believe a gift of that Almighty to every man, woman, and child on the face of the Earth is freedom. And I know free societies yield the peace we all want. It's in our national interest to keep the pressure on the terrorists, to give them no safe haven, no place to hide, to keep them on the run.

It's also in our national interest to help others realize the blessings of a free society, so that when we look back at the initial chapters of the 21st century, we will say, we've done our duty. We defended the United States of America, and we laid the foundation for peace to come.

I want to thank you for your contributions to that hopeful chapter. I thank you for your courage. And there is no doubt in my mind that we will prevail. I've seen firsthand the character of the men and women who wear our uniform. I know such a man named Sergeant Gregory Williams. He's right here with us today.

He was on night patrol in Baghdad when his vehicle was hit by an explosive device. The blast caused Sergeant Williams to lose consciousness. He recovered, and he put out the flames that were beginning to engulf him and the soldiers around him. He gave emergency aid to members of his platoon until he realized he was under enemy fire, and then he provided covering fire. He pulled his platoon leader out of the smoldering vehicle. Williams performed these actions despite the fact that he was burned himself, that he was wounded. His heroism that night saved the lives of his fellow soldiers, and for that he received the Distinguished Service Cross. And I'm proud to be in the presence of such a courageous American citizen.

All here have my pride and have my gratitude, and you have the thanks of our entire Nation. We honor your service. We appreciate the sacrifice of your families. A lot of Americans will keep you in their prayers. May God bless you, and may God continue to bless the United States of America. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:52 p.m. at the Thunderdome. In his remarks, he referred to Brig. Gen. Mark W. Graper, USAF, commander, 354th Fighter Wing, who introduced the President; Col. Donald "Scott" Wenke, USAF, commander, 168th Air Refueling Wing, Alaska Air National Guard; Col. Wendy Wenke, USAF, director of staff (air), Joint Force Headquarters—Alaska; and Susan Covich, daughter of Senator Ted Stevens.

Statement on the International Convention Against Doping in Sport

August 4, 2008

Today I signed the instrument of ratification for the International Convention Against Doping in Sport adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization on October 19, 2005.

This convention is a valuable tool in protecting the integrity of international sport and the health of athletes. The convention advances international cooperation on doping control matters and promotes a drug-free competitive environment for athletes. Ratification of the convention represents the culmination of the longstanding efforts of the international community and the United States to jointly develop an equitable and harmonized approach to antidoping control and enforcement measures in international competition. Importantly, the convention highlights the vital role of youth education, comprehensive drug testing, and research in combating doping.

The timing of the United States ratification, on the eve of the Beijing Olympic games, is appropriate. Over the next several weeks, the world will be focused on the talent and dedication of the world's most accomplished athletes. The convention makes clear that the use of performance-enhancing drugs to gain a competitive advantage undercuts the positive attributes of sport.

I remain particularly concerned that doping sends to young people the message that performance is more important than character and health. As a result, my administration has aggressively pursued education campaigns, research, and drug testing, as well as cooperation among public and private partners to encourage clean, fair, and healthy sport competition. These efforts have coincided with a significant decline in the number of young people using performance-enhancing drugs.

The challenges posed by doping must also be addressed by international cooperation and collaboration. By ratifying the convention, the United States is demonstrating its continued commitment and leadership in working with the international community to combat this public health issue.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Lee Myung-bak of South Korea in Seoul, South Korea

August 6, 2008

President Lee. Mr. President, Mrs. Bush, as well as your lovely daughter, Barbara Bush, I would like to welcome you from the bottom of our hearts. Yes, well, Mr. President, the majority of the Korean people have been eagerly waiting for your visit to Korea this time, and as you saw yesterday, there were many people who gathered together to welcome your visit to Korea.

President Bush. Thank you.

President Lee. And also, Mr. President, yesterday in the lawn in front of the Seoul City Hall, there were many people gathered there, thousands of people gathered, who came together to pray, not only for your visit but also for the future of the Korea-U.S. relationship as well.

And of course, behind those people, there were those who were sort of opposed. *[Laughter]* But, however, the number was minimal, sir.

President Bush. Thank you.

President Lee. Yes, well, Mr. President, I don't need to reiterate the fact that Korea and the United States, we are traditional allies and friends for many, many years. And also, it's been only a little over 5 months since I assumed the Presidency, but today is already our third meeting, Mr. President. So, officially, but as well as personally, I have deep friendship for you and for the people of America, and I believe in the future of the Korea-U.S. relationship.

And as you saw, Mr. President, the weather today is beautiful. We had rain coming, torrential rain coming up until about 2 days ago. Thank you.

President Bush. Thank you, sir. Thank you, Mr. President. Laura and I are delighted to be with you and Mrs. Kim again. Ours is a vital relationship. And our three meetings will only strengthen the relationship. I admire your forthrightness, your integrity, and your deep love for the people of Korea.

And I enjoy coming to a free society, where people are able to express their opinions. And your country is a free society. So,

thank you. I'm looking forward to our conversations. Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:46 a.m. at the Blue House. In his remarks, he referred to Kim Yoon-ok, wife of President Lee.

The President's News Conference With President Lee Myung-bak of South Korea in Seoul

August 6, 2008

President Lee. President Bush, along with Mrs. Bush and Barbara Bush, visited Korea. I would like to extend my warmest welcome to all three of them.

It's been a little over 5 months since I became President, but already today's meeting was the third meeting with President Bush. We had a very deep and insightful meeting. President Bush and I reaffirmed once again the importance of our alliance, and we discussed ways on how to strengthen this alliance.

The security environment is changing very rapidly, and there's a need for the Korea-U.S. alliance to adapt to these changes. With this in mind, President Bush and I agreed that not only must we strengthen the military and security aspect of our alliance but also expand our alliance so that it encompasses the political, economic, social, and cultural aspects as well.

Furthermore, we both agreed that we must work to expand our alliance so that Korea and the U.S. will continue to cooperate in various global issues, such as maintenance of peace, eradicating terrorism, climate change, and nonproliferation. Based on shared values and mutual trust, President Bush and I agreed to continue discussing specific ways to build our alliance into a strategic and future-oriented structure.

President Bush and I agreed that, through the six-party talks, there were positive steps made in resolving the North Korean nuclear issue. And I offered my sincere appreciation and praised President Bush's leadership in this endeavor. We agreed that our ultimate aim is to achieve the denuclearization of North Korea, and we agreed that this aim will be achieved by thoroughly verifying, through a rigorous verification regime, the

completeness and correctness of the declaration submitted by North Korea.

Throughout this process, Korea and the U.S. will, of course, continue our close cooperation. And President Bush and I agreed to work closely together so that the third-phase actions can take place as soon as possible, bringing us closer to our objective, which is North Korea completely abandoning all their nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs.

President Bush and I also agreed that the denuclearization of North Korea and substantive cooperation between the two Koreas should move along in parallel. Also, we made it clear that we are willing to actively assist North Korea strengthen exchange and cooperation with the international community so that it can take part in building peace and sharing in the prosperity of the peninsula and Northeast Asia.

Last July 11th, at the Mount Kumgang resort area, an innocent South Korean national was killed—an unacceptable incident that should have never occurred and one that must never happen again. President Bush and I agreed that North Korea must be forthcoming and fully cooperate so that we find out what really happened and to come up with ways to prevent such incidents from recurring.

We also discussed specific ways to strengthen cooperation between Korea and the U.S. President Bush said that he will do his best so that the ratification of the KORUS FTA, as well as Korea's participation in the Visa Waiver Program will be finalized within this year.

I also welcomed the workstudy program called WEST, the first ever program of its kind to be proposed by the U.S. to any other country, and assured President Bush that I will do my best so that it can be implemented as soon as possible. This WEST Program allows approximately 5,000 students every year to visit the U.S. for a period of 18 months so that they can study English, work, and have an opportunity to experience life in the U.S. This program will help young Koreans and Americans get a better understanding of each other's culture.

President Bush and I agreed to further expand our cooperation in the area of space

science and aeronautics by promoting joint space exploration, development of scientific research satellites, and Korea's participation in NASA's International Lunar Network project.

We also talked about how we are going to continue working closely together, as well as with the international community, on issues of global concern, such as climate change—issues that we already had a chance to discuss during our last meeting in Toyako, Japan, last month.

I thanked President Bush for his swift action in correcting the Dokdo issue, and I also explained to him the historical background of this critical importance.

Once again, along with the Korean people, let me extend to you, Mr. President, and to your family our warmest welcome from the bottom of our hearts. Also, I look forward to you and Mrs. Bush to come and visit Korea freely when you have more time, Mr. President. I will always be ready to welcome my real friend whenever you come by. I will always be ready with open arms.

President Bush. I think you're referring to my retirement. *[Laughter]* It's great to be back, and I can't thank you and Mrs. Kim enough for your gracious hospitality. And Laura and I and Barbara are looking forward to lunch.

It's important for the people of your great country to know how much Americans value our friendship and our relationship, and that we have a very important alliance, and that it is being transformed to make sure that it's modern and effective. It's—alliances aren't stagnant; they've got to constantly reassess. And that's what we're doing in a way that will not only help defend the freedom here on the peninsula, Korean Peninsula, but also will help us meet the challenges of a new century.

And I want to thank you for being a—you know, a forward-looking President. Transformation involves realigning our forces here in Korea, improving the interoperability of our forces, as well as preparing for Korea to take on greater operational responsibilities in times of conflict. Of course, the whole purpose of the alliance is to prevent the conflict from happening in the first place.

We're working to speed your entry into the Visa Waiver Program, as you mentioned. The idea is to get it done by the end of this year. I think people are optimistic about that, Mr. President. And then I appreciate you bringing up the workstudy program. It's an exciting opportunity for young Koreans to come to our country to learn and study and work. And I believe the best foreign policy for America is for people to get to know our country firsthand. And I thank you for bringing up the program, and the responsible officials in our Government will work hard to bring it to a conclusion.

We talked about the six-party talks. Yes, I'm pleased that the 5-megawatt reactor at Yongbyon was destroyed. That's then the ultimate verification, isn't it? We could see with our own eyes that the North Korean Government did what they said they were going to do. And now the question is, will they continue that type of accountability? And so, we're in the process now of making sure the North Korean Government understands they have many more obligations under the six-party talks, and that we will deal with the North Koreans based upon the principle of action for action.

I mean, I told the President I am concerned about North Korea's human rights record. I'm concerned about its uranium enrichment activities, as well as its nuclear testing and proliferation, its ballistic missile programs. And the best way to approach and answer those concerns is for there to be strong verification measures. And that's where we are in the six-party talks. And the choice is the leader of North Korea's to make. We made our choice; five nations bound together saying the same thing. And so we'll see what his decision is, Mr. President.

I strongly support you—your Government's request to investigate last month's shooting of a South Korean tourist. And you spoke eloquently in our meeting about how you felt when you first learned about the incident and how the people of your good country must feel when they learned the news of this woman's death.

We talked about our confronting global security challenges together. I do want to thank you very much for your contributions to two

young democracies, Iraq and Afghanistan. The Korean people have made sacrifices to support troops there and support other missions there, and they've made a difference. And I appreciate that very much. I also want to thank you very much for committing to send 350 troops to Lebanon as part of the U.N. mission.

The United States and Korea are working to open up markets. We concluded a free trade agreement with Korea. And it's an important agreement for the United States. It's important for our businesses; it's important for our workers. And our Congress must get this agreement done and ratify it. I'm going to push hard for it, Mr. President.

I am worried about the protectionist signals coming out of the U.S. Congress. And one way to kind of send a different message is for the Democratic leadership in the Congress to bring the—bring a couple of trade bills up, Colombia and Korea, and get some votes out there, and let Congress—people in Congress declare one way or the other whether they're for open markets and free and fair trade. And I can assure you, Mr. President, this administration is for free and fair trade, and will continue to press hard for what I think is a very good agreement.

Finally, I do want to say how much I appreciate your work on environmental challenges. Korea has been very constructive when it comes to climate change, and I want to thank you for your leadership on that issue. There's no doubt, we need a long-term global goal for reducing emissions. We need mid-term national goals and plans, and we need a lot of research and development to solve the problem in a way that enables us to say to our people, our economies can continue to grow and we'll be responsible stewards of the environment.

I want to thank you once again for your grand hospitality. Our relationship is important, it's vital, and I believe it's strong. Thank you, sir.

Free Trade Agreement/Island of Dokdo/ Afghanistan

Q. A question going out to President Lee. Mr. President, President Lee, you said that passage of the KORUS FTA will be one of the most important aspects of reviving the

Korean economy. Do you, sir, despite the opposition within the U.S. Congress, do you expect the KORUS FTA to be ratified within the U.S. Congress? And if so, when do you expect the KORUS FTA to be ratified?

Additionally, with regards to the Dokdo issue, we already see the conclusion of this issue, but, however, we still have the question of the naming issue because Dokdo is still referred to as Liancourt Rocks. What kind of dialog did you have with President Bush during the summit meeting regarding Dokdo naming?

Lastly, did President Bush request President Lee to dispatch troops to Afghanistan?

President Bush. You sound like the American press. [Laughter]

President Lee. As for the last question, I think President Bush should be answering that question. As for the KORUS FTA, it benefits both Korea and the United States, and this is my firm belief. It will help the Korean economy revive itself, and the KORUS FTA will be an opportunity for us to upgrade Korea's economy up a notch. It will improve our competitiveness internationally, improve our productivity, broaden our trade base. And also, through the broadened trade base, we will be able to create new jobs for Koreans. So these are all reasons why I fully support, and why I believe that the KORUS FTA must pass.

And also the KORUS FTA has a lot of implications in terms of improving and strengthening the Korea-U.S. bilateral relationship. And so, that is why I recognize the significance of the KORUS FTA.

Today President Bush and I discussed and we agreed that we will continue to do our best so that the KORUS FTA will be able to pass by the end of this year. We promised each other we'll do our best. I will, on my part, continue to convince the Korea National Assembly for ratification, and President Bush said that he will continue his strenuous efforts to try to convince the U.S. Congress that they ratify the U.S.—the KORUS FTA.

As for the Dokdo naming issue, this is not a Korea-U.S. issue; this is a Korea-Japan issue. So—well, I told President Bush—I thanked him, of course, for correcting swiftly the naming issue within the United States.

But for the remaining issues, this is an issue that the Korean Government must take up in terms of the justifiability, the historical right that we have over Dokdo, and all the data that we have managed to accrue.

And so, we will continue our efforts to try to correct this and to tell the international community of our sovereign rights regarding this Dokdo issue. So, we'll be very consistent and continuously let people know, and tell the international community and let them know that this is a sovereign land belonging to South Korea. We have Korean nationals living there, and we have exercised control over these islands for many years. And so this is our position, which has always been consistent. And so we have—we're confident that we'll be able to correct this.

As for Afghanistan and sending Korean troops, I think, again, President Bush should be able to answer that. But I can tell you that we did discuss this issue.

President Bush. We discussed it. I thanked the President for the contributions that Korea has made to Afghanistan. And the only thing I talked to him about was noncombat help. I asked him to consider as much noncombat help as possible to help this young democracy.

China/Six-Party Talks

Q. Thank you, both. To President Bush, China's crackdown on human rights is drawing intense scrutiny. People are being harassed and jailed just for speaking their mind—trying to speak their mind. I know you say that you speak candidly with President Hu about this, but with all eyes on Beijing and the world watching, I'd like to ask you directly, what do you think of how China treats its people?

And, President Lee, I'd like to ask you—you noted progress in the six-party talks. Do you think that North Korea will go along with verification of its nuclear programs? For people who think that this is just another go-around, why will this time be any different?

President Bush. I've been meeting with Chinese leaders now for 7½ years; my message has been the same: You should not fear religious people in your society; as a matter of fact, religious people will make your society a better place; that you ought to welcome

people being able to express their minds. And to the extent that people aren't able to do that and people aren't able to worship freely is—you know, I think is a mistake. And I explained it to him every single time.

And the reason I'm going to the Olympics is twofold: one, to show my respect for the people of China; and two, to cheer on the U.S. team. And by the way, the order ought to be reversed as to why I may—went. I hope our team wins as many gold medals as possible; and if not win gold, silver; and if not silver, bronze.

And this is an athletic event. But it's also an opportunity to say to the Chinese people, we respect your traditions; we respect your history. And as I said many times, I don't need the Olympics as an opportunity to express my views about religious freedom, since I have been doing it since I've been the President.

President Lee. I think I need to answer part of the question. As for the six-party talks and the prospects for the six-party talks, I think there are many skeptics as to the future of the six-party talks. I think many people around the world look at the behavior of North Korea up until today and they say—and they wonder whether North Korea will faithfully carry out verification. However, we have a difficult opposition, and I think right now is a good time to really praise the leadership of President Bush for dealing with a very difficult opponent.

And as to what kind of behavior North Korea will take, what's most important is—number one is that we must have a denuclearization of North Korea. So I will be patient; I will be consistent; and I will do my best. And I have faith and I am confident that we will be able to move on to the verification process and move on to the next phase of that. And we will try to—our best to make it complete, and I believe that North Korea must faithfully cooperate in the verification process.

So, regardless of what North Korea has in mind, I believe it's important for the rest of the members of the six-party talks to continue pursuing our objective. And at times we might have to wait; at times we might be difficult, but we will be consistent.

North Korea/Six-Party Talks

Q. A question going out to His Excellency, President Bush. With regards to removing North Korea from the terrorism list, we understand that beginning on the 12th, North Korea might be able to be removed from the list. When do you expect, Mr. Bush, President Bush, that North Korea may be removed from the list? Are there any preconditions or is there anything that North Korea must do for them to be removed from the list of state sponsors of terrorism?

President Bush. Yes. The 12th is the first opportunity where they may be lifted off the list. And, yes, they got a lot to do. They got to, like, show us a verification regime that we can trust. This is a step-by-step process.

I don't know whether or not they're going to give up their weapons. I really don't know. I don't think either of us knows. I know this: That the six-party talks is the best way to convince them to give up their weapons. I know there's a framework in place that will make it easier for those of us who care about this issue to work together to send a common message to the North Korea leader: You have a choice to make. You can verifiably do what you say you're going to do, or you'll continue to be the most sanctioned regime in the world.

We have put out a step-by-step process to—as a way forward for the North Korean leader. This isn't a U.S. proposal; this is a five-party proposal. South Korea has been a very integral part of the process, and they will remain an integral part of the process. We're all at the table together, saying the same thing.

And so, part of the step-by-step was to say, okay, if you do the following things like you said you would do, you get off the terrorist list. That could conceivably happen, as you mentioned, on the 12th. However, it's going to require action on the leader of North Korea's part. It just doesn't automatically happen.

We changed the way it used to be. It used to be that—okay, we'll give you something and hope that you end up responding. It's no longer that way. The six-party talks basically says, you have made a promise; once you fulfill your promise, then something will happen positively. And so I—we'll see. It's

his choice to make as to whether or not he gets to come off the list. If he is off the list, I want to remind you, that he'll still be—they will still be the most sanctioned country in the world.

And so then the fundamental question is, do they want to continue on and try to change the status? Do they want to try to change their isolation? Do they want to enter the community of nations? Do they want to be viewed as a peaceful country? And so there's a series of steps that we've all agreed to, including North Korea, that it's up to them to make the decision as to how they'll proceed.

North Korea

Q. Yes——

President Bush. Yes, Paul [Paul Wiseman, USA Today]. [Laughter]

Q. I was wondering, do you think that North Korea has fundamentally changed from being a member of the axis of evil a few years ago?

President Bush. That's to be determined. The human rights abuses inside the country still exist and persist. The North Korean leader has yet to fully verify the extent to which he has had a highly enriched uranium program. There's still more steps to be done on the plutonium program. So, in order to get off the list, the axis of evil list, then the North Korean leader is going to have to make certain decisions. And that's all part of the six-party talks.

And again, I can't predict the North Korean leader's decisionmaking. I don't know what he's going to do. But I do know that the best way to solve this issue is for five other nations to be saying the exact same thing.

And there has been progress. I mean, one thing is for certain that he did blow up the cooling tower. That was—that's verifiable because we all saw it. And it's—that was a positive step. And I—you know, I think all of us appreciated that positive step, but there's more steps to be taken. And my hope is that the axis of evil list no longer exists. That's my hope, for the sake of peace. And it's my hope for—you know, for the sake of our children.

Thank you very much for your attention. Thank you for your questions. Why don't you go find a shade tree to stand under? [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:05 a.m. at the Blue House. In his remarks, the President referred to Kim Yoon-ok, wife of President Lee; Chairman Kim Jong Il of North Korea; South Korean tourist Park Wang-ja, who was killed by a North Korean soldier on July 11; and President Hu Jintao of China. President Lee and some reporters spoke in Korean, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks to Military Personnel at United States Army Garrison—Yongsan, South Korea

August 6, 2008

The President. Thank you all. Berlus—how about the corporal? What a silver-tongued devil. Thank you, Corporal Berlus. Thanks for the kind introduction. I'm feeling pretty spiffy in my new jacket; feeling pretty warm in it too. [*Laughter*]

I am so honored to be here at freedom's frontier. Thanks for coming out to say hello. I always look forward to the chance to say, "Hooah!"

Audience members. Hooah!

The President. Yes, sir! No better place to do it than right here with U.S. Forces Korea. I thank the units here from the 8th Army Pacific Victors—

Audience members. Hooah!

The President. —members of the 7th Air Force—

Audience members. Hooah!

The President. —the U.S. Navy Forces Korea—

Audience members. Hooah!

The President. —Marine Forces Korea—

Audience members. Hooah!

The President. —and members of the Special Operations Command.

Audience members. Hooah!

The President. I appreciate the fact that you're carrying our flag with such honor in this vital part of the world. The American people are grateful for your service, and so is your Commander in Chief.

Audience members. Hooah!

The President. Thank you. I bring greetings to the South Korean military who is with us today, members from the KATUSA and the Zaytun Division.

Audience members. Hooah!

The President. We're honored by your friendship. We're proud of our alliance, and we're inspired by your work to advance the cause of liberty.

I also bring my love and greetings and appreciation to the military families.

Audience members. Hooah!

The President. Now, I understand our spouses did not take the oath of office when they enlisted. They took another oath. Matter of fact, their service to the country began with the simple words: "I do." So, to the military spouses and to the children who are here, please know that the United States of America is grateful for the sacrifices that you all are making on behalf of our country. And I'm proud to be in your presence, and so is the First Lady of the United States, Laura Bush.

And I'm traveling—or we're traveling with our daughter, one of two daughters—welcome, Barbara.

I know the commander very well. See, I got to see General Sharp up close a lot during the last 7½ years. He was in the Pentagon for a while; then he was transferred to this very important post. So, General Sharp, it's great to be with you again. Thank you for your fantastic service to our country. I'm proud to be with your wife. I also am proud to be with General Lee, deputy commander of the Combined Forces Command. It's an honor to meet your wife too, General. How about Sergeant—Command Sergeant Major Robert Winzenried. Robert, I'm glad you're here.

Audience members. Hooah!

The President. By the way, just so you sergeants understand, you are the backbone of the United States military—

Audience members. Hooah!

The President. —and I appreciate your service.

We're also here today with the Ambassador from the United States to Korea, Sandy Vershbow, and his wife, Lisa. Ambassador,

thank you for your fine service to our country. Proud to be serving with you.

Fifty-five years have passed since the guns went quiet and the cease-fire was signed on this peninsula. Now, for some of you, 55 years seems like a long time. [Laughter] But if you're 62 years old, it's just a snap of the fingers. [Laughter] It wasn't all that long ago.

And since that time, our forces have kept the peace. Our nations have built a robust alliance. Notice I'm saying "our nations." We're working side by side with our strong allies, the Korean people and the Korean military. And thanks to the contribution of men and women who are wearing the uniform just like you, the partnership between America and Korea has become one of the great success stories of modern times.

We've worked with our allies to help build a free and prosperous country out of the rubbles of war. And America is better off for it. Because of the sacrifice of troops just like you, a part of the world that was ravaged by war is now a—is now peaceful. And that enhances the security of the United States of America. We're bringing hope to people, and that's important, for people to have hope.

One of the signs of Korea's emergence is a professional and capable military. It's one of the things you look for when you see a country begin to get on its feet and take control of its destiny—is what kind of military does it have.

America is going to continue to stand with the Korean Peninsula, no question about it. And as South Korea has grown in strength, it takes a larger role, more significant role in its own defenses. And so America, in turn, is modernizing its presence. We're closing unneeded installations, and we're going to return this valuable land right here to the Korean people. See, this is a nice piece of real estate, as I'm sure you know. [Laughter] And it's going to go back to the Korean people, and then we're going to relocate. And that will make this alliance even stronger and even more viable in the future.

This historic transfer is recognition of the skill and the capabilities and professionalism of the Korean forces. And those forces have become skillful and professional, thanks to the United States military. And I want to thank you for your contributions.

Audience members. Hooah!

The President. The bedrock of this alliance is our belief in liberty. And there's no place on Earth that more clearly demonstrates the contrast between free and open societies and repressive, closed societies than the Korean Peninsula. No better place to see an example between the beauty of freedom and the hope of freedom and the difficulties with repressive and closed societies. As South Korea takes its rightful place on the world stage; North Korea traps its people in misery and isolation.

The regime at Pyongyang has threatened the peace of the world with pursuit of nuclear weapons. We're responding to this challenge in two ways. First, you're making sure that there's a strong deterrent against North Korean aggression, and I appreciate that a lot. And secondly, we're going to stand united with South Korea and China and Japan and Russia until we reach our ultimate goal, and that is a Korean Peninsula where people are free from nuclear weapons and free from oppression.

The story of this region—

Audience members. Hooah!

The President. There's another story from this region that's important for everybody to understand, and it shows that freedom is the surest path to move to a more peaceful world. In this part of the world, it's interesting to look at the history. In Japan, a country that was at one time at war with the United States and, obviously, others, freedom has helped transform the enemy into a ally. Freedom has helped transform that country into a prosperous and peaceful nation.

And in South Korea, freedom has helped turn a nation mired in poverty and recovering from war into a vibrant democracy and a strong partner. And here we are in the beginning of the 21st century, and once again, freedom is called upon to lay the foundation for peace that we all want.

We're at war. Now, I know some in the United States say that we're not at war; they say it's a simple law enforcement matter. Well, in law enforcement you respond after the crime. Hopefully, the September the 11th, 2001, lesson will teach us all that it's

important to prevent the crime from happening in the first place; that we have a duty—

Audience members. Hooah!

The President. And that's why it's important to use all assets of national power to keep the pressure on the enemy, to do our solemn duty to protect the American people from further harm.

But in the long run, I want you to remember that in this ideological struggle, the best way to yield the peace for our children and our grandchildren is to understand the transformative power of freedom. I brought a set of principles to the Oval Office, principles I will not compromise from. And one such principle is I do believe there's an Almighty, and a gift of that Almighty to every man, woman, and child on the face of the Earth is freedom.

And as you're far away from home, just remember freedom is going to yield the peace. And I want to thank you for being carriers of freedom and liberty. I want to thank you for standing strong for certain fundamental truths. And I thank our Korean allies as well.

Some of Korea's bravest citizens are working to spread the hope of freedom to other nations, especially in the Middle East. Korean troops have served with courage alongside ours in Afghanistan and Iraq. And the people of Afghanistan and Iraq will always remember that the people of Korea stood with them in their time of need. And they'll always remember the contribution that our U.S. troops have made as well.

Many of you have been to Iraq and Afghanistan. I thank you for volunteering to wear the uniform of the United States in this time of war. It's an amazing group of citizens who, in a time of war, say, "I'm willing to serve; I want to serve my Nation." And I want to thank you for making a huge difference in this great ideological struggle that is—here in the beginning of the 21st century.

In Afghanistan, we removed a dangerous regime that harbored the terrorists who plotted the attacks on September the 11th, and now, we're working to make sure Afghanistan never again becomes a safe haven for terrorists to plot against us.

In Iraq, we removed a dangerous regime that threatened its neighbors and the peace of the world. Removing Saddam Hussein was the right decision at the time, and it's the right decision today.

Audience members. Hooah!

The President. No question, it's been a tough fight against Al Qaida and other extremists in Iraq. Since we launched the surge last year events have turned toward victory. The enemy is on the run; violence is down; Iraqi forces are assuming more responsibility in the fight. Because of this progress, our troops have begun to come home under the policy of return on success.

We're going to continue to stand with the Iraqi people. America will continue to support the men and women who wear the uniform. And we will defeat the enemy overseas so we do not have to face them at home.

Audience members. Hooah!

The President. So, I thank you for your service. I thank you for your sacrifice. And as I leave this peninsula for probably my last time as your President, I go with confidence in our mission, confidence in our country, and with great gratitude in my heart for everyone who wears our Nation's uniform.

Thank you for what you're doing. May God bless you. May God bless the people here. And may God continue to bless the United States of America. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:48 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Cpl. Victor L. Berlus, USA, 8th Army, who introduced the President; Gen. Walter L. "Skip" Sharp, USA, commander, U.S. Forces Korea, and his wife Joanne; Gen. Lee Sung-chool, South Korean Army, deputy commander, Combined Forces Command, and his wife Park Jung-shin; and Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Winzenried, U.S. Forces Korea.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej of Thailand in Bangkok, Thailand August 6, 2008

Prime Minister Samak. We are pleased to welcome President Bush visit to Thailand on the auspicious occasion of the celebration of 155th—75th anniversary of Thai-U.S. relations. As Thailand has now assumed the

ASEAN chairmanship, we will use the opportunity to strengthen our engagement and cooperation with the U.S., both bilaterally and through ASEAN.

President Bush and I had just a very good discussion on several issues of common interest. We discussed the strengthen of the close military and the security cooperation, which benefit both country and the region. A case of—in point is our military close partnership during the tsunami and post-Cyclone Nargis to facilitate access of American relief and assistance to the effected countries.

We will continue our discussion on the other regional issues over the dinner this evening. President Bush expressed his appreciation for Thailand's humanitarian role in sheltering displaced persons from neighboring countries for over 30 years. I also thanked the President for the United States understanding on the Preah Vihear issue.

We agreed to enhance the Thai-U.S. relation by focusing on education, public health, sciences, security, and the law enforcement cooperation. Our two countries share the long and special connection. President Bush—former President Bush senior and Mrs. Barbara Bush came to Thailand to pay tribute to His Majesty the King on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of accession to the throne in December 2006.

Looking towards the future, we agreed that our alliance and friendship will remain firm and close as have been in the past 144–174 years. We are determined to continue working closely together to further strengthen our relationship and good will for the benefit of our two countries and the region.

President Bush. Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister. *Sawatdee khrap.* [Laughter] Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister, for welcoming Laura and me and our daughter Barbara to your beautiful country. I want to thank you very much for welcoming us on behalf of His Majesty the King and Her Majesty the Queen. We appreciate the opportunity to come back, and we honor the friendship that has been in existence for 175 years.

I want to thank you very much for being such a strong ally in the war against terror. Our nations are strengthening our security and defense cooperation. Thailand continues to host Cobra Gold, which is one of the larg-

est annual multilateral training exercises in Southeast Asia.

Thailand's troops have helped the people of Iraq and Afghanistan as they battle extremists and strengthen their democracy, and I want to thank you for those contributions, Mr. Prime Minister. America and Thailand are coordinating our law enforcement, counterterrorism, and counterproliferation activities so we can do a better job of protecting our citizens from danger.

The United States and Thailand are working to expand freedom with good governance. I want to thank you very much and congratulate the people of Thailand for restoring its democracy. Through the Asia Pacific Democracy Partnership, our nations are working together to strengthen democratic values and institutions throughout the region. As the chair of ASEAN, we support your efforts to reduce trade barriers, and to expand economic opportunity, and help Southeast Asia grow in hope.

The United States and Thailand work together to fight disease. I don't think our citizens understand this, Mr. Prime Minister, but we've dedicated \$35 million to help prevent and treat HIV/AIDS here in Thailand, and we're happy to do so. I'm looking forward to going tomorrow to the clinic where we get to see the efforts of the initiative. It's called the Mercy Centre, and I appreciate you arranging that, for me to go see, Mr. Prime Minister.

We're also working on avian flu. I think it's very important for our nations to prepare for the worst. Obviously, we're hoping for the best. And so we've got a good, strong initiative on avian flu.

We're working together to help the people of Burma. We responded very quickly when Burma was struck by the terrible cyclone, and I want to thank you very much for your leadership on that issue. After all, yours was the place where much of the world aid came to be distributed to the poor people there that were deeply affected by the storm.

We want to see prosperity and freedom restored to Burma. Tomorrow Laura is going to the Thai-Burmese border to visit a resettlement camp where Burmese refugees are receiving health care and humanitarian aid. She's looking forward to the trip, and I'm

looking forward to hearing her report from the trip.

So, Mr. Prime Minister, I want to thank you very much for your hospitality. I want to thank you for feeding my delegation. We're looking forward to eating some good Thai food, which is very famous throughout the world. Please give my very best regards to His Majesty and Her Majesty.

Prime Minister Samak. I will.

President Bush. And thank you very much for being so gracious.

Prime Minister Samak. All right. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:51 p.m. at the Government House. In his remarks, the President referred to King Phumiphon Adunyadet and Queen Sirikit of Thailand.

Remarks in Bangkok

August 7, 2008

Thank you. *Sawatdee khrap*. Thank you for the warm welcome. Laura and I are delighted to be back in Bangkok. Such a beautiful city, full of gracious and hospitable people. We appreciate the warm welcome extended by His Majesty the King and Her Majesty the Queen.

I realize I'm a few days ahead of time, but I do wish Her Majesty a happy birthday. Above all, I bring America's warmest wishes to our oldest allies in Asia, the people of Thailand.

Our friendship began 175 years ago this spring, when President Andrew Jackson dispatched an envoy to Siam. Negotiations soon concluded a treaty of peace and commerce and sealed it, curiously enough, with a lotus flower on one side and an eagle and stars on the other. Generations of close friendship followed. At one point, the Thai King offered to send elephants to America. [Laughter] President Abraham Lincoln politely declined. [Laughter] Yes, I was wondering whether or not we can kind of get the offer back on the table. [Laughter] Although my ranch isn't big enough, probably, to hold the elephants. [Laughter]

The values of freedom and openness that gave birth to our alliance have sustained it through the centuries. American troops and

Royal Thai Armed Forces have stood united from Korea and Vietnam to Afghanistan and Iraq. Our free market economies have surged forward on a rising tide of trade and investment. Tourism has boomed as more people have discovered this beautiful and ancient land. And some 200,000 Thai Americans now enrich my nation with their enterprise and their culture and their faith.

On this historic anniversary of our alliance, America looks to Thailand as a leader in the region and a partner around the world. I was proud to designate Thailand a major non-NATO ally of the United States. I salute the Thai people on the restoration of democracy, which has proved that liberty and law reign here in the "land of the free." In many ways, the story of Thailand is the story of this region. Over the past six decades, Asia has gone from an area mired in poverty and recovering from world war to a thriving and dynamic region. America has played a role in this transformation. By maintaining a stabilizing military presence, we helped to—we helped free emerging nations to grow without concerns about their security. By pursuing strong diplomatic engagement, we helped once-hostile nations resolve their differences in peace. By opening our markets to Asian exports, we helped powerful economies to take shape.

I'm proud of these contributions. Yet, the primary source of this region's success is the people. From South Korea to Singapore, nations pursued economic policies based upon free enterprise, free trade, and the rule of law. And the results have astounded the world. Last year, trade in goods between the United States and this side of the Pacific reached \$1 trillion. And there's striking change from the pattern of centuries: More trade now crosses the Pacific than the Atlantic.

With the rise of economic freedom has come a dramatic expansion of political liberty. Think about this: After World War II, Australia and New Zealand were the region's only democracies. Today, the majority of Asian nations answer to their citizens. With this shift, the people of this region have defied the skeptics who claimed that Asian values were incompatible with liberty. Free societies emerged in largely Buddhist Thailand,

largely Hindu India, largely Muslim Indonesia, largely Shinto Japan, and the largely Christian Philippines. As freedom has taken root, peace has followed. And the region has gone decades without a major war.

Some have called this transformation the “Asian miracle.” In truth, it’s no miracle at all. It’s evidence of universal truths: The passion for liberty transcends culture and faith. Free markets unleash innovation and blaze the path to prosperity. Trusting in the natural talent and creativity of a nation’s people is the surest way to build a vibrant and hopeful society.

When I became President, I brought a conviction that America is a Pacific nation and that our interests and ideals require stronger engagement in Asia than ever before. So over the past 7 years, America has pursued four broad goals in the region: reinvigorate our alliances; forge new relationships with countries that share our values; seize new opportunities for prosperity and growth; and confront shared challenges together.

Confident and purposeful alliances are the best way to advance peace and prosperity in Asia. America has five treaty alliances in Asia. And we take them seriously, and we bolstered each one. We signed a new treaty with Australia that deepens our cooperation in defense trade. We helped the Philippines upgrade its military capabilities. We’ve strengthened security initiatives here in Thailand. We’re improving our force posture in South Korea by working to move our troops out of cities and towns and into more strategically effective positions. We’ve reinforced our close alliance with Japan by launching new missile defense initiatives and by transforming our troop posture in a way that preserves our strong position to maintain the peace in the Pacific. All these steps were designed to reassure our allies that America will stand firmly beside them in any test we face.

I’ve also worked to develop strong personal relationships with our allies’ elected leaders. Who could ever forget the trip to Elvis’s place with Prime Minister Koizumi? *[Laughter]* I certainly will never forget it. *[Laughter]* I don’t think a lot of people in Memphis, Tennessee, will ever forget it either. These friendships are built on a founda-

tion of honesty and respect and shared values. And when a new occupant moves into the White House next year, America’s alliances in Asia will be the strongest they have ever been.

As America has revitalized our treaty alliances, we have forged deeper ties with other free nations in Asia. Countries that share our democratic ideals should be natural partners of the United States. Yet, when I took office, our relations with many free nations in Asia were strained. For example, America has dramatically improved our ties with India, the world’s largest democracy, including historic agreement on civilian nuclear energy.

We’ve turned around our relationship with Indonesia, which is home to more Muslims than any other nation on Earth. We’ve partnered closely with Indonesia’s freely elected government to help develop the institutions of a vibrant democracy after decades of military rule. We signed a landmark agreement with Mongolia to help boost democratic development. We’ve enhanced cooperation with the thriving countries of ASEAN, which is now chaired by the great nation of Thailand. We’ve joined with free nations throughout the region to establish a new Asian Pacific Democracy Partnership, the region’s only organization whose sole focus is promoting democratic values and institutions in Asia.

Overall, America has improved our relationships with all of Asia’s major powers at the same time. Experts would have said this was impossible because of historical tensions between these nations. But something has rendered the old patterns obsolete. In an era of integrated markets and common threats, the expansion of freedom in one nation benefits all other free nations. This change marks a sharp departure from the zero-sum mentality of the past. And this change provides a clear charge for the future. Every nation in this region has a stake in ensuring that Asia continues to grow in liberty and prosperity and hope.

One of the most powerful drivers of liberty and prosperity and hope is trade. When I took office, America had free trade agreements in force with only three countries, none of them in Asia. Today, we have agreements in force with 14 countries, including

Australia and Singapore. We've concluded a promising agreement with South Korea, which I am pushing the United States Congress to pass. We've begun negotiating free trade agreements with Malaysia and a bilateral investment treaty with Vietnam. We look forward to resuming trade negotiations with Thailand. We've supported the vision of a free trade area of the Asia Pacific, which would bring down trade barriers across this region.

The nations of the Asia Pacific now have more vibrant trade and investment ties than ever before. And workers and consumers and entrepreneurs across this region will reap the benefits from years to come. Unfortunately, our country sometimes sends mixed signals about the openness of our economy. Voices of economic isolationism do not represent the interests of the American people. For decades, America has maintained a bipartisan commitment to flexible and open markets, and this must not change. I urge people across this region to reject protectionism in your own countries. Together, we can lead the world toward more growth and more jobs and more opportunities by staying open for—to investment and trade.

For all the gains we've made, our nations still face challenges, and we're working together to confront them. No bigger challenge, as far as I'm concerned, than the threat of terror; than the threat of extremists willing to murder the innocent to achieve their political objectives. With partners across this region, we have brought to justice some of the world's most dangerous terrorists. We're also working to counter the hateful ideology of the extremists by promoting a more hopeful alternative, one based upon freedom and liberty.

We strongly support democracies like Thailand and Indonesia and Malaysia, which are making determined stands against extremists and showing that Islam and tolerance go hand in hand. Many of America's friends in Asia have also stood with us in Afghanistan and Iraq, where newly free people are replacing decades of fear with a future of hope. America is proud to stand with so many brave partners in answering the call of our time. And no matter how difficult the test may be, we will not relent until this ideological struggle is won.

Together we're confronting the threat posed by North Korea. The nations of Northeast Asia all have an urgent stake in ensuring that Pyongyang does not threaten the region with nuclear weapons. Yet, when I took office, there was no way for these nations to approach North Korea with a unified front. So America joined with China and South Korea and Japan and Russia to create the six-party talks. Faced with concerted pressure from all its neighbors, North Korea has pledged to dismantle its nuclear facilities and give up its nuclear weapons. Recently, the regime submitted a declaration of nuclear activities. Now, the North Korean regime must commit to help us verify the declaration and address outstanding concerns about its behavior, including its proliferation and uranium enrichment.

The other five parties will stand united until we reach our ultimate goal: a Korean Peninsula free of oppression and free of nuclear weapons. And the United States will continue to insist that the regime in Pyongyang end its harsh rule and respect the dignity and human rights of the North Korean people.

Together we seek an end to tyranny in Burma. The noble cause has many devoted champions, and I happen to be married to one of them. Today Laura is traveling to the Thai-Burmese border, where she's visiting a resettlement camp and a medical clinic. America reiterates our call on Burma's military junta to release Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners. We'll continue working until the people of Burma have their freedom that they deserve.

Together we're confronting other serious challenges to our people and prosperity. Governments across the region have coordinated efforts to address pandemics like avian flu. The major economies of the region are working for a global climate agreement that improves energy security and cuts greenhouse gases without cutting economic growth. The region has come together to respond to natural disasters, from the tsunami of 2004 to this year's cyclone. With all these partnerships, we're deepening trust and openness among our nations. And we're ensuring that whatever challenges the future

may bring, the nations of the Asia Pacific will meet them together.

One question on the minds of many here in Asia and many around the world, is the future direction of China. I've been fascinated by China since my first trip there in 1975, when my dad was the head of the United States Liaison Office in Beijing. At the time, the country was just emerging from the Cultural Revolution. Poverty was rampant. Bicycles were everywhere, and people were wearing almost identical clothes. It seemed unimaginable that three decades later, Beijing would be sprinting into the modern era, covered in skyscrapers, filled with cars, and home to international businesses, as well as hosting the Olympic games.

Over the years, America has had complex relations with China. I was determined to set our relationship on sturdy and principled footing. Four goals we've pursued in Asia—reinforcing our alliances, forming new democratic partnerships, deepening our economic ties, and cooperating on shared challenges—have given America and our allies valuable new platforms from which to confidently engage China. A peaceful and successful future for this region requires the involvement of both China and the United States. And it's important that America's engagement throughout the Asia Pacific be purposeful and enduring.

China and the United States share important economic interests. The growth sparked by China's free market reforms is good for the Chinese people, who are building a confident middle class with a stake in a peaceful future. China's new purchasing power is good for the world, because it provides an enormous market for exports from across the globe. The key to ensuring that all sides benefits is insisting that China adhere to the rules of the international economic system. So, America strongly supported China's accession to the World Trade Organization, where we're able to contest trade practices that we find unfair. I was disappointed that the Doha round of trade talks has stalled, and the United States will continue to engage China, India, and other nations to help reach a successful collusion—conclusion.

America has also established a new strategic economic dialog with China, where we

discuss ways to ensure long-term growth and widely shared prosperity in both our economies, as well as issues like currency exchange rates and intellectual property rights. Through these discussions and others, we're making clear to China that being a global economic leader carries with it the duty to act responsibly on matters from energy to the environment to development in places like Africa.

America and China have found other areas of cooperation. We're partnering to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. China has played a critical leadership role in the six-party talks. America has also stressed our determination to maintain peace across the Taiwan Strait. From the beginning of my Presidency, I have stated clearly that America's approach to Taiwan would be based on our longstanding "one China" policy, our three joint communiques, and our steadfast commitment to the security of Taiwan's democracy under the Taiwan Relations Act. I've also articulated a principle that there should be no unilateral attempts by either side to alter the status quo. And as a result of frank engagement and firm diplomacy, the tensions that once roiled the Taiwan Strait have calmed, and we're witnessing a new period of stability and peace.

Our constructive relationship in these areas has placed America in a better position to be honest and direct on other issues. I have spoken clearly and candidly and consistently with China's leaders about our deep concerns over religious freedom and human rights. I have met repeatedly with Chinese dissidents and religious believers. The United States believes the people of China deserve the fundamental liberty that is the natural right of all human beings.

So, America stands in firm opposition to China's detention of political dissidents and human rights advocates and religious activists. We speak out for a free press, freedom of assembly, and labor rights not to antagonize China's leaders, but because trusting its people with greater freedom is the only way for China to develop its full potential. We press for openness and justice not to impose our beliefs, but to allow the Chinese people to express theirs. As Chinese scientist Xu

Liangying has said: “Human nature is universal and needs to pursue freedom and equality.”

Ultimately, only China can decide what course it will follow. America and our partners are realistic, and we’re prepared for any possibility. I’m optimistic about China’s future. Young people who grow up with the freedom to trade goods will ultimately demand the freedom to trade ideas, especially on an unrestricted Internet. Change in China will arrive on its own terms and in keeping with its own history and its own traditions. Yet, change will arrive. And it will be clear for all to see that those who aspire to speak their conscience and worship their God are no threat to the future of China. They’re the people who will make China a great nation in the 21st century.

This is my last trip to East Asia as President. I have great confidence that Asia will continue to grow in opportunity and achievement and influence. I’m confident because I know the creative and enterprising spirit of this region’s people. I’m confident because the forces of freedom and hope that unleashed the transformation of Asia can never be turned back. And I’m confident because I know the bonds between America and our friends in Asia will never be broken.

When forces from Imperial Japan entered Thailand during World War II, the Thai Ambassador in Washington was directed to declare war on the United States. He bravely refused to deliver the declaration. In turn, America refused to recognize Thailand as our enemy. Instead, we helped Thais in America band together in a movement called Seri Thai. They deployed across the Pacific, infiltrated behind enemy lines, and gathered intelligence that helped speed the liberation of this great land.

Several members of the Seri Thai movement are still with us—here. And I’m honored you all are here, and I appreciate your presence more than you can possibly know. You’ve earned the lasting gratitude of the American people. And all in this region can count on a solemn promise from the United States: America stood with the free people of Asia in the past; America stands with the free people of Asia today. And we will stand

with the free people of Asia long into your bright future.

Thank you for your time. May God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:30 a.m. at the Queen Sirikit National Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to King Phumiphon Adunyadet and Queen Sirikit of Thailand; former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the National League of Democracy in Burma.

Remarks Prior to a Lunch With Burmese Activists in Bangkok

August 7, 2008

The President. Thank you all for joining me. I’m looking forward to my lunch with men and women who care deeply about the human condition in Burma.

Unfortunately, my wife is not here. She’s on the Thai-Burmese border talking about the same thing that we’re going to be talking about. I want you to know, and want the people of your country to know, the American people care deeply about the people of Burma, and we dream for the day in which people will be free. And part of my reason for asking you for lunch is not only to hear your own stories—hear your stories, but for you to give me advice about what you think America ought to be doing.

I’ve just been briefed on the response to the typhoon. And I’m pleased that our Government was so generous. And I’m pleased that a lot of the aid that we paid for is actually getting to the people themselves. One of my questions is not how much money you give, but is it actually making a significant difference in people’s lives, and was told it is. I was told the stories about U.S. money going to buy seed and fertilizer so farmers in the delta can get their crops in the ground and feed their families and, hopefully, feed people in their communities.

I’m always inspired by acts of courage, and I’m having lunch with courageous people. So, I want to thank you for coming. I have a couple of comments, and then we’ll eat some food.

Do you want to start, please? What’s your name?

Lawy Aye Nang. My name is Lawy Aye Nang. I'm the Palaung ethnic. I also belong to the Women's League of Burma, a Burma women's organization comprised of 12 women's organizations based on different ethnicities of Burma. And we are working to empower women and to be able to participate in peaceful reconciliations in Burma. And also raising awareness about Burma, about the gross human rights violations in Burma that are committed by the military regime. And the international community can help with this work.

And the military regime, if they are continuing to deploy their troops along the ethnic areas, and their soldiers continue to commit systematic human rights violations against the ethnic nationality, which includes also rapes. This has been used—long used as a weapon of war in Burma.

The President. Yes.

Lawy Aye Nang. And we advocate to get the support—with the support from the international community, and we are very lucky and very fortunate to have the United States Government to support us in different means and different ways. And, especially, we would like to give—I would like to give our gratitude to the United States for the new sanctions in blocking the import of Burmese jade—

The President. Jade, right.

Lawy Aye Nang. —to the United States.

The President. Right.

Lawy Aye Nang. And this is really hitting the regime and—the regime and their associates who have been destroying the country's natural resources for their own benefit and leaving ordinary citizens in extremely poverty.

And secondly, we are also very glad—grateful to have the—our American friends and helping the Cyclone Nargis survivors—

The President. Yes, yes.

Lawy Aye Nang. —the victims. And we also would like to inform the United States Government here. And there is still restrictions of aid to the Cyclone Nargis victims by the military regime. And we'd like to also request that the United States Government to put pressure—to continue to pressure on

the regime to hinder the—to give the access by the locals and international community to the victims of the Nargis Cyclone survivors.

The President. Thank you.

Lawy Aye Nang. And because we are really concerned at the women's organization here, our women and children who are in the Cyclone Nargis affected area are—

The President. Yes.

Lawy Aye Nang. —vulnerable to the sexual exploitations.

And thank you, so much.

The President. Good job.

Yes, sir.

Aung Zaw. My name is Aung Zaw. I was a student activist in 1988, and I was briefly detained. I spent a week in a notorious [*inaudible*] prison. I was tortured there; then after that, I left Burma. I started the Irrawaddy Magazine, which I started documenting human rights violations and I started collecting information from Burma. So, we have a stringer who works inside the country send us information to us. And from here—that we release the information from here. We use information from him. We also promote an independent person's participation on—[*inaudible*].

And I think we are very pleased that we have this lunch meeting. And this was a very, I think, not only a symbolic meeting, but also send a strong signal to some ASEAN nations, and also to China, in particular, who continue to defend and protect the Burmese military Government.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:06 p.m. at the U.S. Ambassador to Burma's residence. Participating in the lunch were Lawy Aye Nang, joint general secretary, Women's League of Burma; Aung Zaw, editor, Irrawaddy Magazine; Aung Naing Oo, senior associate, Vahu Development Institute, Chiang Mai University; Lian Sakhong, general secretary, Ethnic Nationalities Council; Win Min, lecturer, Chiang Mai and Payap Universities; political analyst Bo Kyaw Nyein; Bo Kyi, head, Assistance Association for Political Prisoners; Naing Aung, general secretary, Forum for Democracy; and Kayw Kyaw, director, Political Defiance Committee of the National Council of the Union of Burma.

Interview With Foreign Radio Journalists in Bangkok

August 7, 2008

The President. I am in Bangkok, and one of the reasons I've come is not only to pay my respects to the Government and the people of Thailand, but also to be in a position to speak about freedom in Burma. I just had lunch with some people that are deeply concerned about the future of Burma, people that were involved in the student marches of '88, people involved with humanitarian assistance. I was regretful that my wife couldn't join us, because she's an articulate spokesman for the people of Burma; but she's on the border on this mission of saying to the Burmese people: You have friends, and you're not alone; and the United States cares about you.

So, I want to thank you for giving me the chance to answer your questions, and I'll be glad to do so now. Why don't we just go around the table?

Q. Mr. President, it's an honor to be with you, and many thanks, giving a chance to—this roundtable discussion.

The President. Thank you.

Q. My name is Thein Htike Oo, from Voice of America; Toe Zaw Latt from Democratic Voice of Burma; and Soe Win Than from BBC. We have one lady here from Radio Free Asia, May Pyone Aung.

The President. Good, thank you. Welcome.

U.S. Aid to Burma

Q. I would like to start a couple questions about the relief aid policy of United States.

The President. Yes.

Q. Recent relief operation, the Burmese regime didn't allow the U.S. Navy ship aid through the Pacific come, and international community, the U.S. obviously was really frustrated. I would like to know, if Burma faced another catastrophe or disaster, are you going to try to help, or are you going to—[inaudible]—Burmese regime again?

The President. Well, absolutely. But first of all, we care about the human condition, human suffering. And there's no question, there was huge human suffering when the cyclone came through. I can remember the

day it hit. I was told that this was going to be a major disaster for the people, and so I ordered our Navy ships in the area to be prepared to sail toward the Burmese area to provide aid and logistics and management. We're very good about dealing with major emergencies. And interestingly enough, we were involved with a military mission in the area, so we were prepared to send a robust package in.

Unfortunately, the Government, the military leader chose not to allow for there to be immediate help. No telling how many lives could have been saved, or how much human suffering could have been dealt with more effectively had there not been the slow response of the military dictator.

But now our aid, along with other people—other countries' aid, is beginning to move. In answer to your question, yes, our Government will respond if there's another catastrophe. And hopefully, the military people have learned a lesson: That there needs to be truthfulness at the highest levels of government. People have got to understand and listen to reality and understand that nations and people want to help when there's suffering. And so, we will respond. In the meantime, we're going to keep pushing for freedom.

Burmese Government's Acceptance of Foreign Aid

Q. During the time, a lot of Burmese people, they were expecting a sort of humanitarian intervention, even though the Burmese regime didn't allow the aid. So why it didn't happen, or what is the reason—

The President. We chose to go through the normal routes. We wanted to basically say, here's your opportunity to receive aid. I'm disappointed that the military dictator chose not to allow the aid in quickly. But I don't think it would have been helpful for the Burmese people had there been a conflict over the delivery of aid. What we don't want to do is compound a terrible situation. In other words, if we just sent in—sent people in, our military in without visas or permission from the Government, there's no telling what the reaction would have been. And so therefore, we were trying to make the problem better, not worse.

And so, yes, I—no question, there was frustration on the delays, but I felt the best way to do so was the way we ended up doing it. My only point is, is that there's—if there's another catastrophe, and let's pray there's not, but if there is, the Government will now see that they have nothing to fear by welcoming in U.S. aid and other countries' aid. They ought to welcome that.

And now the question is, how quickly can the delta region rebuild? And of course, we'd like to help on that too. We spent about \$57 million, or over \$50 million of help so far. And we do so generously. We care about the stories we hear. And we want the farmers to get seed and fertilizer so they can grow and feed their families and feed the people in their area and, hopefully, grow enough for the country.

Joint Military Exercises

Q. Now, I don't take too long. Now, the United States has proposed civil military relief exercise with the countries in this region, and recent ASEAN meeting endorsed that relief exercise, and probably next year the Philippine will host. So, they agree to cooperate relief exercise.

The President. That's good.

Q. I wonder, if the countries in this region agree to cooperate, are you going to invite this exercise to include Burmese military regime or North Korea?

The President. That's an interesting question. I don't know, I haven't thought that through yet, to be frank with you. I can't answer your question, because you're the first person who's asked me that question. I will take it back to Washington and under consideration. Interesting idea, I have no—but I can't say yes or no right now.

Q. Thank you.

The President. Thank you. Yes, very good. Yes, sir.

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

The President. Toe Zaw Latt.

Burma-International Community Relations/China

Q. There's no real consensus on how to deal with Burma in international community. How will the United States try to overcome

this impasse, most recently seen at the Security Council over Burma?

The President. Well, what we've got to do is continue to work with countries on the Security Council and explain to them that what matters most in life is the human condition, and that individual rights are important. And we just have a lot of work to do to convince people that the status quo in Burma—that life can be better, let me put it that way. And it's in their interest that life is better, particularly China.

China is an important country on the United Nations Security Council; they're an important country in the world; obviously, Burma's neighbor. And we—I hope that I can use my good relations with the Chinese leadership to convince them that the way forward is for there to be more civic participation, more citizen participation in the future of the country; and that the perfect way to do that is to explain to them how backward the Government was when it came to the response for the natural disaster. Hopefully, that will open up eyes.

But no question, there's a lot of diplomacy that needs to be done to convince others that people like Aung Suu San Kyi [Aung San Suu Kyi] * deserve to be free, and political prisoners ought to be free. And the reason I'm talking to you today is because I want those in prison and their families to know that we care about them and think about them.

China-U.S. Relations

Q. Do you think there will be some common ground that the United States and Chinese Government can work together?

The President. Well, I hope so. I mean, it's in the common ground, for example, that the Burmese be a peaceful country. I mean, we care about that. Whether or not the Chinese will agree that somebody like Aung Suu San Kyi [Aung San Suu Kyi] * ought to be free and ought to be the center of foreign policy like it is for us, I don't know. We just have to work it hard.

* White House correction.

***President's Upcoming Visit to China/
Meeting With Chinese Leadership***

Q. Soe Win Than from BBC. Picking up on this China relation, you are going to China today——

The President. I am soon.

Q. ——you will be meeting the highest Chinese leadership tomorrow.

The President. Yes.

Q. And you said you would mention Burma to those leaders. You haven't been able to convince them until now.

The President. Right.

Q. How optimistic are you that you will be able to convince, and how are you going to go about doing this time, sir?

The President. Well, you know, look, it's—I've mentioned Burma a lot to the Chinese leadership, and it's—I've mentioned Darfur; I've mentioned Tibet; I've mentioned religious freedom inside China. So, there's a lot of subjects to discuss with the Chinese leadership. And it's just a matter of continuing to make the case. I have—I'm sure the Chinese leader's mind is going to be on the Olympics. This is a big deal for the people of China. One of the reasons I'm going is to be able to pay my respects to the people of China, and well as to be in a position where I can bring up these issues with the Chinese Government.

We'll see. I'm just—it's—to me, this is a process of continually having a consistent message, speaking to the people of Burma, letting the prisoners know we care about them, and pressing hard at the international level. I make no promises to your listeners except that we'll continue to try.

Burma-U.S. Relations

Q. Yes. One thing is the relationship with the regime. Then you have been probably the President who is more committed for the Burmese democratic movement. But the United States tough line against Burma sometimes entrenched the generals there, and some people would say that given the example of the Nargis Cyclone relief efforts, then if you have had this kind of relationship with the generals then you could be able to do more. So——

The President. Yes, it's an interesting question. I understand your point. We have

been tough, because we believe that the general has been very stubborn in not allowing certain freedoms, and we believe that's wrong. We believe that those arrested in the marches of '88 ought to be released from prison. There's about 2,000 political prisoners who are being held simply because they had a belief that was contrary to what the general thinks.

You notice I'm saying "general" because it's generally viewed as a one-man regime. I know there's others that support him.

But, yes, I have been and—because I believe that—as a matter of fact, just signed a bill that's going to continue the sanction regime, particularly when it comes to jade and precious gems.

That's an interesting question, had we had a different relationship, one, what would it say to the reformers? But also, would it have changed the number of days required to let relief in? It's hard for me to tell. What I'm concerned about is the general wasn't being given full information, that he wasn't fully aware of reality. And I don't think his reaction was because of relations with the United States; I think his reaction was—is because he was in denial to a certain extent about the realities on the ground.

But I'm constantly—look, my mission, so long as I'm the President, which is 6 more months, is to think about ways to relieve human suffering and how to help people inside Burma. And if I thought it would make—help us achieve the objective by changing the relationship with the Government, I'd give it serious consideration. But I don't necessarily agree with that premise. I wish there was a magic wand to wave; there isn't. On the other hand, the people that are listening to your radio broadcast has got to know that the President of the United States and a lot of other people in America are concerned and care about how they live and want them to be free and want them to realize the beauties of a Burmese-style democracy. And whether that happens tomorrow or not is doubtful. Nevertheless, what is important, though, if for there to be a strong voice in laying out that vision. And that's what I'll continue to do.

Yes, ma'am.

President's Lunch With Burmese Activists

Q. Mr. President, you just met a group of Burmese activists and then you share views with them on Burma's struggle. What do you see and what do you get from having lunch with them?

The President. First of all, there's a lot of courageous people that have made a decision to work hard on behalf of the rest of their citizens to achieve a free society. Secondly, that they have great hopes that the United States will continue to speak out, that the United States will not abandon our belief in the universality of freedom. Thirdly, they were—I asked—I said, if you were me, what would you do? And I got a variety of opinions. And it was fascinating to hear voices of people who have actually been on the frontlines of change.

I came away with the impression that they're very grateful to the American people for the generous support. Sometimes our generosity is not—actually ends up in the hands of the people as quickly as it should; but nevertheless, that they are—there seems to be a general awareness that the American people care. And there was a—there's a certain reality, a certain sense that there are—one of the things I came away with: There are people who may even be wearing the military uniform who understand that the status quo is not acceptable, and there needs to be a better way forward.

But a lot of the frustration was focused on a single person—the general in charge of the country, and that—there was a belief that he didn't seem to care that much about the plight of the average citizen. And so, hopefully, U.S. pressure and U.S. focus will get him to think more about the average person and care about the way the average person lives.

Burmese Democracy Movement

Q. Many critics said that our opposition itself is also very much divided, and they are not united enough against the military regime, and that—do you think that the United States can help prepare them for their future democratic Burma?

The President. Well, first of all—that was an interesting question—I didn't think they were very divided—at least the crowd I was

with. But I thought they were pretty united in their dream for a better Burma.

You know, one of the things that obviously the people involved in the democracy movement have got to think through is how do you get from here to there. In other words, it's not easy to go from a very fierce military one-man rule to democracy. And so therefore, it needs to be well thought-out. And you have a very good point, and that is, is that there is a—is there a focused roadmap to get to a better tomorrow? It's hard for me to tell just in that conversation. Obviously, that's going to be a concern for—it must be a concern for people.

One thing is for certain, is the Constitution is a sham. The rewrite of the Constitution is just a—it's not a good document; it's not a fair document. So therefore, there needs to be a constitution at some point in time that will enable Burma to be a federal state that—based upon the will of the people.

Burmese Elections

Q. Follow up on that. The military regime will hold a election in 2010, and they began preparing this month for election. And then what is U.S. stand on this election?

The President. My stand is they ought to be open and fair, and I doubt they will be. I think the Constitution is a sham constitution, and therefore—but, you know, I—this is a society that's not interested in democracy. They have proved they're not interested in democracy. If they're interested in democracy, they'd let the prisoners out of prison, for starters. The political prisoners would be a given to chance to leave and live in a free life. That's the first test, not election under a sham constitution.

And so, you know, they'll play like the election was fair and all this—to justify their behavior. And I think people like yourself ought to be speaking out that the elections, unless certain conditions are met, can't possibly be fair.

U.S. Policy on Burma

Q. We understand, and the Burmese listeners also understand, how you and the First Lady are compassionate for Burmese people, how much you strongly support to the freedom for Burma. But I wonder, place here

the new administration—will be installed, and any chance the policy changes from the United States and——

The President. I would be very surprised. I know both candidates and the—freedom for Burma is a bipartisan issue. And the Burmese people—it's not just the President that thinks about the citizens of Burma. There's a lot of people in our Congress, both Republicans and Democrats, that feel the same way. And so, I think the Burmese people are going to have a consistent friend in the United States.

China's Role in Burma Situation

Q. You're talking to the China authorities. Do you think China can play a role to make situation better in Burma?

The President. I think—oh, yes, I think China could play a different role. I do. The question is whether they want to or not. And so I'll—I will bring up the Burma—Burmese issue again to President Hu Jintao, who I like. He's an easy man to talk to. And they just got different interests at times from the United States. And so, I've got to work hard to see if I can't convince him that we share the same goals. It's not going to be easy, but I'll try to do so.

Thailand and ASEAN's Role in Burma Situation

Q. Wonder will Thailand and ASEAN in Southeast Asia——

The President. Yes, Thailand can help. ASEAN can help. They need to send a signal. Obviously, Thailand was very helpful when it came to helping with the cyclone—aftermath of the cyclone. After all, this is a staging center for a lot of our materials and other peoples'—countries' materials that came through. Yes, and they can continue to work the issue. We just got to make sure that ASEAN delivers a message that is inspiring to the people of Burma.

International Community's Role in Burma Situation

Q. Mr. President, besides sanction and travel restrictions on the generals in Burma, do you—have you ever thought of alternative strategies work on Burma—under U.S. and then with the international community?

The President. A different strategy?

Q. Yes.

The President. You mean, trying to convince—well, I think our strategy is the right strategy, the U.S. strategy. And if your question is, do I—am I trying to convince others to join us on the strategy? Well, yes. In other words, it would be better if we could all speak with one voice. And I've been in—you know, it hadn't been that hard with some countries, like the European countries, for example. But it's been difficult with some of the countries in the neighborhood here because we don't share the same goals.

My goal is democracy. Their goal is stability and—at times. And that's not necessarily the—I'm for stability too. Don't get me wrong. But I'd like to see the system move toward a free society. I want to see these prisoners released. I want to see people treated better. I've got a friend who helps deal with the rape victims along the border. These women are being raped—she says, systematically raped by the military as part of their campaign of fear. That stuff has got to end in order for me to feel comfortable with any other policy toward Burma.

And that's a—this is a priority. In other words, there's—and others have different priorities. And so therefore, it's hard to find common ground, but we'll continue to try to do so.

Okay, last—yes. Then I got to go to the games. [*Laughter*] I'm cheering the American Olympic team.

U.S. Foreign Policy in Asia

Q. I'm going tonight too, sir. You have the conviction and idea to bring freedom and democracy to Burma, but some people would say that the United States doesn't have much strategic interest in Burma, unlike Afghanistan. Where does Burma fit in, sir?

The President. I think so long as there's human suffering like there is here in Burma, then this will be of strategic importance to the United States. Look, no question, we've got a lot of issues on our platter, but I think about Burma a lot. Maybe one reason why is my wife was such a activist on the subject.

But nevertheless, I gave a speech today in Thailand that talked about how America is, in many ways, a Pacific nation, and that I think—I know the center of gravity of a

lot of policy is shifting to the Far East. And therefore, Burma, the Burmese issue is—will be an integral part of any Far Eastern policy. And no question, America's strategic interests lie in a lot of places, but they lie here as well. And so long as this issue festers, then it will have the attention of the American policymakers.

Thank you all for your time. Very good job.

Q. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The interview began at 1:38 p.m. at the U.S. Ambassador to Burma's residence. In his remarks, the President referred to Senior Gen. Than Shwe, Chairman, State Peace and Development Council of Burma; Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the National League of Democracy in Burma; and President Hu Jintao of China. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Statement on the 10th Anniversary of Terrorist Attacks Against U.S. Embassies in Africa

August 7, 2008

Today marks the tenth anniversary of the Al Qaida terrorist attacks against U.S. Embassies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Nairobi, Kenya. In Dar es Salaam, the terrorists killed 11 people and wounded more than 85 others; the blast in Nairobi killed 218 people and injured approximately 5,000. We remember today those who lost their lives or were injured in the attacks, their families, and their loved ones.

The attacks in East Africa are brutal examples of Al Qaida's tactics in its war against innocent people worldwide, carried out in the heart of two African capitals without regard to the race, creed, or nationality of the victims. This has been Al Qaida's method for more than a decade, indiscriminately attacking civilians throughout the world. The attacks in Kenya and Tanzania remind us that Al Qaida and its terrorist affiliates continue to want to attack the United States and our allies. This anniversary reinforces the need to confront the terrorists, to work with our allies to bring them to justice, and to prevent such attacks from happening again.

Remarks at a Dedication Ceremony for the United States Embassy in Beijing, China

August 8, 2008

Thank you, sir. Thank you, Mr. President. *[Laughter]* It is quite an honor to be introduced by your dad. This has got to be a historic moment: father and son, two Presidents, opening up an Embassy. I suspect it's the first, although I must confess, I haven't done a lot of research into the itinerary of the Adams boys. *[Laughter]*

My dad was a fabulous President. And I tell people one reason why was not only did he know what he was doing, he was a fabulous father.

Mr. Ambassador, honored guests, Laura and I, my brother and my sister, are proud to be here with our dad as we open and dedicate this new Embassy.

No doubt, this is an impressive complex. To me it speaks of the importance of our relations with China. It reflects the solid foundation underpinning our relations. It is a commitment to strengthen that foundation for years to come.

I thank all those who designed and built the Embassy and all those who work here to advance the interests and values of our great Nation. Dad and I are honored that Councilor Dai has joined us, and Minister Xie; Ambassador Zhou, who, by the way, opened a new Chinese Embassy in Washington, DC, designed by I.M. Pei a couple weeks ago.

We appreciate our friend Anne Johnson being here, director of the Art in Embassies Program. Dr. Kissinger, thanks for coming.

It takes a special band to open the Embassy—out of west Texas—Odessa, Texas, for that matter—the Gatlin boys are with us today. I thank the Red Poppies. Thank you for your talent.

And finally, I want to pay tribute to Sandy Randt, who has done a fabulous job as our Ambassador to China. Sandy, thank you and—*[applause]*.

We're proud to be here with those citizens of ours who work at the Embassy, and we say thanks to the Chinese nationals who make our Embassy go as well.

I'm honored to represent the United States at this opening ceremonies of the Olympic games here in Beijing. And I'm looking forward to cheering our athletes on. Mr. Ambassador, I'm not making any predictions about medal counts, but I can tell you the U.S. athletes are ready to come and compete in the spirit of friendship.

You know, during my last visit here I had the opportunity to break in the mountain biking course. I was so proud of my efforts, I told Laura I was thinking about entering the competition myself. *[Laughter]* She reminded me they don't give any medals for last place. *[Laughter]*

Tonight the Olympic torch will light the home of an ancient civilization with a grand history. Thousands of years ago, the Chinese people developed a common language and unified a great nation. China became the center for art and literature, commerce and philosophy. China advanced the frontiers of knowledge in medicine, astronomy, navigation, engineering, and many other fields. And the Chinese are even said to have invented the parachute, something for which the 41st President is very grateful.

We share a long history. The first American ship arrived in China just after the year we won our independence. World War II, Americans and Chinese fought side by side to liberate this land from Imperial Japan. We all remember very clearly, Dr. K, when President Nixon came to Beijing to begin a new era of dialog between our nations. You might remember that yourself. *[Laughter]*

Today, the United States and China have built a strong relationship, rooted in common interests. China has opened its economy and begun to unleash the entrepreneurial spirit of its people. America will continue to support China on the path toward a free economy.

We're also cooperating to fight pandemic diseases and respond to natural disasters. And through the six-party talks, we're working together to ensure that the Korean Peninsula is free of nuclear weapons.

The relationship between our nations is constructive and cooperative and candid. We'll continue to be candid about our mutual global responsibilities. We must work together to protect the environment and help

people in the developing world; continue to be candid about our belief that all people should have the freedom to say what they think and worship as they choose. We strongly believe societies which allow the free expression of ideas tend to be the most prosperous and the most peaceful.

Candor is the most effective—is most effective where nations have built a relationship of respect and trust. I've worked hard to build that respect and trust. I appreciate the Chinese leadership that have worked hard to build that respect and trust. And I thank all those here at the Embassy who are doing the same thing. The people here who work made sacrifices to serve our country. Serving America is noble, and I hope you found it to be rewarding, just like I have.

I'm honored to be with you. I appreciate the honor of dedicating this new Embassy. And I'm looking forward to going to the games. *[Laughter]* God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:10 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Marvin Bush, brother, and Dorothy Bush Koch, sister, of President Bush; State Councilor Dai Bingguo, Minister of Finance Xie Xuren, and Ambassador to the U.S. Zhou Wenzhong of China; former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger; and entertainers Larry Gatlin and the Gatlin Brothers and the Red Poppy Ladies Percussion Ensemble. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of former President George H.W. Bush. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks to the 2008 United States Summer Olympic Team in Beijing

August 8, 2008

Congratulations for representing the finest nation on the face of the Earth. The honorary captain and I are proud to be with you. We're here to wish you all the very best.

First, I want to say thanks to the U.S. Olympic Committee, chaired by Peter Ueberroth, CEO Jim Scherr, Judge Charles Lee. I wasn't exactly sure what to say to you, except to start with, God, I love our country; and I love what we stand for; and I love being with you.

Laura and I and a lot of our family are here to cheer you on. We're just a handful of a lot of folks who care about you a lot. There are going to be a lot of people pulling for you. We want you to win as many golds as you possibly can.

We appreciate all the hard work you've put in to get to this spot. It's got to be really exciting, thinking about marching in that stadium and representing our country. So I guess all I've got to say is, go for it, give it all you've got, and may God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:44 p.m. in the Fencing Hall. In his remarks, he referred to former President George H.W. Bush, honorary captain, and Charles Lee, chef de mission, 2008 U.S. summer Olympic team. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

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.

August 2

In the morning, at the Bush family home in Kennebunkport, ME, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had a telephone conversation with President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil to discuss the recent World Trade Organization Doha round negotiations in Geneva, Switzerland.

August 3

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

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Camp David, MD. Later, he welcomed and met with Ruler of Dubai and Prime Minister Muhammad Bin Rashid Al Maktum of the United Arab Emirates.

August 4

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he met with Ruler

of Dubai and Prime Minister Muhammad Bin Rashid Al Maktum of the United Arab Emirates.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Andrews Air Force Base, MD, where he was joined by Mrs. Bush. They then traveled to Eielson Air Force Base, AK. While en route aboard Air Force One, he participated in an interview with Michael Abramowitz of the Washington Post.

Later in the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush greeted and participated in photo opportunities with U.S. military personnel. He then met with the family of a soldier killed in the war on terror.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Seoul, South Korea, crossing the international dateline and arriving the following evening.

August 5

In the morning, aboard Air Force One, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the evening, upon arrival at Seoul Air Base, South Korea, the President and Mrs. Bush participated in an arrival ceremony. They then traveled to the Grand Hyatt Seoul Hotel.

The President announced his intention to appoint Mark V. Rosenker as Vice Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board.

August 6

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he and Mrs. Bush traveled to the U.S. Embassy, where they met with Embassy staff and their families. They then traveled to the Blue House Presidential residence, where, in the Grand Garden, they participated in an arrival ceremony with President Lee Myung-bak of South Korea and his wife, Kim Yoon-ok.

Later in the morning, at the Spring House, the President and Mrs. Bush had tea and participated in a social lunch with President Lee and his wife, Kim Yoon-ok.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to U.S. Army Garrison—Yongsan. Later, they traveled to Bangkok, Thailand, arriving in the evening.

Later in the evening, the President traveled to the Government House, where he participated in a working dinner with Prime

Minister Samak Sundaravej of Thailand. Later, he traveled to the Four Seasons Hotel Bangkok.

August 7

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. He then traveled to the Queen Sirikit National Convention Center. Later, he toured the Human Development Foundation—Mercy Centre.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to the U.S. Ambassador's residence, where he participated in a briefing on Cyclone Nargis disaster relief efforts in Burma and had lunch with Burmese activists. Later, he traveled to Don Muang Royal Thai Air Force Base, where he was joined by Mrs. Bush. They then traveled to Beijing, China, arriving in the evening.

Later in the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to the Westin Beijing Chaoyang hotel.

The President announced the designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to Asuncion, Paraguay, to attend the inauguration of President Fernando Lugo on August 15: Carlos M. Gutierrez (head of delegation); Liliana Ayalde; Robert Mosbacher, Jr.; and Daniel W. Fisk.

The President announced the designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, to attend the inauguration of President Leonel Antonio Fernandez Reyna on August 16: Robert J. Portman (head of delegation); P. Robert Fannin; Julio Franco; Kathi Koll; and Omar Minaya.

The President announced that he has named Brian Cossiboom as Special Assistant to the President for Presidential Personnel.

The President announced that he has named J. Keith Ausbrook as Special Assistant to the President and Executive Secretary on the Homeland Security Council staff.

August 8

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Then, he and Mrs. Bush traveled to the U.S. Embassy, where they met with Embassy staff and their families. Later, they traveled to the Great Hall of the People.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush attended a social reception and lunch hosted by President Hu Jintao of China and his wife, Liu Yongqing. During the reception, he met with Prime Minister Vladimir V. Putin of Russia to discuss the situation in Georgia.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Fencing Hall, where they met with International Olympic Committee President Jacques Rogge. Later, they traveled to National Stadium, where they attended the opening ceremony of the 2008 summer Olympic games. During the ceremony, the President again met with Prime Minister Putin to discuss the situation in Georgia.

Later in the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush returned to the Westin Beijing Chaoyang hotel, where he met with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and National Security Adviser Stephen J. Hadley to discuss the situation in Georgia.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

NOTE: No nominations were submitted to the Senate during the period covered by this issue.

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 August 4

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Dana Perino and National Security Council Senior Director for East Asian Affairs Dennis C. Wilder

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S. 3370

Released August 6

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Dana Perino and Chief of Staff to the First Lady Anita B. McBride

Advance text of the President's remarks in Bangkok, Thailand

Text of ROK-U.S. summit statement

Released August 7

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Dana Perino

Fact sheet: The United States and Asia: Ensuring Freedom and Prosperity

Fact sheet: The United States Supports the People of Burma

**Acts Approved
by the President**

Approved July 31 *

H.R. 4841 / Public Law 110-297
Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians Settlement Act

S. 2565 / Public Law 110-298
Law Enforcement Congressional Badge of Bravery Act of 2008

S. 3298 / Public Law 110-299
To clarify the circumstances during which the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and applicable States may require permits for discharges from certain vessels, and to require the Administrator to conduct a study of discharges incidental to the normal operation of vessels

S. 3352 / Public Law 110-300
To temporarily extend the programs under the Higher Education Act of 1965

* These public laws were not received in time for inclusion in the appropriate issue.