

drive more, getting out on the highways, taking a little time off, and they're moving around. And that increasing demand is also part of the reason the price of gasoline is going up.

And thirdly, we're switching fuel mixes. The summer fuel mix is different from State to State and is different from what is being used in the winter. And therefore, the combination of these creates higher gasoline prices. And I'm concerned about higher gasoline prices. I'm concerned what it means to the working families and small businesses, and I'm also mindful that the Government has the responsibility to make sure that we watch very carefully and to investigate possible price gouging. And we'll do just that.

Q. Is there going to be rationing, do you think?

The President. No, I don't—that's your word.

Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld

Q. Mr. President, you've made it a practice of not commenting on potential personnel moves—

The President. Of course I did.

Q. —of calling it speculation—

The President. You can understand why, because we've got people's reputations at stake. And on Friday, I stood up and said, I don't appreciate the speculation about Don Rumsfeld; he's doing a fine job; I strongly support him.

Q. But what do you say to critics who believe that you're ignoring the advice of retired generals, military commanders, who say that there needs to be a change?

The President. I say, I listen to all voices, but mine is the final decision. And Don Rumsfeld is doing a fine job. He's not only transforming the military; he's fighting a war on terror. He's helping us fight a war on terror. I have strong confidence in Don Rumsfeld. I hear the voices, and I read the front page, and I know the speculation. But I'm the decider, and I decide what is best. And what's best is for Don Rumsfeld to remain as the Secretary of Defense.

I want to thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:27 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Hu Jintao of China; and

former Senator John C. "Jack" Danforth of Missouri.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Fuad Siniora of Lebanon

April 18, 2006

President Bush. It's been my honor to welcome the Prime Minister of Lebanon to the Oval Office. Prime Minister, thanks for coming.

Prime Minister Siniora. Thank you very much for giving us the opportunity.

President Bush. Well, we just had a really interesting discussion. I told the Prime Minister that the United States strongly supports a free and independent and sovereign Lebanon. We took great joy in seeing the Cedar Revolution. We understand that the hundreds of thousands of people who took to the street to express their desire to be free required courage, and we support the desire of the people to have a government responsive to their needs and a government that is free, truly free.

We talked about the need to make sure that there is a full investigation on the death of former Prime Minister Hariri, and we'll work with the international community to see that justice is done. We talked about the great tradition of Lebanon to serve as a model of entrepreneurship and prosperity. Beirut is one of the great international cities, and I'm convinced that if Lebanon is truly free and independent and democratic that Beirut will once again regain her place as a center of financial and culture and the arts.

There's no question in my mind that Lebanon can serve as a great example for what is possible in the broader Middle East; that out of the tough times the country has been through will rise a state that shows that it's possible for people of religious difference to live side by side in peace; to show that it's possible for people to put aside past histories to live together in a way that the people want, which is there for to be peace and hope and opportunity.

And so, Mr. Prime Minister, we're really glad you're here. I want to thank you for the

wonderful visit we've had, and welcome you here to the White House.

Prime Minister Siniora. Thank you very much, Mr. President. I would like to really thank President Bush for giving us the opportunity to be here at the White House and to discuss matters of mutual interest to the United States and Lebanon, and matters that has to do with the developments that have been taking place in Lebanon.

For the past—over 16 or 18 months, Lebanon has been undergoing major changes. And Lebanon has really been committing itself that we want the change to happen to—in a democratic and a peaceful manner, but at the same time, to really stay course—on course; that we are there to meet the expectations of the people to have a united, liberal, free country, and, at the same time, prosperous economy.

So that are the matters that we have discussed with President Bush. And I really would like to seize this opportunity to thank President Bush and the United States for the support that they have been extending to Lebanon throughout the past periods and with all the resolutions that were taken since the assassination of Prime Minister Hariri. The United States has been of great support to Lebanon.

I am really convinced that President Bush and the United States will stand beside Lebanon to have Lebanon stay as a free, democratic, united, and sovereign state. And the United States is really of great importance in this regard, whether this can be done directly or indirectly. So I would like once more to express our great thanks for President Bush and the United States for this.

President Bush. Thank you, sir. Appreciate it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:51 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Remarks at Parkland Magnet Middle School for Aerospace Technology in Rockville, Maryland

April 18, 2006

Thanks for having me. Please be seated. Madam Secretary—I never thought I'd be saying that 10 years ago, I might add. Of

course, she never thought I'd be President. [Laughter] It is good to be here with you all. Thanks to Parkland Magnet Middle School for having us. We just had an amazing tour. I say "amazing tour" because we saw what a unique place Parkland is, and we saw a really diverse student body. There's people from all kinds of backgrounds here.

We saw some—three really wonderful teachers, people who are dedicated to their profession, who deeply care about the students they teach. And for all of you here who are teachers, thanks for carrying on a really noble profession. We saw two scientists who are here from NASA. These are good, hard-working folks who said, "I kind of want to lend my expertise to try to convince a child that science is cool." You know, sometimes—you might remember those days, when you were in middle school, people say, you know, "Science isn't cool." Science is not only cool; it's really important for the future of this country. And it's great to have people we call adjunct professors here, to help lend their real-life experiences to stimulate junior high students to the wonders of science.

We saw robotics. When I was in the seventh grade, I don't think we spent much time on robotics. [Laughter] Of course, Mr. Jones, the teacher, probably said, "You didn't spend much time paying attention at all, did you, Mr. President." [Laughter] We saw people using little devices to look for sun spots. We saw the analysis of a parabola curve for sixth and seventh grade students. We saw a school that is setting high standards in the firm belief that every child can learn. That's what we saw.

And I want to thank the principal, Kevin Hobbs, for welcoming us here today. You know, Kevin skipped a vacation—at least he claimed he skipped a vacation—[laughter]—to be here. And I am so grateful you did so, sir. But more importantly, I am grateful that you're a principal. Great schools—the really good schools in our country have at its center an educational entrepreneur who is able to rally a teacher group to set high standards and follow through. And I want to thank you, Kevin. Again, I want to thank all the principals.

I appreciate Chris Van Hollen joining us today. Mr. Congressman, I'm pleased you