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proper help from the Federal Government and State government, there will be a better tomorrow.

And so it is with—you know, it is—it's good to be home. I'm just sorry it's under these circumstances.

I do want to say something about the American Red Cross. The American Red Cross is working closely with the emergency rescue efforts. A lot of people are sheltered, and the Red Cross is helping those people who have been displaced from their homes. It is very important for our citizens to support the American Red Cross. You can get on their web page and find a way to contribute. You know, I hope the country does not have disaster fatigue. The Red Cross is a vital part of helping people recover and helping people find the compassionate care that our citizens expect when there's a disaster such as this.

Anyway, Governor, thanks——

Governor Rick Perry of Texas. Very good, sir.

The President. ——for having us.

Gov. Perry. Glad to have you home.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:32 a.m. in the U.S. Coast Guard hangar at Ellington Field. In his remarks, he referred to Representatives Kevin Brady, John A. Culberson, Sheila Jackson-Lee, Ted Poe, and Senator John Cornyn of Texas. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Multi-National Force—Iraq Former Commander General David H. Petraeus

September 17, 2008

The President. The United States is fortunate to have great men and women who volunteer to serve in a time of danger. I have been incredibly impressed by the sacrifice of our troops who have been put in harm's way, and I've been incredibly impressed by the level of leadership for those troops.

General David Petraeus was asked to do a very difficult job, and he did it with distinction and honor. He was a part of the planning for the surge. He implemented the surge, along with a lot of other brave people, and the United States and the world is better off because of it.

And now the General has agreed to be commander of CENTCOM, which oversees the very important part of the world, the Middle East. And I want to thank you for taking on that assignment, General.

Recently, we saw how important it is, with the attack on our Embassy in Yemen. There were some security forces that lost their lives there, and we send our condolences to their families. This attack is a reminder that we are at war with extremists who will murder innocent people to achieve their ideological objectives. One objectives of these extremists is they kill; is to try to cause the United States to lose our nerve and to withdraw from regions of the world. And our message is, is that we want to help governments survive the extremists. We want people to live normal lives. We want mothers to be able to raise their sons and daughters in a peaceful environment so they can realize the hopes and dreams of a better world.

And I want to thank our diplomats who stand in harm's way. I thank our military who stands in harm's way. And I want to thank General Petraeus and his family for being so dedicated to our great country.

General.

General Petraeus. Thanks, Mr. President. Great to be home, sir. And it was a great privilege to serve there with our young men and women.

The President. God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:53 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Martin Torrijos Espino of Panama

September 17, 2008

President Bush. Mr. President, thank you for coming. It's—*bienvenidos*.

President Torrijos. Yes.

President Bush. Yes. President Torrijos has been a good personal friend, and he has been a good friend to freedom, prosperity,