

research and development tax credit is a permanent part of the Tax Code, to encourage private investment when it comes to research.

But I spent a lot of time yesterday talking about education. I proudly signed the No Child Left Behind Act, which changed the way people should view education, from one in which it was okay just to move kids through to one that said we're going to measure, and we're going to hold people to account. We're going to set high standards, and we're going to measure to determine whether our children are learning to read and write and add and subtract. And if we find out they're not able to read and write, we'll correct problems early, before it's too late. I want to extend that same rigor that we've applied in reading to math and science so that our children have got the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century.

And today I had the honor of being in West Sacramento, after my bike ride, by the way, in Napa Valley, which—good place to ride, by the way. I talked about an issue that I know is on people's minds here in California, and that is high energy prices. And I reminded our folks that we live in a global world, and when China's demand for energy goes up, it affects the gasoline prices here. When India's demand for energy goes up, it affects the gasoline prices here, which says to me, we've got to be smart about using energy—using investment technology to get away from use of oil.

And I talked about plug-in hybrid vehicles, the research going into that, so that one day you'll be driving your first 40 miles on electricity, electric batteries. And I talked about ethanol. But I also talked about hydrogen fuel cells, which I believe will be the wave of the future for how we drive our cars.

What I'm telling you is, ours is a party that has got a vision and a plan to make sure the United States of America is the leader in the world. Our message to the American people is, don't fear the future, because we intend to shape the future.

Thanks for coming. I'll answer a few questions in a little bit. Thank you for being here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:05 p.m. at the Toscana Country Club. In his remarks, he referred to Bradford M. Freeman, California State

finance chairman, Bush-Cheney '04, Inc.; Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger of California; California Secretary of State Bruce McPherson and his wife, Mary; Chuck Poochigian, candidate for California State attorney general, and his wife, Debbie; Steve Poizner, candidate for California insurance commissioner; Brian Bilbray, candidate for Congress in California's 50th Congressional District; and entertainer Ben Stein.

Remarks to Military Personnel and Their Families in Twentynine Palms, California

April 23, 2006

Thanks for the warm welcome. Sergeant Major, thanks for the introduction. It's an honor to be here. I've been really looking forward to coming to Twentynine Palms. The general told me that I'm the first President ever to have come. It's an honor to be the first President, but he also reminded me that my mother beat me to the punch. [*Laughter*]

I want to share some thoughts with you right quick. One, I'm incredibly proud of the United States Marine Corps. You bring honor to our country. You represent the very best of America. You represent men and women who volunteer to serve during dangerous and historic times. And because of your service, we're defeating an enemy overseas so we do not have to face them here at home. Because of your service, we've liberated people from the clutches of a tyrant. And because of your service, we're laying the foundation of peace for a generation of Americans to come. These are historic times, and your service makes me incredibly proud.

And I also want to say something to your families. It's hard when your loved one is overseas. I respect your sacrifice and want to thank you very much for your service to our country as well.

Today I—this morning I was—had three phone calls I think that you might find of interest. I spoke to the President of Iraq, the Speaker of the Iraqi Assembly, and the Prime Minister-designate. It was a remarkable phone call. First, they expressed their deep appreciation for the United States of America and our soldiers. They understand the sacrifices that you are making on their behalf, and they are grateful for those sacrifices. And

the reason why they are is because they represent the 12 million people who went to the polls in the face of incredible terrorist threats, and said, “We want to be free; we desire to live in a free society.”

I told them—I said that they have awesome responsibilities to their people. They have the responsibility of improving the lives of men and women regardless of their religious status and nature; they have responsibilities to defeat the terrorists; they have a responsibility to unite their country. And I believe they will.

The formation of this Government is an important milestone toward our victory in Iraq. A lot of times people ask me about my attitude about things, and here’s my attitude: The only way we can lose in Iraq is if we lose our nerve. And I’m not losing my nerve, and I know that the United States Marine Corps will not lose their nerve, either.

Yesterday was an important day, but I recognize we still have more work to do. Democracy in Iraq will be a major blow for the terrorists who want to do us harm. Democracy in Iraq will deny them safe haven. Democracy in Iraq will set a powerful example for people in a part of the world who are desperate for freedom.

It is such an honor to be here with the mighty United States Marine Corps and their families. May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless our country. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:34 p.m. in the Mess Hall at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center. In his remarks, he referred to Sgt. Maj. James M. Ricker, USMC, and Brig. Gen. Douglas M. Stone, USMC Reserve, commanding general, Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command; President Jalal Talabani, Speaker of Parliament Mahmoud al-Mashhadani, and Prime Minister-designate Jawad al-Maliki of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Visit With Former President Gerald R. Ford in Rancho Mirage, California

April 23, 2006

President Bush. It’s such an honor to be with President and Mrs. Ford. The country

has produced a lot of fine citizens, and there’s no two finer people than these two. Thank you for your hospitality, sir.

President Ford. We solved all the problems, didn’t we? [*Laughter*]

President Bush. That’s right—we sure did.

President Ford. Well, thank you for stopping by, George.

President Bush. God bless you.

President Ford. Same to you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:01 p.m. at President Ford’s residence.

Remarks on Immigration Reform and a Question-and-Answer Session in Irvine, California

April 24, 2006

The President. Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks for letting me come by. Tom, thanks for the invitation. What I thought I would do is share some thoughts with you on some issues that kind of, like, may be on the TV screen these days—[*laughter*]—and then answer some of your questions. I’m interested to know what’s on your mind.

First, I’ve had a fabulous trip to your unbelievably beautiful State. It started off in northern California—Cisco; then I went to Stanford; then I went to Napa Valley. Then I rode my bicycle on Earth Day in Napa Valley. Then I found out the mountains are a little steep in Napa Valley. [*Laughter*] I then went down and spent a fantastic time in Palm Springs. What an unbelievably diverse State, and it’s a fantastic place to end my journey, here in Orange County. I want to thank you for giving me a chance to come by and visit with you.

Laura sends her very best. I, of course, checked in with her this morning before I headed over here, to see if she had any additional instructions for me for the day. [*Laughter*] She said, “Keep it short.” [*Laughter*] I’m a lucky man to have Laura as a wife. You can imagine what it’s like to be President—there’s some pressure on your family, as you can imagine. The good news is, I’ve got a 45-second commute. [*Laughter*] And the better news is, I’ve got a wife who is a fantastic First Lady, who shares a passion