

Weekly Compilation of  
**Presidential  
Documents**



Monday, May 29, 2006  
Volume 42—Number 21  
Pages 965–1036

## Contents

### Addresses and Remarks

- See also* Meetings With Foreign Leaders  
Illinois, war on terror and a question-and-answer session in Chicago—984  
Iraq's Government, formation—983  
Kentucky  
American competitiveness in Highland Heights—965  
Reception for congressional candidate Geoff Davis in Florence—975  
Pennsylvania  
Energy in Pottstown—1003  
Pennsylvania Congressional Victory  
Committee dinner in Philadelphia—1010  
Radio address—982  
U.S. Coast Guard, change of command ceremony for the Commandant—1015

### Bill Signings

- Coastal Barrier Resources Reauthorization Act of 2005, statement—1019

### Communications to Federal Agencies

- Assignment of Certain Functions Related to the Use of Cooperative Threat Reduction Funds for States Outside the Former Soviet Union, memorandum—1033  
Assignment of Certain Functions Relating to the Global War on Terror, memorandum—1031

### Communications to Federal Agencies—Continued

- Handling of Materials Held by the Department of Justice Following Execution of a Search Warrant, memorandum—1018

### Interviews With the News Media

- News conferences  
May 23 with Prime Minister Olmert of Israel—997  
May 25 with Prime Minister Blair of the United Kingdom—1020

### Joint Statements

- Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom—1032

### Letters and Messages

- Cuban Independence Day, message—965

### Meetings With Foreign Leaders

- Israel, Prime Minister Olmert—997  
United Kingdom, Prime Minister Blair—1020, 1032

### Proclamations

- Black Music Month—1019  
Great Outdoors Month—1003

(Continued on the inside of the back cover.)

**Editor's Note:** The President was at Camp David, MD, on May 26, 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

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* is published pursuant to the authority contained in the Federal Register Act (49 Stat. 500, as amended; 44 U.S.C. Ch. 15), under regulations prescribed by the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, approved by the President (37 FR 23607; 1 CFR Part 10).

Distribution is made only by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* will be furnished by mail to domestic subscribers for \$80.00 per year (\$137.00 for mailing first class) and to foreign subscribers for \$93.75 per year, payable to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The charge for a single copy is \$3.00 (\$3.75 for foreign mailing).

The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* is also available on the Internet on the GPO Access service at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/wcomp/index.html>.

There are no restrictions on the republication of material appearing in the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*.

## Contents—Continued

### **Proclamation—Continued**

- National Homeownership Month—1014
- National Hurricane Preparedness Week—980
- National Maritime Day—980
- World Trade Week—981

### **Statements by the President**

- See also* Bill Signings
- Brett M. Kavanaugh To Be a U.S. Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia, Senate confirmation—1032
- Death of Lee Jong-wook—996
- Death of Lloyd Bentsen—1002
- Dirk Kempthorne To Be the Secretary of the Interior, Senate confirmation—1032
- House of Representatives, energy legislation—1017, 1019

### **Statements by the President—Continued**

- Iraq's Government, formation—983
- Michael V. Hayden To Be Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, Senate confirmation—1032
- National economy—1017
- Representative William J. Jefferson, Department of Justice's handling of materials—1017
- Senate passage of immigration reform legislation—1018

### **Supplementary Materials**

- Acts approved by the President—1036
- Checklist of White House press releases—1035
- Digest of other White House announcements—1033
- Nominations submitted to the Senate—1034



**US GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE**  
SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS  
Washington DC 20402

\_\_\_\_\_  
**OFFICIAL BUSINESS**  
Penalty for private use, \$300

**PRESORTED STANDARD**  
POSTAGE & FEES PAID  
GPO  
PERMIT NO. G-26

Week Ending Friday, May 26, 2006

**Message on the Observance of  
Cuban Independence Day, 2006**

*May 18, 2006*

I send greetings to those celebrating the 104th anniversary of Cuban Independence.

The hope of freedom is found in every heart, and it is the future of every land. The United States is committed to advancing the values that sustain liberty and helping establish a just and peaceful government in Cuba. On this anniversary of Cuba's independence, we look forward to the day when Cuba embraces democracy and human rights for all her people.

This anniversary also is an opportunity to recognize the generations of Cuban Americans who have contributed to the vitality, success, and prosperity of our great Nation. Through their devotion to faith, family, and freedom, they have helped make our country stronger and better.

Laura and I send our best wishes. May God bless the people of Cuba.

**George W. Bush**

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 19. An original was not available for verification of the content of this message. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Remarks on American  
Competitiveness in Highland  
Heights, Kentucky**

*May 19, 2006*

**The President.** Thanks. Please be seated. Geoff, thanks for the introduction. He said I was the last sitting President—the last sitting President to be here before me was a Texan. [*Laughter*] I don't know what took the other ones so long to get here—[*laughter*]—but I'm proud to be here; particularly proud to be in NKU, Northern Kentucky

University. Thank you very much for letting me come by.

It's a good place to come to, to make sure that America understands we don't need to fear the future, because we can shape it. That's what I want to talk to you about today, is the need for the United States of America to remain the leader of the world. And one way you remain the leader is, you have places like excellence—centers like Northern Kentucky University, where you've got innovative curriculum, high standards, the willingness to work in your community—all aimed at making sure our kids have got the skills necessary to compete. And that's why I'm here.

So I want to thank the president—Mr. President, thanks for having me. [*Laughter*] He'd probably rather be called "Doctor." But, Jim, thank you for having us. Thank the faculty for letting me come. I appreciate you teaching; teaching is a noble profession. For the students who are here, one career path you ought to think about is being a teacher. And one thing you've always got to remember is, the child's first teacher is a mother and a father.

I bring my RSVP's from Laura. She is giving a graduation speech tomorrow—she just didn't get the invitation to come to NKU to give the graduation speech here. [*Laughter*] If you had been wise, you would have had her and not me. [*Laughter*] She sends her best. She is really, really a good person, and I'm proud to—[*applause*]—I'm proud to call her wife. She's got to be the most patient woman in America. [*Laughter*] She's doing great; she sends her best.

I appreciate very much Congressman Geoff Davis. He's an interesting person. He served his country in the United States military. He didn't have to run for the United States Congress; chose to do so—I think sets a good example for people to understand, public service is a noble calling. And I want to thank you for inviting me here, Geoff.

I appreciate Senator Jim Bunning being here as well. So I was asking him what it was like to face the Cincinnati Reds. [*Laughter*] You might remember those days—[*laughter*—at least I do. He’s not only a fine Senator, he’s a wonderful person. And his wife, Mary, reminded me, she came here to NKU just a couple of years ago. [*Laughter*] She had the same kind of career my mother did. Got in; got out without a degree, but nevertheless loved the experience. [*Laughter*]

I appreciate very much State Senator David Williams, president of the State senate. Thanks for coming. Make sure they got plenty of money to run this university, senator. I’ve known Williams long enough where I can tell him that, see. [*Laughter*] It’s great to see you. It’s good to see the Judge as well. I appreciate Katie Stine—is with us today. Senator Stine, thanks for coming.

I want to thank the mayor—I want to thank Mayor Roettger, who is the mayor of Highland—the city of Highland Heights. Thanks for being here, Mr. Mayor. I want to thank all the local and State officials here. I want to thank Gary Toebben who is the president of the Northern Kentucky Chamber. Thanks for having me here. I met Dr. Ed Hughes. If you don’t know Ed, Ed is the founding president and CEO of Gateway Community and Technical College.

I want to say a quick word about community colleges. They’re a really important part of making sure the United States is able to compete. People around here, if you’ve got a growing economy and are looking for labor, you need to support your community colleges. They’re one of the really important institutions of the United States. And so for the community college students who are here, welcome; thanks for coming. Appreciate you taking advantage of the opportunities available to you.

We’re living in historic times. They are exciting times. If you’re a student getting ready to graduate from NKU, you’ve got a job available for you that’s paying better than a lot of other college graduates have ever been able to get. This is a good time to be getting out of college.

On the other hand, these are difficult times in some ways, when you think about

it. I mean, we’re at war. And war is unsettling to people. War puts a strain on the United States of America. War causes people to think about the future in different ways.

These are times of globalization. In other words, we’re all connected now. Competition is coming at the United States from different places around the world. These are times of change. Technology changes so rapidly that it can create a sense of concern amongst our citizens.

I don’t know if you know this or not, but by the time somebody gets 30 in this job market, people have changed jobs several times. That stands in stark contrast to the days when previous generations would go to work and stay at the job all their life. Pension funds are different now. We’ve got 401(k), defined contribution plans as opposed to defined benefit plans. These are changing times. And the fundamental question facing any nation, but particularly ours, is how do we adjust to those times? What do we do about it?

The temptation during changing times and unsettling times, for some, is to retreat and say, you know, it’s really not worth it. We’ve been through this period in our Nation’s history, a time when people would look abroad or look afar and say, “Well, these just seem such difficult problems that it’s probably best that we don’t take them on,” or that, “Competition in the economic sphere is such that the best way to deal with that kind of competition is just to wall ourselves off.”

Those two tendencies, which have happened in our Nation’s history—tenants of thought—would be called isolationism and protectionism. And I’m here to talk today about why it is really important for us to reject those two notions—that the United States of America must not wall ourselves off from the world and must not forget our duty to help lead the world to be a better place.

Now there’s a practical reason why we shouldn’t isolate ourselves, and that is, there’s an enemy that still wants to hurt us. And it’s important for you all to know that everyday that I wake up I think about the war on terror. I knew that after September the 11th—and many of the decisions I make are based upon what happened on that day,

September the 11, 2001. My job is to do everything I can to protect the American people. And I knew that after the attacks there would be a tendency by people to say, well, maybe there's not a war, maybe that's just an isolated incident. Part of my job, by the way, was to say to the American people, "Go about your business; create jobs; go to school; raise your families—let us worry about it in Washington, DC."

But I think about this all the time. I know that in order for us to be able to defend ourselves, we have got to be active in the world. Another way to put it is, we will stay on the offense and bring the terrorists to justice before they hurt us again.

What's unsettling about these times for some is that we face a determined enemy. Let me tell you what I think about the enemy. The enemy is—they're coldblooded killers, the best way to describe them. They will take innocent life to achieve a tactical and strategic objective. These are people that are bound by an ideology. See, they're driven by an ideological fervor. In other words, they're not just isolated angry people; they're people that have got a point of view.

Perhaps the best way to describe the point of view is to remind people what life was like under the Taliban in Afghanistan: There's no freedom to dissent, no freedom to worship; if you're a woman, you were a second class citizen; if you were a young girl, you had no chance, very little chance to be educated. In other words, they had a view of the world which is 100 percent opposite of us. And that's the ideology of these people. And they believe it. They strongly believe that they should distort a great religion and convert it to meet their means. It's totalitarian in nature. It's something akin to dealing with fascism and communism but with a different flavor to it.

Now, I recognize some in our country don't believe that, and that's okay. The great thing about our country is, we all have different views. But I believe it. And I know that if we were ever to retreat and isolate and say it's just too difficult to get involved, that ideology would flourish. After all, they've told us what their ambitions are, through intercepted communications and the different ways of finding out information. They

have made it clear in their communications with each other that democracies are soft, capitalism is a failed system, and that it's just a matter of time before the United States of America were to lose its nerve.

That's what they believe. They believe if they can make life painful enough that we will retreat from the battlefield, that we will give them safe haven—allow them to get safe haven. They want to reestablish roots in a country like they did in Afghanistan so they can help topple moderate governments in the Middle East as well as launch attacks against the United States of America. That's what they have said. As your Commander—as your President and as the Commander in Chief, it's probably pretty wise that I take the words of the enemy seriously, which I do.

And so therefore, for those who think it's probably best to let the world kind of drift off without American leadership or American involvement, they really don't see the world the way—at least the way I see it. And I understand some would like to see the world the way they hope it would be. But you've got to have a President who sees the world the way it is. And the way it is, is a dangerous place that requires the United States of America to be on the offense. And so we're waging the global war on terror.

And the global war on terror has a variety of fronts. The two most notable fronts, of course, are Afghanistan and Iraq. In Afghanistan, I said if you harbor a terrorist, you're as guilty as a terrorist. I know full well that when the President says something, he better mean it. I meant it. And when the Taliban didn't believe us, we liberated the country. And today, there's a new democracy in the world, and that's important, particularly for the students to understand, because eventually I'm going to tie in democracy and peace. But there is a new democracy, and we're helping that democracy survive and grow.

Secondly, I said if you see a threat, you've got to take threats seriously. I saw a threat. Now, I don't want to rehash the history of the decisionmaking that went on in the runup to the war of Iraq; I would just remind people that people in both political parties and people all around the world saw a threat. And I feel strongly that the world is better off without Saddam Hussein in power.

And no matter what your position was on the issue of war in Iraq—and I can understand why good people differ about my decision—but we've got to make sure we don't retreat from the world and allow the good work that has gone on to collapse, so that the enemy is able to gain a safe haven from which to create havoc and launch attacks. And so therefore, we have developed a plan for victory. It's not a plan for retreat; it's a plan for victory.

And the definition of victory is to support the Iraqis so they can sustain themselves, govern themselves, defend themselves, be an ally in the war on terror, and deny safe haven to Al Qaida. That's the goal.

The work is difficult work. It's hard to help a society go from a tyranny to a democracy. You see, the people who lived under the thumb of Saddam Hussein were terrorized by him. He divided the society up. He pitted groups of people against each other. He was ruthless in his administration of his so-called justice, and as a result, there's a lot of scarred emotions and distrust.

And yet something amazing happened in December of last year—admittedly it seems like an eternity ago—but 12 million Iraqis defied car bombers, killers, and terrorists and declared in unity, "We want to be free." It's an amazing moment in the history of freedom. They've said to their Government and said to the people, "Look, we want to live in a free society. We want to be able to express ourselves. We want to be able to elect our officials." And so the political process is one that's now moving forward to honor that request, to honor the 12 million who voted.

There's a government forming in Iraq. This is a new process for them. You might remember, we had a little trouble getting our own Constitution up and running; we weren't a perfect democracy in our beginnings either. But, nevertheless, what particularly the students now are seeing is, as a result of active involvement—not only to defend ourselves—but adherence to some basic beliefs, a new democracy in the heart of the Middle East is emerging. We're training these Iraqis so they can take the fight to the enemy. I have said clearly to the American people, as the Iraqi forces step up, we will step down.

But it's really important for us to understand that if we leave too early, the new democracy will falter. It's in the Nation's interest that democracy prevail, because democracies help yield the peace.

A nation that becomes isolationist will be one that doesn't understand that democracy can change the world; is one that says, well, let's just get out of there before we complete the mission; let's just not worry about what takes place in parts of the world other than, perhaps, our own neighborhood. But to me, that's a bad choice, because, you see, during a period of time when we thought everything was calm, there was resentment and bitterness growing, which enabled an enemy to recruit suiciders who were willing to launch an attack on our Nation, which has caused more people to lose their life than in Pearl Harbor.

And so therefore, I really think it's important for the American Government to work with allies to stay on the leading edge of change, to not lose our nerve, and to remember the lessons of history.

One of the interesting lessons of history is to look at Europe. We had World War I and World War II in a pretty quick period of time, and we lost a lot of troops there. And today, Europe is whole and at peace. So what happened? What caused the world to change? What caused the world to change was, Europe established democracies, and history has proven democracies don't war with each other.

I love to tell the story about my relationship with Prime Minister Koizumi. You know, my dad was a young guy; right before he went to college, he joined up in the United States Navy just like a lot of others did—and I'm sure some of your relatives did the same thing—to fight the Japanese. Yet today, I sit down at the peace table with Koizumi. We talk about North Korea; we talk about Iraq; we talk about how allies can work to keep the peace.

I find it really interesting that that's taking place. And what happened was, was that between the time that the United States fought the Japanese and the time old George W. sitting down there at the table with the Prime Minister, Harry Truman said, let's help the

Japanese develop a Japanese-style democracy. See, it's really important for the students here to understand, that liberty and freedom have got the—have proven the capacity to convert enemies into allies. And if you're interested in keeping the peace, it's important for the United States of America to lead.

There's something universal about freedom. I believe in the universality of freedom. I believe everybody desires to be free. I don't believe freedom is only owned by America; I don't believe only Methodists can be free. I believe everybody desires to be free, and the United States of America must lead the world to be more free.

But our concern shouldn't just be in winning the war on terror and changing the conditions that enable folks to recruit—in other words, battling the ideology of hatred with the ideology of hope. An active nation is one that also works hard in places like the Sudan, where ours is the only nation in the world that has condemned what's going on in Darfur as genocide. The United States must lead to make sure—[*applause*]. A confident nation that does its duty in the international community is one that does what we're doing now in Darfur. We provide over 85 percent of the food aid to help the refugees in this area. We're taking the lead in the United Nations to call the world to account.

I believe to whom much is given, much is required. And therefore, it's important for the United States to continue to lead in the fight against HIV/AIDS in places like the continent of Africa. I believe that when we see starvation, this great Nation of ours should lead the world to help feed the hungry. I believe when we see devastation, the United States must continue to be willing to use assets to help people such as those whose lives were turned upside down by the tsunamis or the earthquakes in Pakistan. You see, a confident nation—a nation confident in its ideals and confident in its capacity must continue to lead and not isolate ourselves from the world.

We've got a good economy right now. And that's good news. Unemployment rate is 4.7 percent nationwide. We've got—productivity is up; home ownership is up; after-tax—real after-tax income is up by over 8 percent since

2001. Things are rocking along. The entrepreneurial spirit is strong. And yet when you think about it—when some think about it, they look at our economic future, and they're very worried. They're troubled. See, they're troubled by competition from places like China and India. And I can understand that. These are vast labor markets that are just beginning to grow.

And the response, in some instances, is to say, "Let's just don't—let's don't take them on; let us kind of pull back and wall ourselves off through protectionist policy." For those of you who've studied history, you might remember we've had this kind of—we've had these decisions before in our Nation's history.

How about the 1920s? You might remember the 1920s, at least through your history books, at least—and that is, is that we were an isolationist nation. We said, "Let them figure it out in Europe; we'll let them work out their differences over there. We don't need to be involved." And we had high protective tariffs—and, by the way, really high taxes. And as a result, there's a worldwide depression. I'm not saying all of it was caused by those tendencies; I'm saying some of it was caused by those tendencies. So we've been through a period of time where we said let's—we lose our confidence; let's not be bold in our willingness to do the right things at home so that we can compete.

My attitude is this about America: We shouldn't fear the future, I told you. And I want to talk to you about some ways that we can shape the future in order to make sure America remains the leader. I'm not only talking about the leader for peace but I'm also talking about the economic leader of the world. It's in our interests that that be the case. When our Nation leads and remains the most productive place in the world, it means a higher standard of living for our people. It means better wages, better quality of life. It means you're more likely to realize your dream. If we wall ourselves off and stagnate as an economy, it's going to be harder for this great American Dream to continue to renew itself.

And so here are some ideas for you as to how to make sure we continue to shape the future. One is to keep taxes low. The reason

why it's important to keep taxes low is because in a global economy, capital will tend to flow where taxes are low. And the other reason why is, is that you want money in the hands of the entrepreneurs.

You might remember, we've been through a lot in the last 5 years: recession; stock market collapse; corporate scandals; attacks on the country; natural disasters; high energy prices—yet, we're growing; we're strong. And one of the reasons why is, is because we let the people keep more of their own money. See, the theory is, is that when somebody has more of their own money to spend, save, or invest, the economy grows. And so if we're going to be competitive, we've got to make sure that we keep money in the peoples' pockets. That's how the entrepreneurial spirit remains strong.

It's really important for our citizens to remember that 70 percent of new jobs in America are created by small-business owners. And the more money they have in their coffers, the more likely it is they're going to create jobs for the American people.

Secondly, we want this always to be the best place for entrepreneurship. We want people in our country saying, you know, "If I've got a good idea and willing to work hard, I'm going to take a risk, because I want to own my own business." There's nothing better than meeting somebody who says, you know, "I started my business recently, Mr. President, and I'm doing just fine—and by the way, thanks for the tax relief so I can keep some more money to expand."

You'll hear, in Washington, people saying, "Well, we've got to raise the taxes in order to balance the budget." That's not the way Washington works. If we were to raise your taxes, Washington would figure out new ways to spend your money. And it might sound good; the titles of the programs will sound just fine, but we've got to make sure we set priorities with your money. My number one priority is this: So long as we've got a troop in harm's way, a man or woman in uniform who's risking their lives for the security of America, they're going to get whatever it takes to do their job. *[Applause]* Thank you all.

But we can cut this deficit in half if we're wise about how we spend your money, by

setting priorities. And we will. The interesting thing about progrowth economic policies, coupled with fiscal sanity in Washington, is that when the economy grows, it creates more revenues for the Treasury. Last year, we've got about \$100 billion more revenues to our Treasury than anticipated. And this year, there's 11 percent ahead of where we were last year. And so if you hold your spending down by setting priorities and grow your economy, the deficit shrinks. And that's one way to control your budget.

But the real budget problems we face beyond the current account is—of the budget—is the unfunded liabilities inherent in Social Security and Medicare. If this Nation wants to be competitive, we have got to make sure that we reform Medicare and Social Security. And here's the problem, and this is—I'm addressing this particularly for the ones coming up, the people getting ready to get in the workplace—because the truth of the matter is, Social Security is fine for people who are eligible today. And Social Security is in pretty good shape for baby boomers. As a matter of fact, we're the problem. *[Laughter]* We're getting ready to retire—just so happens I turn 62 in 2008, which is a convenient age. *[Laughter]*

But there's a lot of us, see, and we're living longer than anybody anticipated. I'm riding that mountain bike because I'm trying to retard the aging process. *[Laughter]* But a lot of my—baby boomers are more conscious of their health. In other words, we're mindful that if you smoke, it's going to shorten your lifetime, or if you're drinking too much, it will affect you. And so there's been a—there's a health consciousness among my generation. There's a lot of us, and there's fewer people paying into the system, and we've been promised greater benefits, which means we're on a collision course for our younger workers. And you're paying into this system that's going to be broke. And it's going to affect our ability to compete. That's what I'm telling you.

And so Congress has got to listen to this. Let's get rid of all the politics once and for all up there, and come together and put a bipartisan solution to Social Security and Medicare so that we can say to a young generation of Americans, "We did our duty."

And by doing our duty, by solving a problem that, admittedly, is down the road—but the longer we wait, the more acute the problem is going to be. Now is the time to fix it to make sure the United States of America remains the economic leader of the world. [*Applause*] Thank you all.

I was just getting warmed up, and we're running out of oxygen in here. [*Laughter*]

Trade is an interesting issue. One way to determine whether the Nation has lost its confidence is whether or not the Nation is willing to trade, be a free trading nation. And I can understand people's concerns about imports coming in from China and imports coming in from India. But I don't think we ought to allow those concerns to close down markets. As a matter of fact, I feel very strongly that the United States of America must do the right things internally and also open up markets so that we can keep competition in a global way.

Here's the thing, my job is to make sure that we're treated fairly. That with opening markets—our own markets and getting other people to open their markets, that they treat us the way we treat them, because I strongly believe, one, trade is good for the world; two, it's a good way to alleviate poverty; three, it's important for creating jobs. Northern Kentucky, by the way, benefits from trade. One reason your job base is strong is because we're selling goods made here, elsewhere.

The way I like to tell the American people: It's like China, for example. I was with President Hu. I said, "Mr. President, it's fine for you, selling your goods here, but you've got to understand something about the American people: We just want to be treated fairly. So intellectual property rights, if you have a product here, we're not going to steal the patent—steal the intellectual property rights from you; don't steal it from us. If you—treat our manufacturers well; make sure your currency moves like our currency moves. That's all we want, Mr. President." The American people are fair. And the reason I'm confident in talking about why opening markets will be good for us, because I firmly believe we can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere. And America must never, never lose that thought.

So I know I shocked some people the other day when I got up and said, we're addicted to oil and that's a problem. But if we're really interested in being a competitive nation, we're going to have to do something about our reliance upon oil—now. So I'm working with Congress to promote what's called this Advanced Energy Initiative. And we're working on a variety of fronts. First, one thing we can do is make sure we promote clean coal technology. We've got a lot of coal—like, 250-some odd years worth of coal. We also care about our environment here in America. And we've also got the capacity to make sure that we develop the technologies that will enable us to use this coal. One way to get off oil and hydrocarbons is to use our coal in an environmentally friendly way, and I believe we'll be able to do so. We're spending a lot of money in Washington, by the way, on clean coal technology, and I think it's a proper use of taxpayers' money to do so.

We're also investigating coal-to-liquid technology. In other words, we'll be able to use our coals to be able to provide liquids that we'll be able to use, as well, as an energy source. But there's some other interesting ideas going on. For example, I like the idea of our farmers being able to provide energy to power automobiles; it's called ethanol.

But there will be some technological breakthroughs that allow us to use switch grass. Somebody said, what is it? Well, it's grass that looks like a switch—[*laughter*]—that grows in dry climate. See, that makes sense, doesn't it, to be able to investigate whether or not we can convert that kind of material to energy? I think we'll be able to. Wood chips—now all of this sounds fanciful to some, which the Internet seemed fanciful at one point in time.

And so we're spending money at the Federal level to investigate ways to be able to diversify. One of the interesting technologies that's now on the market is hybrid automobiles. But there's new battery technology being developed, and I'm told we're close to breakthroughs in this technology that will enable you to drive your first 40 miles on electricity alone. That's a pretty good deal, if we're able to achieve that kind of breakthrough. Particularly in big cities—a lot of

people in big cities aren't going to drive 40 miles a day. They may not drive 40 miles a week. But nevertheless, when you start taking that amount of demand off the market, for gasoline, it starts to begin to affect our national and economic security.

In terms of electricity, we have got to move forward with nuclear power. Nuclear power is clean—and we're spending money on solar energy and wind energy. There's not going to be a single breakthrough; there's going to be a variety of sources, of new renewable energy sources that are going to enable us to be able to say to the next generation coming, we're less reliant on oil. It's in our economic interests, and it's in our national security interests that we spend money now to develop the technologies that will get us off oil so we can leave behind an America that's competitive, that will be able to compete in the global economy.

I'm now getting to the reason I came here—[laughter]—and that is that this country of ours, in order to be competitive, must always be on the leading edge of technological change and therefore must be always the best at research and development and, at the same time, must educate our children so they have the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century.

NKU has got some really innovative programs, kind of a seamless transition from high school to college. You've got math and science fairs. You're focusing a lot of your attention on making sure the skill sets that you teach your children are relevant, that will actually keep us competitive.

Let me talk about research and development right quick. I believe there's a proper Federal role for basic research. The reason why is, there has been some Federal research projects which have made a difference in your lives. People here probably don't understand it, but at least understand this. But the Defense Department spent a lot of money on figuring out ways to communicate, out of which came the Internet. See, the Internet came to be as a result of Federal research dollars being spent. I like to mountain bike; I like to put a little country and western music on my iPod. [Laughter] The iPod came to be because of Federal research into microdrive storage and different tech-

nologies. And so therefore, in order to make sure America is competitive and that we're the leader of the world, I believe we ought to double the amount of money we spend in basic research at the Federal level.

Secondly, what's interesting is, most research money is spent by the private sector. One of the great things about our system is it encourages people to—encourages corporations to invest so they can remain productive and be able to compete. One of the tools that we've used to encourage people to invest in research and development is the research and development tax credit. Curiously enough, it expires on a regular basis, which then causes uncertainty. If you're not sure the tax thing is going to be around, you may not want to invest. And so in order to make sure we continue to get the \$200 billion a year we get from private sector into research and development, we need to make the research and development tax credit permanent.

Thirdly, if our children don't have the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century, the jobs are going somewhere else; make no mistake about that. In a global economy, whether we like it or not, whether we're protectionists or confident, the jobs will go somewhere else. And so therefore, it's really important that the United States of America focus hard on the math and sciences. And by the way, we made a pretty good start with No Child Left Behind. And the reason why is, is that we're beginning to change the attitudes towards one of the real keys to success, and that is measurement.

So I go to Washington, and I said, we'll be strongly committed to helping Title I students in particular with additional money, but I want the States and the local governments to show us whether or not the kids are learning. I didn't think that was too much of a request to ask.

We didn't say, "Here, you do this curriculum." We didn't say that. We didn't say, "You've got to hire so-and-so or run your schools this way," because I believe in local control in schools. But we did say, "Why don't you show us—measure." Let's stop guessing in America. Let us know for certain whether or not our children are going to be able to compete in the 21st century, starting

with making sure every child learns to read. I don't think that's too much to ask, to make sure every child can read. If you can't read, you're not going to be a scientist or an engineer. You won't be able to fill the jobs of the 21st century.

And so we started No Child Left Behind, and I want to appreciate the State of Kentucky for implementing the No Child Left Behind standards. It says we're going to raise standards—we're not going to tell you how to run your schools, but you need to measure. And by the way, if you find that a child can't read at grade level, here's a little extra money to help. In other words, we use the accountability system to be able to diagnose problems early and solve them before it's too late.

In the old days—you might remember those days—we just kind of shuffled the kids through. And guess who got shuffled through? Inner-city African American kids, just move them through; it's so much more easy; just let them go. Kids whose parents don't speak English as a first language, they're too tough; just move them through. But that's not fair, and it's not right, and it's going to mean America will not be able to compete. And so we shut that practice down, and America is better for it.

And so let me read you some interesting statistics—I'm able to read these to you because we measure. [Laughter] In 2005, America's fourth graders posted the best scores in reading and math in the history of the test. In other words, there's a norming test to determine whether or not the local accountability system—standards or systems are making a difference. African American fourth graders set records in reading and math. The Nation's Report Card showed eighth graders earned the best math scores recorded ever. Eighth grade Hispanic and African American students achieved the highest math scores ever.

In other words, we've had an achievement gap in our country, and because we focus on each child and measure and insist that curriculum work, that achievement gap is growing—in order for this country—is shrinking. In order for this country to be competitive, all our students have got to get a good education. Everybody must be drilled in the basics. And now it's time to add.

time to add math—focus on math and science. This college is going to—this university will benefit by making sure that we've got high school students—junior high and high school students coming out of our—these institutions with the capacity to be interested in math and the skill set necessary to be able to take on some of the really interesting courses being taught here.

And so why am I concerned about math? Well, we also know that by the time a student gets to high school, most of our students have fallen behind the rest of the developed world in math and science. You're able to measure. And that's not good enough for America. It's a warning signal, it seems like to me. If we're going to be a confident nation that doesn't wall ourselves off from the world, that competes and leads, we better make sure the next generation of children coming up not only are good readers but have got the ability to be skillful in math and science and engineering and physics and chemistry.

And here's some ideas for us. First, I believe we ought to expand Advanced Placement programs around the country by providing money to train 70,000 high school teachers over the next 5 years to teach AP. Now, AP is an interesting program. Some of you probably know what it is. Here's the way I like to describe it: We're going to set high standards, and we're going to expect the best. And we're going to have teachers with that skill set necessary to convince students it's in their interest to learn AP. I went to an interesting AP school in Dallas, Texas, and they said it's graduating more AP students than any other high school in the country. Of course, you know how Texans are. Anyway—[laughter].

But I walked into a classroom and had a young Latino—guy had a pony tail on, and he said, "I want to be an astrophysicist, Mr. President." And it was child after child—because they had an AP teacher raise those standards—say, I want to be a chemist; I want to be a physicist. We can do this in America. And one way to start is to make sure that AP classes flourish.

Secondly, we're going to have a program that has 30,000, what we call, adjunct professors. These will be math and science professionals who will go into classrooms—one way

to say this strategy is to say, “Look, it’s okay to be a math and scientist; it’s cool.” But we need—I went to a classroom outside of Maryland, and there was a NASA engineer in there, and he could make science really seem interesting to these kids.

Thirdly, we’ve got to make sure that we have the same rigorous examination of our math curriculum that we did with our reading curriculum. See, we went through a whole process of helping local districts determine whether or not the reading curriculum they were using was going to work. By the way, one way to determine is, you measure.

And so Secretary of Education Spellings has established what’s called the National Math—I signed, through Executive order, her recommendation—the National Math Panel. They met this week earlier; they’re 17 expert panelists and 6 members from other Government agencies. They’re going to help design standards and accountability, as well as teaching methods. In other words, we’re going to get focused on this, and we expect our States to join us and to focus on math and science. It is really important that we start laying that skill set now for the next generation of Americans if we’re going to be confident.

And by the way, in the eighth grade, if you start falling behind in math, you ought to get that supplemental service money, that extra help, just like we provide for third and fourth graders in reading, when they begin to fall behind.

Obviously, some are saying, “Well, that sounds great, Mr. President, how about helping those of us who can’t go to college, go to college.” I’m a big believer in Pell grants. Pell grants are a very important part of making sure American education lays that foundation for excellence. We’ve increased the number of Pell grants since I’ve been your President by a million. We’ve got 5 million kids now getting Pell grants, and the maximum grant has gone from 3,750 to 4,050. If you qualify you get 4,050. But I think we ought to provide additional incentives to the Pell grant program. We call them enhanced Pell grants—and we’re working with Congress—they’ve actually just passed the two ideas that I think make sense.

One is that if you’re a graduate with a 3.0, and you’ve taken a rigorous high school curriculum—if you take a rigorous high school curriculum and you go to college and maintain a 3.0 in college for your first 2 years, your Pell grant increases 750 for the first year, 1,300 for the second year. The purpose of this is to say to high schools, keep raising that standard. Keep providing rigorous courses in math and science, and for the students that qualify, there will be a reward. And by the way, once you get into college, there will be an additional \$4,000, on top of the Pell grant, for third and fourth year students who have maintained 3.0 and who major in math, science, or a critical foreign language.

And so here are some incentives to build on this strategy to make sure America competes. So before you all pass out, I want to say one other thing—[laughter]. Laura said, whatever you do, don’t go over to Kentucky and get a little long-winded. I obviously didn’t listen. [Laughter]

I feel passionately about our country’s future. I am optimistic about America. I’ve got a unique perspective. I am able to see America in a different way from you all. I am able to see these unbelievable acts of kindness that take place on a regular basis here in our country, people willing to say, I want to serve my country by loving a neighbor. I also understand that our value system, our belief in human liberty is just a powerful motivator for good. And I know the entrepreneurial spirit is a way to make sure people are able to realize dreams.

And so what I really want to share with you is, I understand that there’s some uncertainty and worries because of circumstances today, but you’ve got a President whose—I’ve got no doubt in my mind that the world is headed toward peace and that this country is going to remain the economic leader of the world. We just can’t lose our confidence. America shouldn’t fear the future, because we’re going to shape the future.

Thanks for letting me come by.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:30 p.m. at Northern Kentucky University. In his remarks, he referred to James C. Votruba, president, Northern Kentucky University; Katie Kratz Stine, Kentucky State senator; Mayor Charles W. Roettger III of

Highland Heights, KY; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and President Hu Jintao of China. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

### Remarks at a Reception for Congressional Candidate Geoff Davis in Florence, Kentucky

May 19, 2006

**The President.** Thank you all very much. Geoff, thanks very much for your kind introduction; thanks for your service. I'm here because there's no doubt in my mind, Geoff Davis is the right candidate for the 4th Congressional District.

I've gotten to know him. I got to know the kind of person he is. And you know, when you find somebody who is full of integrity, somebody who prioritizes his faith and his family above all else is somebody you need to send back to Washington, DC. He came and campaigned hard here, and he told you what he was going to do, and he has done what he said he's going to do. Geoff Davis needs to be reelected to the United States Congress for the good of this district and for the good of the United States of America.

You know, one of the interesting things about Washington is, we've got plenty of lawyers up there. [Laughter] I'm not one. [Laughter]

**Congressman Davis.** Me, neither.

**The President.** Neither is the Congressman. [Laughter] Seems like when you've got somebody who has got the kind of experience we need in Washington—I'm talking about experience outside of politics—that you ought to keep him up there. See, he's a fellow who's a small-business owner. This is a really vibrant part of our country, right here in northern Kentucky. It's a part of the world where the entrepreneurial spirit is strong. And it makes sense to have somebody in the United States Congress who has lived the life that many of our entrepreneurs have lived.

And we're a nation that is at war. And I need allies in the United States Congress, people who understand what the military is all about. This man wore the uniform of the United States of America. Send him back to the United States Congress.

Davis really wanted—he really wanted Laura. He said, “You stay at home, Mr. President.” [Laughter]

**Audience member.** Next time.

**The President.** Yes, next time. Unfortunately, she was tied up. But she's a believer. She wants me to tell you all, thanks very much for supporting this good fellow. I bring a message from her, and I bring a message from myself: Any time when you find somebody who is willing to run, that's making a sacrifice, it means a lot to have the support of the people. And so thank you all for coming today. Thanks for contributing to this man's campaign.

And I want to remind you that money is one thing, but he's also going to need people out working those coffee shops, working the neighborhoods. And so I'm going to thank you not only for what you have done; I want to thank you for what you're going to do, which is turn out the vote to make sure he gets back to Washington, DC.

Anyway, Laura sends her best. And old Geoff is like me; he married well. [Laughter] All you've got to do is—if your six kids were 21, it would be a landslide. [Laughter]

But we flew down on Air Force One together. We talked about two things, I think, that will interest you. You can get to know a person pretty well when you're with them for a while and nobody else is around listening, and there's not any—not any cameras and not any agenda papers. And so guess what he wanted to talk about? First, he wanted to talk about his children. I thought that was interesting. He could have talked about anything. He could have said bridges, or how about—

**Congressman Davis.** We did talk about— [laughter].

**The President.** How about this, Mr. President? Or why don't you tell them this, Mr. President? Presidents get a lot of advice. Some of it is solicited, and some of it is unsolicited. [Laughter] He wanted to talk about his family, how proud he was of his family. He wanted me to make sure I understood that he had six children and that one of them is going to NKU, and one of them is 6. [Laughter] He wanted me to know how much he loved his wife, and how much he respects her. I think that says something

about the nature of the man. And I think the voters of this district ought to pay attention to the values of the candidates who are running for office. This is a man who's got strong values, the kind of values we need in the public arena.

Then he wanted to talk about the military. He wanted to share some thoughts. See, he went to West Point.

**Audience member.** Hey!

**The President.** Yes.

**Congressman Davis.** His son went to West Point.

**The President.** I'm glad somebody appreciates it. [*Laughter*] He wanted to share his experience with me as an officer, a West Point grad who—he's got friends out in the trenches still fighting for America. I think it's interesting to have a Congressman who feels comfortable enough to talk to the President about the command structure, the decisions we make that influence the troops in the field. See, we need people in Congress who understand that once you commit somebody into harm's way, they deserve all the support of the Federal Government. They not only deserve monetary support; they need strong moral support of our Government.

I'm proud also that Jim Bunning is with us today. He's a fine United States Senator, good man. That big right-hander is big enough to be able to see all way in the back. And his wife Mary is with him as well. Thank you, Mary. Thank you all for coming.

I want to thank State Senator Dan Kelly, the senate majority floor leader, for being here. Senator, thanks for coming. You make sure you turn out to help this guy turn out the vote.

You know, one of the interesting things about—one of the things I learned in Texas politics is the importance of the—we call them “county judges;” you call them “country judge executives”—“county judge-dash-executive.” [*Laughter*] I remember campaigning for my dad in 1964. He was running against—yes, he's a good old boy. [*Laughter*] And he said, “Your job is to go tell them you'll pass out the literature in the courthouse.” Then I got in the courthouse and of course, it was completely empty. [*Laughter*] The courthouses were dominated in those days by the Democrat Party.

Good politics starts at the courthouse. You can tell whether a person is going to do well politically if he can get the courthouse crowd going for him, because that's—local politics always is the base of support. So I'm honored to welcome today Gary Moore, Ralph Drees, and Steve Pendery. These are the county judge executives of Boone County, Kenton County, and Campbell County. And we're glad you're here. Thanks for coming.

I want to thank the grassroots activists who are here. Somebody who is a grassroots activist is somebody who gets on the telephone at the right time and says, “I know Geoff Davis, and it's in our interest, our mutual interest, for you to go vote for him.” A grassroots activist is somebody who does the tedious tasks of stuffing envelopes full of mailers that say, here's a good man with a good record. A grassroots activist is somebody who goes to their place of worship and says, “Oh, by the way, we have a duty to vote, and we've got a good man running here; don't let him down.” That's what a grassroots activist is. And for those of you who are grassroots activists, thanks very much for being involved in campaigns; thank you for turning out the vote.

Let me talk about a couple of issues that are important. You win elections based not only on your values but what you believe and what you do. See, there's an interesting debate in Washington right now. There's a lot of anger in Washington. But anger is not a philosophy. Anger is not a set of principles. Anger is—you can't win elections by being angry. You win elections by being optimistic and hopeful and leading. That's how you win elections.

And we're in the lead. And I want to thank Geoff for joining this Nation as we lead the world toward peace. Our biggest challenge in Washington is to protect the American people. That's the biggest calling we have. It's the most important responsibility. When somebody says, “Name your most important responsibility, Mr. President,” it's easily, “To protect you.” I learned that lesson on September the 11th, 2001. It's a lesson I'll never forget as your President, that my most solemn duty is to protect the American people. And therefore, it's important to have allies

like Geoff Davis who are willing to stand strong in observing and honoring that duty.

I learned some lessons on September the 11th, and one of them is, we face an enemy that is full of hate, that adheres to an ideology that is backwards, an ideology that's the opposite of freedom. An ideology, nevertheless, is one that can bind people together. I learned that these are folks you can't negotiate with; you can't hope for the best. You, kind of, can't sit back and say, well, maybe they'll change their mind. The only way to protect the American people and do our duty is to stay on the offense and bring them to justice. And it's important to have people in the United States Congress who understand that. And Geoff understands that.

Another lesson I learned is that it's really important to make sure this enemy can't find safe haven, can't hide in places so they can plot and plan in order to attack us. See, they have stated their objectives clearly. They want to spread their ideology, and they want us to retreat from the world. They think we will. They think it's just a matter of time for the United States to lose our nerve and to be—and to withdraw.

But they don't understand me, and they don't understand people in the United States Congress, like Geoff Davis. We understand our duty. I said, "If you harbor a terrorist, you're equally as guilty as the terrorist." Just as an aside, when the President says something, he better mean what he says. When a member of Congress says something, they better mean what they say, as well. I meant what I said, and the Taliban no longer is in power, and now 25 million people are free.

One of the interesting lessons of September the 11th, in this world in which we live, is that the United States cannot be complacent when we see a threat. If we see a threat, we must deal with that threat before it comes home to hit us. It used to be, we could see a threat and we'd say, wait a minute, we're okay; we've got oceans protecting us—you know, we're fine, because we're pretty well insulated from those kind of threats.

That changed on September the 11th. And I saw a threat. Matter of fact, people in both political parties saw the same threat I saw. Countries from around the world saw the

same threat I saw. And the threat was a dictator who had killed millions of his people—killed hundreds of thousands of his people, used weapons of mass destruction, had invaded his neighborhood, declared the United States an enemy, harbored terrorists.

The President must use diplomacy before he ever commits troops into harm's way. We—worked as hard as I could to solve the issue of Iraq peacefully. When we couldn't do so, Saddam Hussein had a choice to make: disclose and disarm or face serious consequences. He made the choice. The world is better off without Saddam Hussein in power.

And we have a plan for victory in Iraq. And a victory in Iraq is a country that can sustain itself, govern itself, and defend itself; an ally in the war on terror; and someone who will deny that which the enemy has declared they want, which is a safe haven from which to launch further attacks. And we're on our way. And it's really important to have Members in the United States Congress who understand the power of freedom to transform societies, the ability of our fighting forces—if given the proper equipment—to be able to achieve an objective, and not cut and run before the mission is complete.

These are difficult times for the American people. War is tough, particularly when you face an enemy that is able to put bloodshed on our TV screens on a regular basis. See, these people have no conscience; they have no sense of justice; they will take innocent lives in order to drive us out. That's what they're trying to do. And I need allies in Congress who are willing to understand the stakes, who know that there is no option other than victory; that we're not going to retreat; that we're not going to allow the enemy to be able to have a safe haven in Iraq. And we will not abandon the 12 million people who defied car bombers and terrorists and said to the world, we want to be free.

We're going to succeed. We're going to succeed. You know, there are some interesting lessons in history—Geoff and I were talking about them as well. It's important for those of us in Washington to study history and to learn from history. One of the interesting lessons of history is the power of liberty to transform societies. It's happened. It's

happened in recent times. World War I was a terrible war; World War II, also a terrible war. Both of them took place on the continent of Europe. And yet there are no wars on Europe today. Europe is free and whole, at peace because democracies don't war with each other. That's one of the lessons of history.

One of my better buddies in the world is Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan. That's probably not much of interest, until you realize my dad—or think about the fact that my dad fought the Japanese. One of the really interesting things that I think about when I visit with Prime Minister Koizumi—and, by the way, when I'm visiting with him, we're talking about the peace; we're talking about how to help democracy in Iraq; we're talking about what to do about the man in North Korea; we're talking about how to work together as strong allies to lay the foundation of peace. I find it interesting, and I think the American people ought to listen carefully to that lesson of history, that because Japan adopted a Japanese-style democracy, an enemy, a sworn enemy of the United States is today an ally in keeping the peace.

The same thing is going to happen in the broader Middle East. As democracy takes hold in the broader Middle East, we will have an ideology that defeats the ideology of terror in place, and someday, an American President is going to be sitting down with a duly elected leader of Iraq saying, how do we keep the peace? We're laying the foundation for peace, and I need allies like Geoff Davis who understand the stakes.

Government doesn't create wealth; Government creates the environment in which people are willing to take risk to realize their dreams. And there is a fundamental difference in Washington, DC, on how to run this economy. We believe that the best way to run the economy is to let the people run the economy by keeping more of their own money.

This economy of ours is strong: 3.5 percent GDP growth last year; 4.7 percent unemployment rate across the Nation; 5.2 million new jobs in 2½ years. Productivity is on the rise; small businesses are flourishing; more people own a home today than ever before in our Nation's history. More minorities own

a home today than ever before in our Nation's history. And the reason it's strong is because of the tax cuts we passed.

And I know what's going to happen if the other party runs the United States Congress; they're going to run up your taxes. Make no mistake about it; their view on how to grow this economy is to take more money out of your pocket. Our view on how to grow the economy is to let you keep more money. The tax cuts need to be made permanent.

Oh, you hear a lot of talk about the deficit in Washington, and the other side will say, well, here's how you solve the deficit—raise your taxes. See, it becomes a convenient excuse. That's not how it works in Washington. And Geoff understands that—that it doesn't work that way, to raise your taxes and balance the budget. No, what happens is, they're going to raise your taxes, and they're going to figure out new ways to spend your money. That's how Washington works.

The best way to balance the budget is to keep progrowth economic policies in place which generate more revenue for the Federal Treasury and hold down Federal spending. And that's why I need allies like Geoff Davis who are fiscally responsible with the people's money. We're on our way to cutting that deficit in half by 2009.

And by the way, if the United States Congress sees that supplemental I sent up there—that supplemental, by the way, aimed to make sure our troops have the combat equipment necessary to win this war on terror and to help the people down in Katrina—if they bust a 92.2 barrier I put on it, I'm going to veto the bill.

In order to make sure that we're a competitive—I just, by the way, I had a fantastic experience at NKU. I really enjoyed myself there. And it's a wonderful institute here. And I was talking about how to keep America competitive. That's one of the things we need. We need forward-thinking people in Washington, DC, who don't fear the future, because we intend to shape the future; we intend to make sure that we put policies in place that keep us the most competitive nation in the world.

And one thing we need to do in order to be the most competitive nation in the world is to get off our addiction to oil. In order

to make sure America has the economic security for the future and the national security that we need, is, we've got to do something about oil, and we've got to diversify away from it.

Here's some ideas: One, clean coal technology. We're going to spend research and development money to make sure we can use the coal—250 years' worth of coal and burn it in an environmentally friendly way. We can do that. We'll be able to do that.

Secondly, we need to use coal to help get liquid fuels, see. And one of the things about Davis, he understands that. And he put, in the defense bill, \$5 million to help us make sure we can extract liquids from coal. In other words, it's a different way to make us less dependent on foreign sources of oil.

We need to change how we drive our cars. I want Kentucky farmers growing the fuel for the future. I'm a big believer in ethanol. We've got battery technology going on that would mean that you can drive your first 40 miles on electricity and your thing doesn't have to look like a golf cart. [Laughter]

We're working on new solar technologies. We're working on wind technologies. We're investing in hydrogen so the little fellow here will be driving his car, not driven by gasoline but powered by hydrogen. I need—

**Audience member.** Good—

**The President.** I was about to say, this man is a nuclear power guy, and so am I. [Laughter] The best way to protect the environment and to have renewable sources of energy is through nuclear power.

And so I need allies in the United States Congress who understand that we have got to diversify away from oil. It's in our national interest and our economic interest that we develop a broad-based energy strategy that will get the job done.

Finally, I do want to talk about the importance of people in Congress who understand that values are important. One of the areas where we're making progress is promoting the culture of life. I think it's really important for our society to be a welcoming society, a society that recognizes everybody has worth, born and unborn.

Geoff Davis is an ally in promoting a culture of life. He's an ally—look, he didn't get to vote on these deals. He's in the House.

But I can assure you, he supports my nominees for the Supreme Court and for the circuit court. These are people who will not legislate from the bench, people who are solid constructionists, strict constructionists.

It's really important to have people in Washington who understand that Government can hand out money, but Government can't put hope in a person's heart. That's done when a loving soul says, "I love you, brother; what can I do to help you?" Some of the most intractable problems in our country cannot be solved by money.

One of the things that we've initiated in Washington is the Faith-Based and Community-Based Initiative, which says to people of faith, you can apply for Federal grant money so that you can help heal broken hearts, and you don't have to lose the core of your mission. And we ought to have people in the United States Congress who understand that in order to solve problems, problems of the heart, that requires a higher power than the United States Government sometimes to do so. Geoff Davis understands that.

You know, de Tocqueville came to America in the 1830s. He came to America and observed that America was such a unique place because of the voluntary associations all across our country, where people would show up to help a neighbor in need. That spirit is still alive in America today, by the way. We've got people doing millions of acts of kindness on a daily basis, and there hasn't been one law that says you've got to do it, except for a higher calling. And the power of Government must not stand in the way of those trying to practice their faith to heal open hearts, but to stand side by side with them, and Geoff Davis understands that.

So I've come to northern Kentucky to support this good man and to ask you to continue to support him. He's making a difference in the United States Congress. He understands the challenges of the world in which we face, and he shares the same sense of optimism that I share, that this great country of ours can solve any problem when we put our mind to it. Send him back to the United States Congress and you'll be better off for it.

Thank you, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:34 p.m. at the Hilton Greater Cincinnati Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Pat Davis, wife of Representative Davis; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Proclamation 8020—National Hurricane Preparedness Week, 2006**  
*May 19, 2006*

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

During National Hurricane Preparedness Week, private organizations, public officials, and government agencies will highlight the preparations necessary for the new hurricane season that begins on June 1.

Last year, a record number of hurricanes caused unprecedented devastation across an entire region of our country. Our citizens along the Gulf Coast demonstrated their strength and resilience, and individuals across America revealed their compassion and resolve by opening their hearts, homes, and communities to those in need.

After these storms, Federal, State, and local governments have worked to enhance our Nation's ability to respond to large-scale natural disasters. The Federal Government has conducted an extensive review of preparedness and response efforts, and actions are being taken at all levels of government to improve communications and strengthen emergency response capabilities.

To help individuals, families, and businesses prepare for the future, the Department of Homeland Security provides checklists and information on natural disasters and other threats at [ready.gov](http://ready.gov). By working together, government, private entities, and civic and charitable organizations can help increase preparedness for this year's hurricane season.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 21 through

May 27, 2006, as National Hurricane Preparedness Week. I call upon government agencies, private organizations, schools, media, and residents in the coastal areas of our Nation to share information about hurricane preparedness and response to help save lives and protect communities.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this nineteenth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., May 23, 2006]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 24. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Proclamation 8021—National Maritime Day, 2006**  
*May 19, 2006*

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

The United States Merchant Marine plays an important role in ensuring our national security and strengthening our economy. As we celebrate National Maritime Day and the 70th anniversary of the Merchant Marine Act, we pay tribute to merchant mariners and their faithful service to our Nation.

Since 1775, merchant mariners have bravely served our country, and in 1936, the Merchant Marine Act officially established their role in our military as a wartime naval auxiliary. During World War II, merchant mariners were critical to the delivery of troops and supplies overseas, and they helped keep vital ocean supply lines operating. President Franklin D. Roosevelt praised these brave merchant mariners for persevering "despite the perils of the submarine, the dive bomber, and the surface raider." Today's merchant mariners follow those who courageously served before them as they continue to provide crucial support for our Nation's service men and women.

America is grateful for their commitment to excellence and devotion to duty.

In addition to helping defend our country, merchant mariners facilitate commerce by importing and exporting goods throughout the world. They work with our Nation's transportation industry to share their valuable skills and experience in ship maintenance, navigation, and cargo transportation. This past year, the good work and compassion of merchant mariners also played an important role in hurricane relief efforts. Ships brought urgently needed supplies to the devastated areas, provided assistance for oil spill clean-up, generated electricity, and provided meals and lodging for recovery workers and evacuees.

In recognition of the importance of the U.S. Merchant Marine, the Congress, by joint resolution approved on May 20, 1933, as amended, has designated May 22 of each year as "National Maritime Day," and has authorized and requested that the President issue an annual proclamation calling for its appropriate observance.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 22, 2006, as National Maritime Day. I call upon all the people of the United States to mark this observance by honoring the service of merchant mariners and by displaying the flag of the United States at their homes and in their communities. I also request that all ships sailing under the American flag dress ship on that day.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this nineteenth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., May 23, 2006]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 24. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

## **Proclamation 8022—World Trade Week, 2006**

*May 19, 2006*

*By the President of the United States of America*

### **A Proclamation**

Free and fair trade is a powerful engine for growth and job creation in the United States and in countries throughout the world. World Trade Week is an opportunity to celebrate the benefits of trade for people everywhere.

America is a great force for prosperity, and our country's economic and national security interests are advanced through strong economic ties with our friends and allies. Since 2001, my Administration has concluded or implemented free trade agreements with 15 countries. We are working toward agreements with 11 additional countries, and we will continue to pursue further opportunities.

Last August, I was pleased to sign legislation implementing the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR). CAFTA-DR will reduce tariffs on American goods and expand export opportunities for American businesses. When the rules are fair, American people and businesses can compete with anyone in the world. CAFTA-DR will also advance our commitment to democracy and prosperity for our neighbors.

Studies have shown that the elimination of global trade barriers could help lift hundreds of millions of the world's poor out of poverty and boost economic growth around the world. An important opportunity to deliver the full benefits of trade to people around the world is the Doha Round of trade negotiations at the World Trade Organization. An ambitious Doha agreement could bring benefits to all nations, especially the developing world, and my Administration is working for a successful conclusion to these negotiations.

During World Trade Week and throughout the year, the United States remains committed to increasing free and fair trade and to improving the standard of living for our citizens. By working with our friends and allies, we will continue to help build a world

that lives in liberty, trades in freedom, and grows in prosperity.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 21 through May 27, 2006, as World Trade Week. I encourage all Americans to observe this week with appropriate events, trade shows, and educational programs that celebrate the benefits of trade to our Nation and people around the world.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this nineteenth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:47 a.m., May 23, 2006]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 24. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

### **The President's Radio Address**

*May 20, 2006*

Good morning. Earlier this week, I spoke to you from the Oval Office to lay out my vision for reforming our Nation's immigration system. And on Thursday, I went to Arizona to visit with the men and women of the Border Patrol. I wanted to get an update on their efforts because a secure America depends on a secure border.

I believe America can be a lawful society and a welcoming society at the same time. We must enforce our laws while honoring our proud immigrant heritage. So I support comprehensive immigration reform that will accomplish five clear objectives.

First, America must secure its borders. Since I became President, we've increased funding for border security by 66 percent, hired thousands more Border Patrol agents, and caught and sent home about 6 million illegal immigrants. Yet we have much more work to do.

So this week, I asked Congress to provide funding for dramatic improvements in manpower and technology at the border. We'll hire thousands more Border Patrol agents. And to help these agents do their jobs, we will deploy advanced technologies such as high-tech fences in urban areas, infrared cameras, and unmanned aerial vehicles. We'll also draw on the expertise of State and local law enforcement in our border communities and give them new resources and training so they can help secure our border.

Putting these new resources in place will take time. To help during this transition, up to 6,000 National Guard members will be deployed to our southern border. They will assist the Border Patrol by operating surveillance and communication systems, installing fences and vehicle barriers, building patrol roads, and analyzing intelligence. The support of Guard personnel will allow Border Patrol agents to use their skills to focus on securing the border.

Second, to secure our border, we must create a temporary-worker program that provides foreign workers a legal and orderly way to enter our country for a limited period of time. This program would reduce pressure on the border, meet the needs of our economy, and allow honest immigrants to provide for their families while respecting the law. And it will help us make certain we know who is in our country and why they are here.

Third, we need to hold employers to account for the workers they hire by creating a better system for verifying documents and work eligibility. The system should include a new tamper-proof identification card for every legal foreign worker. This card would help us enforce the law and leave employers with no excuse for breaking it. And by making it harder for illegal immigrants to find work in our country, we would discourage people from crossing the border illegally in the first place.

Fourth, we must resolve the status of millions of illegal immigrants who are already here. They should not be given an automatic path to citizenship. This is amnesty, and I oppose it. Amnesty would be unfair to those who are here lawfully, and it would invite further waves of illegal immigration.

Some people think any proposal short of mass deportation is amnesty. I disagree. There's a rational middle ground between automatic citizenship for every illegal immigrant and a program of mass deportation. Illegal immigrants who have roots in our country and want to stay should have to pay a meaningful penalty, pay their taxes, learn English, and work in a job for a number of years. People who meet these conditions should be able to apply for citizenship, but approval will not be automatic, and they will have to wait in line behind those who played by the rules and followed the law.

Fifth, we must honor the great American tradition of the melting pot by helping newcomers assimilate into our society. Americans are bound together by our shared ideals: an appreciation of our history; respect for our flag; and the ability to speak and write in English. We will work to ensure that every new citizen fully embraces our common culture. When immigrants assimilate, they will advance in our society, realize their dreams, renew our spirit, and add to the unity of America.

Congress is now considering legislation on immigration reform. That legislation must be comprehensive. All elements of this problem must be addressed together or none of them will be solved at all. The House started the debate by passing an immigration bill. Now the Senate should act by the end of this month, so we can work out the differences between the two bills, and Congress can pass a bill for me to sign into law.

We should approach this debate with confidence. America has shown before that we can enforce our laws and uphold our values, and we will do it again. Our Nation honors the heritage of all who've come here because we trust in our country's genius for making us all Americans, one Nation under God.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:45 a.m. on May 19 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 20. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 19 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

## **Statement on the Formation of Iraq's Government**

*May 20, 2006*

I congratulate Prime Minister Maliki on the formation of Iraq's new unity Government. Iraqis now have a fully constitutional government, marking the end of a democratic transitional process in Iraq that has been both difficult and inspiring. This broadly representative unity Government offers a new opportunity for progress in Iraq.

The new Government reflects Iraq's diversity and opens a new chapter in that country's history. Iraq's new leaders know the period ahead will be filled with great challenge. But they also know that they—and their great country—will not face them alone. The United States and freedom-loving nations around the world will stand with Iraq as it takes its place among the world's democracies and as an ally in the war on terror.

Today, as Iraqis look to their new Government, they can be proud that in 3 years they have progressed from the oppression of a brutal dictator who fomented sectarian divides to an elected government in which all Iraqis have a voice. As Iraq's leaders work together to chart the future of their nation, bringing freedom and security to the Iraqi people, they make the world a safer place for all of us. The sacrifices of many of our country's noblest and bravest have helped make this day possible. We will not forget their contribution to our security and Iraq's democracy.

## **Remarks on the Formation of Iraq's Government**

*May 21, 2006*

The formation of a unity government in Iraq is a new day for the millions of Iraqis who want to live in freedom. And the formation of the unity Government in Iraq begins a new chapter in our relationship with Iraq.

This morning I called the President, the Prime Minister, and the Speaker to congratulate them on working together to form the unity Government. I assured them that the United States will continue to assist the

Iraqis in the formation of a free country, because I fully understand that a free Iraq will be an important ally in the war on terror, will serve as a devastating defeat for the terrorists and Al Qaida, and will serve as an example for others in the region who desire to be free.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:33 a.m. in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Jalal Talabani, Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, and Speaker of the Council of Representatives Mahmoud al-Mashhadani of Iraq.

### Remarks on the War on Terror and a Question-and-Answer Session in Chicago, Illinois

May 22, 2006

**The President.** Thank you all very much. Thanks for the warm welcome. It's great to be back in Chicago, home of the mighty Chicago White Sox, world champs. I said that because the mayor is here—[laughter]—who, by the way, is one of the finest mayors in our country. Mayor Daley, thank you for being here. He's a huge Chicago White Sox fan. When I had the White Sox to the White House to congratulate them on the world championship—winning the world championship trophy, there was the mayor, beaming.

The other team here isn't doing quite so well these days. [Laughter] As a matter of fact, I had the honor, though, of throwing out the first pitch in the Chicago Cubs home opener against Cincinnati, and they won that game 16 to 7. You know, when you're President, sometimes you get blamed for a lot of things. [Laughter] So I want to assure all the Cubs fans here that the last time I saw them play, they were undefeated. [Laughter]

I really appreciate being invited here by the National Restaurant Association. Thanks for having me. You know, Laura and I don't eat out as much as we used to. [Laughter] But we do appreciate your industry's contribution to the country.

I appreciate your leadership in Washington on really important issues like tort reform and tax relief and immigration reform.

I'm going to spend a little time today talking about immigration reform. But the main reason I've come today is to talk to you about a watershed event that took place this weekend in Iraq. On Saturday, in Baghdad, Iraqis formed a new Government, and the world saw the beginning of something new—constitutional democracy at the heart of the Middle East.

And if you like, after my remarks I'd like to answer some of your questions. So be thinking of them.

But before I get there, I do want to thank Ed Tinsley. He's a West Texan, and like me, he married a woman from Midland, Texas. It's the best decision Tinsley ever made, and it's the best decision I ever made. Laura sends her greetings to you all. She's a fine First Lady, and I'm lucky she said yes when I asked her to marry me.

I appreciate Steven Anderson, the President and CEO of the National Restaurant Association. I appreciate sharing the stage with Denny Hastert. He is an excellent Speaker of the House. He is dependable, reliable, smart, capable. Do you realize that he will have served, come June 1st, longer than any other Republican Speaker in our Nation's history? And the reason why, he knows what he's doing.

And I appreciate Congressman Ray LaHood and Congresswoman Judy Biggert for joining us as well, today. They're here looking for a ride back to Washington on Air Force One. [Laughter] I appreciate all the State and local officials for coming too.

Our economy is strong, and it's growing. And the restaurant industry plays a vital role in this prosperity. National unemployment is 4.7 percent. That's lower than the average of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. People are working. We've added over 2 million jobs in the last 2½ years. And one of the main reasons why is because the National Restaurant Association members are employing people. The NRA—National Restaurant Association—estimates that more than 12.5 million people work at 925,000 restaurants across our country. That makes restaurants the largest private employer in our land.

You not only help people put food on the table but you provide many Americans with their first job, with a start. You teach people

the importance of showing up on time and working hard and meeting the needs of our customers. You're also America's largest employer of immigrants, and you know how essential it is that we have an immigration system that is safe, orderly, and fair. And I agree with you, and that's why I laid out a vision for comprehensive immigration reform that would accomplish five key goals.

First, the United States will secure our borders by deploying thousands of new Border Patrol agents and giving those agents the best technology available to do their job.

Secondly, you can't secure our border with thousands trying to sneak in, and therefore, this country needs a temporary-worker program that will allow foreign workers to enter our country legally on a temporary basis to meet the needs of our economy and take the pressure off our border.

Third, we must create a reliable system for verifying documents and work eligibility so we can better enforce our immigration laws at the workplace.

Fourth, we will find a rational middle ground to resolve the legal status of the millions of people who have been here for quite awhile, without granting amnesty.

And fifth, we will uphold the great American tradition of the melting pot so America can remain what it always has been, one Nation under God.

The reforms I proposed regarding guest workers are really important for your industry. Your association estimates that restaurants will add—will need 1.9 million new workers over the next 10 years, which means that you need workers—your need for workers will be growing faster than the American labor force. So you understand why effective immigration reform must include a practical and lawful way for businesses to hire foreign workers when they can't fill those jobs with Americans. The restaurant industry has first-hand experience with immigrants and immigration law. And I appreciate your strong stand on Capitol Hill for comprehensive reform.

And here's where we are: The House passed a bill last—an immigration bill last December, and the Senate is working hard on its version of the bill. The Senate needs to complete its bill now so that the House

and Senate can work out their differences and pass a comprehensive reform bill that I can sign into law.

We face challenges at home, and we face challenges abroad. So I've come to talk to you about an historic event that took place halfway around the world this weekend. This Saturday in Baghdad, the new Prime Minister of Iraq announced a national unity Government. This is a free Government under a democratic constitution, and its formation marks a victory for the cause of freedom in the Middle East.

In three elections last year, millions of Iraqis cast their ballot in defiance of the terrorists. And now they have a Government of their own choosing under a constitution that they drafted and they approved. As this new unity Government takes office, it carries with it the hopes of the Iraqi nation and the aspirations of freedom-loving people across a troubled region.

The unity Government has strong leaders that will represent all of the Iraqi people. I called them this weekend to congratulate them. I thanked them for being courageous and strong and standing for the belief that liberty will help transform their troubled nation.

The new Government is led by Prime Minister Maliki. He's a Shi'a. He's an Iraqi patriot who for years was part of the resistance to Saddam Hussein. He's shown courage and wisdom by surrounding himself with strong leaders who are committed to serving all the people. Prime Minister Maliki said this weekend, "Just as we did away with the tyrant and the days of oppression and despotism, we will do away with terrorism and sabotage, backwardness, poverty, and ignorance." The Iraqi people are blessed to have a leader like Prime Minister Maliki, and I'm proud to call him ally and friend.

Iraq's new Government has another strong leader in its President, President Talabani. He's a Kurd who distinguished himself by his service in the Transitional Government and in his long fight against Saddam Hussein. He's proved that he's not afraid to take the lead. He's made clear that a democratic Iraq must reject sectarian violence as strongly as it rejects terrorism. He says, "It's our duty,

all of us, to work hand in hand to protect our people and to support Iraqi unity.”

Iraq’s new Government has another able leader in Speaker Mashhadani. He’ll preside over Iraq’s new Council of Representatives. The Speaker is a Sunni who originally opposed America’s presence in Iraq. He rejects the use of violence for political ends. And by agreeing to serve in a prominent role in this new unity Government, he’s demonstrating leadership and courage. It was said to me that he wouldn’t have taken my phone call a year ago. He’s now taken it twice. He says Iraq’s new leaders must govern by common vision. This common vision is critical to the new Government’s success.

Although Iraq’s new leaders come from many different ethnic and religious communities, they’ve made clear they will govern as Iraqis. They know that the strategy of the terrorists and the insurgents is to divide Iraq along sectarian lines. And the only way the enemy will be defeated is if they stand and act as one.

The Government is still a work in progress, and overcoming longstanding divisions will take time. Iraq’s new leaders know they have a great deal of work ahead to broaden the base of their Government and to unite the people. They also understand that representing all Iraqis and not just narrow sectarian interests, they will be able to make a decisive break with the past and make a future of progress and opportunity for all their people a reality. The unity Government must now seize this moment and pursue a common agenda for the future.

This weekend, Prime Minister Maliki laid out his plan for a new Iraq. He promised to work for a sovereign Iraq that will assume responsibility for the security of its people. He committed himself to a free Iraq that will uphold international standards of human rights and respect the role of women in Iraqi society. He pledged to work for a prosperous Iraq that welcomes foreign investments and accelerates reconstruction and lays the foundations for economic growth and opportunity. He declared he would lead a transparent Iraq where Government is open and accountable and corruption is not tolerated. And he vowed to work for a peaceful Iraq that is the enemy of terror, a friend to its

neighbors, and a reliable partner in the community of nations.

The Prime Minister promised that he will soon fill the remaining positions in his Government and announced the details of his plans to build his new country, his new Iraq. As his Government moves forward, it can draw on many strengths of the Iraqi nation. Iraqis are among the most highly educated and skilled people in the Middle East. They have abundant natural resources, including fertile soil, abundant water, and large reserves of oil. And they’re rich in cultural and historical and religious sites that one day could draw millions of tourists and pilgrims from across the world. Iraq’s new leaders understand that so long as they remain united, there is no limit to the potential of their country.

The unity Government opens a new chapter in the relationship between the United States and Iraq. The new Iraqi Government does not change America’s objectives or our commitment, but it will change how we achieve those objectives and how we honor our commitment. And the new Iraqi Government—as the new Iraqi Government grows in confidence and capability, America will play an increasingly supporting role. To take advantage of this moment of opportunity, the United States and our coalition partners will work with the new Iraqi Government to adjust our methods and strengthen our mutual efforts to achieve victory over our common enemies.

At my direction, the Secretaries of State and Defense recently traveled to Baghdad to meet with the Prime Minister and other leaders. And now the new Government has been formed, I’ve instructed those Secretaries to engage Iraq’s new leaders as they assess their needs and capabilities, so we will be in the best position to help them succeed. Iraqis are determined to chart their own future. And now they have the leadership to do it. And this unity Government deserves American support, and they will have it.

Our Nation has been through three difficult years in Iraq. And the way forward will bring more days of challenge and loss. The progress we’ve made has been hard-fought, and it’s been incremental. There have been setbacks and missteps—like Abu Ghraib—

that were felt immediately and have been difficult to overcome. Yet we have now reached a turning point in the struggle between freedom and terror.

Two years ago, Al Qaida's leader in Iraq wrote a letter that said, "Democracy is coming," and this would mean "suffocation" for Al Qaida and its allies. The terrorists fought this moment with all their hateful power—with suicide attacks and beheadings and roadside bombs—and now the day they feared has arrived. And with it has come a moment of great clarity: The terrorists can kill the innocent, but they cannot stop the advance of freedom.

The terrorists did not lay down their arms after three elections in Iraq, and they will continue to fight this new Government. And we can expect the violence to continue, but something fundamental changed this weekend. The terrorists are now fighting a free and constitutional Government. They're at war with the people of Iraq. And the Iraqi people are determined to defeat this enemy, and so are Iraq's new leaders, and so is the United States of America.

The path to freedom is always one of struggle and sacrifice. And in Iraq, our brave men and women in uniform have accepted the struggle and have made the sacrifice. This moment would not be possible without their courage. The United States of America is safer because of their success, and our Nation will always be grateful to their service.

For most Iraqis, a free, democratic, and constitutional Government will be a new experience. And for the people across the broader Middle East, a free Iraq will be an inspiration. Iraqis have done more than form a government; they have proved that the desire for liberty in the heart of the Middle East is for real. They've shown diverse people can come together and work out their differences and find a way forward. And they've demonstrated that democracy is the hope of the Middle East and the destiny of all mankind.

The triumph of liberty in Iraq is part of a long and familiar story. The great biographer of American democracy, Alexis de Tocqueville, wrote: "Freedom is ordinarily born in the midst of storms. It is established painfully among civil discords, and only when

it is old can one know its benefits." Years from now, people will look back on the formation of a unity government in Iraq as a decisive moment in the story of liberty, a moment when freedom gained a firm foothold in the Middle East and the forces of terror began their long retreat. Thank you for having me. [*Applause*]

Thank you all very much. Thank you. Thank you all. I'll be glad to answer some questions if you've got some. Tinsley said it would be helpful if I answered some questions. [*Laughter*]

**The President.** Let's see—you got one? Yes, sir.

### **Tax Reform**

**Q.** I was just wondering, being a small-business owner, one of the things we really appreciate about your administration was the tax cuts for small business. And I was just wondering, are those going to be permanent, and are we taking action to make them permanent?

**The President.** His question is about tax cuts and whether they'll be permanent. First of all, a lot of Americans don't really understand that when you cut taxes on individuals, you cut taxes on a lot of small businesses. Many small businesses are subchapter S corporations or limited partnerships, which end up paying their taxes based upon the individual income tax rates. And so when you reduce taxes on everybody who pays taxes, you're really helping the small-business sector. And why that's—that's an important part of our economic recovery policy, because small businesses create 70 percent of the new jobs in America.

So thank you for recognizing the—thank you for reminding people here the importance of those tax cuts for small business. And also, by the way, there was some incentives in our economic recovery package that encourage you to buy equipment. And when you buy equipment, somebody has got to make the equipment. When somebody makes the equipment, it means somebody is more likely to be able to find a job not only at your place of work but the equipment manufacturer's place of work.

And so his question was, are you going to allow the tax cuts to expire? See, they weren't

permanent. My answer is, in order to make sure this economic recovery is lasting and real, the tax cuts need to be made permanent. And the Speaker agrees with me, you'll be happy to hear. It's important for Congress to understand that when there is any uncertainty in the Tax Code, it will make it less likely someone is willing to invest in a small business and expand their businesses. Uncertainty in the Tax Code creates uncertainty in the investment community or when people make investments.

So we're absolutely committed to making the tax cuts permanent. The argument you'll hear is, well, how can you possibly balance the budget if you make the tax cuts permanent? I guess the reverse of that is, "We want to raise your taxes to balance the budget." Unfortunately, that's not the way Washington works. The way Washington works is, they will raise your taxes and figure out new ways to spend the money and not balance the budget.

The best way to balance the budget is to keep progrowth economic policies in place. I think you're going to find a report coming out this summer to be very interesting. In other words—last year, by the way, we exceeded the estimated revenues by about \$100 billion. The economy is cranking. When the economy works, people are employing people, and when people are making money, they pay more taxes. Right now, it looks like that the revenues coming into our Treasury are greater than anticipated this time around too.

And so the best way to reduce our deficit is to keep progrowth economic policies in place—hence, permanent tax cuts—as well as being wise about how we spend your money. And the best way to be wise about how we spend your money is to set priorities. And my priority is to make sure our troops have what it takes to defend the United States of America.

#### **Voluntarism**

**Q.** Mr. President, my daughter's name is Jamie. She's a 16-year-old girl. What advice or recommendations would you give to her and to other youth of our country to help make our country a better place?

**The President.** Thank you. I would say that—to Jamie, listen carefully to that universal admonition to love a neighbor like you'd like to be loved yourself. You know, I get an interesting perspective of America. I, of course, get to see the incredible folks who wear our Nation's uniform. It's unbelievably inspiring to meet men and women who have volunteered to serve our country in a time of war. And not only do I get to meet them; I get to meet their families. I also get to meet the entrepreneurs of America, people who are willing to risk time, effort, and money to grow a business. And as a result, we've got a great—we've got fat wallets relative to the rest of the world.

But the true strength of the country lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens. That's the really unbelievable strength of America. I get to meet people all the time. I met two youngsters today, Chinese Americans, who volunteered to go down to help the Katrina victims. Nobody told them to do it. There was no Government law that said, "You're going to go down and love your neighbor." They heard the call.

And so my advice is to tell your daughter that she can be a part of a changing America by helping somebody who hurts; feed the hungry; find shelter for the homeless. America's strength lies in the armies of compassion that exist all across the United States of America.

And so I thank you for your question.

Yes.

#### **Health Care Reform**

**Q.** Thank you, Mr. President. First, I want to tell you, thank you, how much we love your brother in the State of Florida.

**The President.** I had nothing to do with it. [Laughter] Thank my mother. [Laughter]

**Q.** He has been very good to the restaurant industry.

**The President.** He has been eating a lot, I noticed. [Laughter]

**Q.** You said that, not me. [Laughter] Mr. President, with mandated health care beginning to sweep the Nation, and we're seeing it pop up on the State level, do you see the association health plan passing, hopefully, before you're out of office? And where do

you see mandated health care going for the business industry?

**The President.** First of all, I think that the Government has a—the Federal Government has a responsibility, particularly on two fronts, when it comes to health care. One is to take care of the elderly. Lyndon Johnson signed that bill, and it said the Federal Government will provide health care for the elderly, called Medicare. And thanks to the Speaker's leadership and others here, we reformed Medicare so it actually meets the needs of our seniors.

My attitude is, if you made a commitment to the seniors, make it a good commitment; make it work. And we didn't have prescription drug benefits as a part of Medicare. And yet we're willing to pay for the surgery for an ulcer, for example, but not the drugs to prevent the ulcer from happening in the first place.

Secondly, we got to—made a commitment to the poor, and that's through Medicaid as well as community health centers. These are facilities—and the Speaker and I have been working on this—to expand community health centers throughout America so the poor and the indigent can get primary care in these facilities and not at your local emergency rooms.

Now, I also believe—[*applause*]*—*but I believe the best health care system beyond that means making sure we strengthen the doctor-patient relationship. And that is—that's not a mandate; that's just a practical way to view medicine.

And so how can you do that? Well, one is to promote health savings accounts, which we are doing. Health savings accounts are unique products that enable a small-business owner and/or an individual to be able to purchase a catastrophic plan—low-premium catastrophic plan, high-deductible catastrophic plan—coupled with a tax-free savings account. Now, that's important because it means that you're in control of your account. The person, the customer, the consumer is in control of making health care decisions.

One of the problems we have when it comes to cost is that we have the third-party payer system. Somebody else pays the bills, and therefore, there is no consumerism, so to speak, involved in health care.

Secondly, we got to recognize that certain individuals don't have the capacity to be able to buy health insurance like big companies can do, and therefore, it erodes the capacity of small businesses to be able to maintain their purchasing power. In other words, if it costs you a lot of money to buy the insurance plan, you're not going to pay for your insurance, see. And right now our small businesses are being penalized because they're not allowed to pool risk across jurisdictional boundaries. A solution to that is association health plans. The Speaker got it passed out of the House. It got killed by the trial lawyers in the United States Senate.

To answer your question, yes, I hope to get it out. It's a practical way of making sure that small businesses aren't mandated but have got choice in the marketplace. That's what I'm trying to tell you. I believe in choices in the marketplace. I believe in empowering people to make rational choices. In order to have a health care system that helps control costs and where people can make rational decisions, there needs to be transparency in pricing.

I know when I go to restaurants, I got a menu, see, and they say, here's what it costs you. That's not the case in most health care decisions, is it? I don't—I haven't seen a lot of price postings. So we're working—we're using Federal leverage through Medicare and the Veterans Administration, for example, to say, if you're doing business with the Federal Government, post your prices and the quality of service you're getting, so consumers can start making rational decisions in the marketplace. When you've got rational decisionmaking based upon price, it's going to help control cost, which is very important for your industry.

Third, this is an industry—the health care industry is one that's kind of lagging behind when it comes to information technology—the docs are still writing out prescriptions with longhand. Or sometimes when you're in a hospital and you're going from place to place, you're carrying files, right? And they've been written out in longhand. Well, it's not a very efficient use of a person's time; plus, most doctors can't write. [*Laughter*] And therefore, costs are higher than they should be in medicine. So we're working to

make sure that information technology is spread throughout the medical industry.

Again, the Federal Government has got a good chance to help leverage our position. We're a major provider of health care. And therefore, we ought to be using our position to start off helping the industry write a common language. Part of the problem in medicine is that there's not a common language, and therefore, it's hard to have a smooth information technology system throughout the medical industry. Our goal, by the way, is for every American to have a electronic medical record, and—but, by the way, with a guarantee of privacy.

And finally, one reason why you're having trouble buying health care is because these lawsuits are running good docs out of practice. Do you realize there are over 1,500 counties in America without an ob-gyn. And part of the argument is, we got a health care system that is accessible and affordable—then we got to do something about these junk lawsuits. Again, the Speaker got a good medical liability bill out of the House of Representatives, but the trial lawyers defeated it in the United States Senate. And if you really want to help the country and make sure you've got affordable health care, get ahold of your United States Senators who are voting against meaningful medical liability reform, and help us get a bill passed.

That's a long answer—it's a long answer because I wanted to show you, we've got a comprehensive plan that runs the opposite of Federal Government being the decider at all costs. I don't believe we ought to federalize medicine; I believe we ought to localize medicine. And the most local medicine is between the doctor and the patient.

#### **Canada-U.S. Relations/Border Security**

**Q.** Good morning, Mr. President—from Toronto, Canada, and my question is regarding border restrictions between our two countries. Given the impact on tourism, do you feel that it's necessary to continue increasing border restrictions between Canada and the U.S.?

**The President.** What he's referring to is, right after 9/11, the Congress passed legislation that said there will be a new—border—an identification card between—travel be-

tween our countries. And you can understand why our Nation reacted the way—I hope you can understand the way our Nation reacted the way we did after 9/11. I mean, we were—we analyzed all aspects of our security. We were—we said we were going to do everything we can within the law to protect ourselves. And Congress passed some new laws to make sure that we knew who was coming in the country and who was leaving the country. And I supported those laws.

And now we're working with your Government to make sure that the identification cards that will be used between our two borders are compatible not only with our needs but your needs. I spoke to Prime Minister Harper about this subject. He's very aware and worried about a identification card that would be difficult to get into the hands of Canadians; it would make it difficult for Canada to continue to attract conventions. And so to answer your question, yes, we ought to have a system that is compatible with both our countries' needs.

The difference between—and by the way, it's very important for the Canadians to understand, there's a difference in the debate going on between the northern border and the southern border. The southern—and by the way, it's important for Americans to understand, the language of this debate must never say that Canada and/or Mexico are the enemies of the United States. They're friends of the United States. They're our friends and neighbors.

And so the issue this gentleman is referring to really is, how do we make sure we have a system that enables the legal people to come back and forth, I guess, is the best way to describe it. And we're working on it, to make sure that whatever documents are needed will not be restrictive, but nevertheless informational, I guess, is the best way to put it.

Thanks.

Yes, sir. Okay, you're next after that. Yes.

#### **Fuel/Energy**

**Q.** President Bush—from Crown Point, Indiana. First of all, I want to say, you're doing a fine job.

**The President.** Well, leave it at that, will you? Thank you. That kind of makes your

question not very credible when you say something like that. [Laughter] But I'll accept it anyway.

**Q.** My question is, is there a realistic yet aggressive timetable and strategy to get our reliance off of Middle East oil and go to a different fuel source or ways that the United States can prosper?

**The President.** No, that's a great question. One of the things that should be evident to the American people now is that we live in a global world, and when demand for hydrocarbons increases in places like China and India, it causes our gasoline prices to go up. In other words, a global economy is such that when demand rises faster than international supply, the price of crude goes up—which is the feedstock for gasoline. And so the American people see firsthand what it means to be in a global world which is dependent upon fossil fuels, hydrocarbon.

And so the realistic timetable is as soon as possible. And I do think it's realistic. And here's—what he's saying is, how quick can we get off oil, all right? Well, most oil is consumed in America because of our automobiles. And the question then is, how quickly can we diversify the automobile fleet from one that is gasoline-only to one that becomes a mix, for example, of gasoline and ethanol? And we're making pretty good progress. If you really think about, for example, the penetration of ethanol in the Midwest, it's been amazing over the last couple of years. Indiana people—you're beginning to get E-85 pumps. E-85 means 85 percent of the fuel you buy at an E-85 pump is ethanol. We've put tax incentives in place to encourage the construction of ethanol refineries, and they're beginning to grow quite dramatically.

Some people say, well, you've got ethanol pumps, but doesn't it make it difficult to use it because the cars are not compatible? That's not true. There are 5 million automobiles on the road today that are flex-fuel vehicles. In other words, they can use ethanol and/or gasoline or a combination of the both. So the technologies to make our automobiles ethanol-compatible are around. As a matter of fact, you may have a flex-fuel vehicle and just don't know it.

The question then is, how do we—do we have enough feedstock into the ethanol business to be able to really get major penetration? And that's where we're spending some money. Because we got corn all right, but sometimes you got to eat corn. And sometimes your pigs and cows have got to eat corn. And so pretty soon, we're going to run into a bind when it comes to corn for ethanol and corn for other means and other needs. And so we're spending quite a bit of money at the Federal level and have been for a couple of years, to see whether or not we can develop new technologies to make ethanol out of other feedstocks like switch grass or wood chips.

They say we're getting pretty close to that. I can't give you a specific timetable. I know we're getting close to a battery that can go into a hybrid vehicle. Hybrid vehicles are good things—that switches between electricity and gasoline. And the next breakthrough is going to come to a vehicle that doesn't switch between electricity and gasoline until you've driven your first 40 miles. In other words, you'll have a battery that will be able to last for 40 miles before your car has to kick into gas—gasoline. And that's going to help save a lot of—that will help reduce demand for oil.

Longer term—and this is—this is a longer term—that's within 5 years, they tell me, as well. But over the next 10 years, my hope is that we have hydrogen become a technology that is commercial and applicable, so you're really driving automobiles with hydrogen as fuel source, not gasoline. And we're spending a lot of money on that. We're spending over a billion dollars to accelerate technologies to do that.

In the short term, in order to—by the way, it doesn't answer your question, how do you get off oil. But it does answer, how do we help consumers in America. I view rising gasoline prices as like a tax. It certainly affects small businesses. And one way to do it is to make sure we've got ample supplies of gasoline available. You realize, we haven't built a new refinery since the 1970s. If Congress is that concerned about the price of gasoline, it seems like they ought to give us flexibility

so we can permit expansions and/or new refineries so that we can keep the price—[*ap- plause*]. It's a long-winded answer, but it's a problem that requires a strategy in which we spend money on research and development and on a variety of fronts.

Another example is clean coal technologies. It's conceivable that relatively—well, within a period of time—it's not—in my lifetime; let's put it that way—that we can have coal-fired plants that have got zero emissions. Now, that's important for people to know that it's possible. We've spent about billions there as well, to achieve this breakthrough, because we've got 250-some odd years of coal reserves in the United States.

I think we ought to be using nuclear power. It is renewable, and it produces no emissions. We're spending money on technologies to make sure we can reprocess spent fuels. In other words, we're working on a variety of fronts. I don't know the timetable—as soon as possible. And the reason why is, is that our national security issues oftentimes rest with countries that have got oil, and they don't like us, see.

And so the faster we're off oil, the better off we're going to be from an economic security perspective and a national—and I probably surprised you when I got up at my State of the Union and said, "We've got a problem; we're addicted to oil." You know, I'm from Texas and all that. But I believe it, and I know it. And so I'm going to work with members from both political parties to expedite research and development so we've got new technologies to achieve this important objective.

Yes, ma'am.

#### ***U.S. Relations With Latin America***

**Q.** Thank you—Westport, Connecticut. Speaking of oil-producing countries that are not friendly to the United States right now, I'm very concerned about what's going on in Venezuela and Bolivia and all, the coalition of Hugo Chavez. I wondered what your strategy was going to be, or what you're working on in that respect.

**The President.** Thank you. I am going to continue to remind our hemisphere that respect for property rights and human rights is essential for all countries in order for there

to be prosperity and peace. I'm going to remind our allies and friends in the neighborhood that the United States of America stands for justice; that when we see poverty, we care about it, and we do something about it; that we care for good—we stand for good health care.

I'm going to remind our people that meddling in other elections is—to achieve a short-term objective is not in the interests of the neighborhood. I will continue to remind people that trade is the best way to help people be lifted from poverty; that we can spend money—and we do in the neighborhood—but the best way for there to be growth is to encourage commerce and trade and prosperity through the marketplace.

I want to remind people that the United States stands against corruption at all levels of government, that the United States is transparent. The United States expects the same from other countries in the neighborhood, and we'll work toward them.

We'll continue to work with forces like the Central—countries like the Central American countries, where we passed a free trade agreement called CAFTA, to remind the people in that area that relations with the United States will be beneficial to their people. There's a lot of things we're doing.

Thank you very much. I'm concerned—let me just put it bluntly—I'm concerned about the erosion of democracy in the countries you mentioned.

#### ***Trust in Government***

**Q.** Hi—Orlando, Florida. Let me first say, it's an honor to hear you speak. And I'm a proud supporter. I just had a quick question. Yesterday, at the keynote address, Ted Koppel mentioned that there is a growing lack of trust between Government and the American people. How would you address this statement?

**The President.** He said there's a growing lack of trust between our Government and the American people?

**Q.** Yes, he did.

**The President.** Well, I think I would say that there's an unease in America now, and the reason why is because we're at war. And war is difficult—particularly this kind of war, where it's on our TV screens every day. And

I can understand why people are uneasy. Americans care about human life. We have a great compassion for people all around the world. And so when people read or see that the enemy has run a suicide bomber into a village or a marketplace and innocent people died, it breaks our heart. So there is an unease about America.

Hey, listen, we got an amazing economy—it's strong, and yet there's an uneasiness. And that's what happens in war. And let me just share my thoughts about this with you. If I didn't think we'd succeed, I wouldn't stay. And if I didn't think it was important that we succeed, I wouldn't stay. And the reason it's important is that we must understand that we're in a global war against a totalitarian group of people who will kill innocent life, there or here, in order to achieve an objective. That's just the lessons of September the 11th that I refuse to forget.

In Iraq, the enemy has made it clear—this is their words, not mine; I quoted the man—the Al Qaida guy in Iraq—those weren't my—I didn't make up those quotes. That's that he said. And by the way, you need your President and your Commander in Chief to take the words of the enemy seriously. And they have said it's just a matter of time—[*applause*]. They have said it's a matter of time for the United States to leave, that democracies are soft, that capitalist societies are weak. And their view is that if they kill enough innocent people, we will tire and leave. That's what they said.

They've also said, "We're going to stop the elections." They will try to sow sectarian violence in order to make it difficult for a democracy to succeed in Iraq. And the reason why they want us to leave is because they want safe haven from which to launch attacks—not only against the United States but modern Muslim nations in the Middle East. That's what they want to do.

Their vision—they have a vision. They have an ideology that is the opposite of ours. They don't believe in freedom to dissent and freedom to worship. Matter of fact, they've taken a great religion and, in my judgment, have twisted it to meet their own needs.

If somebody said, "Well, what do you think life would be like with these folks?", just remind them what life was like in Afghanistan

under the Taliban. There was no dissent, and if you did, you were whipped. Young girls didn't go to school. They have a backward vision of the world, but they do have a vision, and they want to spread that vision. And we stand in the way of spreading that vision—we and a coalition of nations that have bound together to promote democracy and freedom. That's what—and democracy worries them.

My quote in the speech was this guy's words—democracy will be a setback. That's why I said, the formation of this Government, under a constitution drafted and approved by the Iraqis, is a setback, because it's—they've said, "We will defeat this democracy." But they're not going to defeat the democracy. The only way they defeat the democracy is if we let them defeat the democracy, we don't stand with this young Government.

Again, I know that—I know there's concern about—from the American people that we can't win. See, most Americans want us to win. Most Americans want to succeed. And there's questions about whether or not the strategy will do so.

And I can understand why people are concerned about whether or not our strategy can succeed, because our progress is incremental. Freedom is moving, but it's in incremental steps. And the enemy's progress is almost instant, on their TV screens. And, of course, I get briefings from our commanders on the ground. I want to assure you that the information—I make my mind up based not upon politics or political opinion polls but based upon what the commanders on the ground tell me is going on.

I do want to share with you—thanks for bringing this up. It's not exactly the question. [*Laughter*] I'll share with you some of my thoughts about why it's important to have a democracy—liberty prevail in the Middle East. You know, our policy up until now was, let's just hope everything's fine. If it looked okay on the surface, then let's just don't rock the boat. Let's get our energy sources and everything will be all right.

But that's not what was happening. Beneath the surface, there was a—discontent and hopelessness and despair was beginning to take hold. And as a result, this group of

killers sprung up, and they were able to recruit and train sophisticated suiciders. And they killed over 3,000 of our people.

I felt it was important for us to address not only the short-term needs of the country—which means, stay on the offensive and bring them to justice before they hurt us again—but also the longer term needs of the country, by addressing the root cause of the resentment and hatred. And in my judgment, the best way to defeat the totalitarian vision of the enemy is with an ideology that has worked, that is bright and it's hopeful, called freedom and liberty, expressed through democracy.

Now, I know there are some people in our country who say, why worry? Well, the reason “why worry” is because we have a duty to lay the foundation of peace for a generation to come. And I'm confident we can succeed. And I will tell you two examples of this—of why I'm confident. One, think of all the lives lost in Europe during World War I and World War II, American lives lost. You all know some of them. You know neighbors who had a grandfather or a father who went over—called up, went overseas to—and fought in Europe and lost their lives. But today, after nearly a century of violence and death and destruction, Europe is whole, free, and at peace. And it's important for America to ask the question, why is that the case? Well, democracies don't war with each other, and democracies have taken hold in Europe.

The second example I like to bring up is from World War II as well, and that is what's happened to our former enemy, the Japanese. Prime Minister Koizumi is coming to our country soon. I'll be sitting down at the table with a friend talking about issues like North Korea or thanking him for having 1,000 troops in Iraq or worrying about the spread of pandemic disease or talking about how we can help the young democracy, Afghanistan. And I find it amazing that the President of the United States is sitting down talking about peace with the head of a country that my dad went to war with and your dads and granddads went to war with.

And what happened between the brutal attack on our country—that, by the way, killed fewer people at Pearl Harbor than we lost on September the 11th—and today, when

we're talking about keeping the peace? Japan adopted a Japanese-style democracy. One thing history teaches—and by the way, if you look back at some of the written word, when Harry Truman had the vision of helping this country recover from the war and become a democracy, a lot of people were saying, it's a waste of his time; hopelessly idealistic, they would say. But he had faith in certain fundamental truths. One truth is, everybody desires to be free. Freedom is universal. It's not just a right for America.

And the second truth is, proven after 60 years of time, that freedom has the capacity to convert an enemy to a friend. And as I said in my remarks, I believe that this is an historic moment in Iraq, and that some day, people will be looking back on this period of time saying, thank goodness the United States of America didn't lose its faith in certain fundamental values and we laid the foundation of peace.

And it's hard work. It's hard work to go from a tyranny to a democracy. And I understand why people are concerned; I understand it. Listen, I meet with—the hardest job of the President is to meet with families of the fallen. And it's a—it's my duty. But almost to a person, they say, “Whatever you do, Mr. President, complete the mission; lay the foundation of peace so my child had not died in vain.” And I give them that assurance every time I'm with them.

Yell it.

### **Federal Response to Catastrophic Events**

**Q.** I'm from Munster, Indiana. I was wondering, sir, if we were to be attacked by a biological weapon or if there was an outbreak of the avian flu, would we be prepared?

**The President.** Good question. We are working to be prepared. His question is, if there is a catastrophic event that is beyond the magnitude of a natural event, such as a biological attack and/or a attack of pandemic flu, would we be prepared?

Well, first step is to recognize that it's a possibility and start preparing, which we're doing at the Federal level. Yes, we've got a good strategy—now, whether or not it would work to perfection, you hope you never have to find out.

One of the classic cases—one of the classic dilemmas we're trying to resolve is that most—it's against the law to put Federal troops in to enforce the law. It's posse comitatus, you know? I'm not a lawyer, but nevertheless, that's what the lawyers tell me. However, States can use their Guard to do law enforcement activities. And the fundamental question is, if there's an event big enough, should the Federal Government be able to prevent State authority—should there be an automatic declaration of a state of emergency that will enable me to rally Federal troops to keep the law?

We haven't resolved that issue yet, but that's one of the dilemmas on a catastrophic event that ends up exceeding the boundaries of—that would make it not a local event. But we're working hard on it. We've spent a lot of time on pandemic flu, which, by the way, has got the same—a biological attack would have the same applications as to how you—how do you isolate the incident; how do you isolate the spread of disease; how do you rally local authorities to make the right decisions about public facilities.

Mike Leavitt is in charge of this, the health aspect of this response. He's been traveling the country, working with local and State response plans, and it's a big job to get ready for it. I appreciate your question.

**Q.** From Arlington, Texas.

**The President.** Oh, yes.

**Q.** Home of your Texas Rangers.

**The President.** Mighty Rangers. They never—they still don't have—

**Q.** They're in first place; that's good. My question is about—

**The President.** I thought with change of ownership they'd go all the way, you know? [Laughter]

### **Health Care Reform/Global Warming**

**Q.** My question is about health care reform.

**The President.** Yes.

**Q.** You mentioned health care reform, catastrophic health care reform, Americans with disabilities as well. Under the umbrella of that, it doesn't seem that there is much addressed in terms of dental care, even though that is part of health care, I would think. And

the second part of that question is, will you see Al Gore's new movie? [Laughter]

**The President.** Doubt it. [Laughter] But I will say this about the environmental debate, that my answer to the energy question also is an answer to how you deal with the greenhouse gas issue, and that is, new technologies will change how we live and how we drive our cars, which all will have the beneficial effect of improving the environment.

And in my judgment, we need to set aside whether or not greenhouse gases have been caused by mankind or because of natural effects and focus on the technologies that will enable us to live better lives, and at the same time, protect the environment.

Not sure how to answer your question on dentistry, frankly. I'll take a look at it. Yes, drop your address off.

**Chef,** how are you doing, buddy?

**Q.** Doing very good. I'm doing very good, sir.

**The President.** You know how I could tell you were chef?

**Q.** I don't know. [Laughter]

**The President.** Yes.

**Q.** Thank you. On behalf of—I'm from Tampa, Florida. And on behalf of all the cooks and chefs in our country, I have to say, you're running the country the way a chef would run the country, and we're proud of you, first of all.

**The President.** Thank you, sir.

### **Governor Jeb Bush of Florida/Public Service**

**Q.** You have created a lot of jobs, and our industry is just, like you said, it's cranking, and we're loving every minute of it. My biggest concern, sir, is 2008 is coming. Do you have a plan for—to keep your policies in place and keep them going? And would Jeb ever consider—we like him—even though we're the home of the Tampa Bay Devil Rays—we don't have everything, but would Jeb ever consider—

**The President.** Playing for the Tampa Bay Devil Rays?

**Q.** Hell no. [Laughter] For our country. For our country, sir.

**The President.** You better ask Jeb. Look, I said something about it the other day.

Somebody asked me about him. I said, look, I think he'd be a great President. But it's—he said he's not going to run in 2008, and I think you've got to take him for his word. He's been in public life now for 8 years, and I think he wants a breather.

But thank you for your kind words. You go back and write him a letter, you know. He's a good man. Look, my—here's the thing about Washington that—the rhetoric needs, in my judgment, toned down up there so that we're able to attract good people, both Republican and Democrat, to run for public office. You know, it's one thing to disagree, but it's another thing to disparage people. And we just—we don't need that kind of language, in my judgment—in order to attract good people to public service.

And there's too much politics in Washington these days. There really is. And so my worry is, not so much about Jeb, but when people take a look at Washington and say, "Why mess with it? Why do I want to put my family through it all?" And my advice to them is, one, it's worth it. But my advice, also, to all of us in public office is not to demean somebody because you don't agree with them. At least, in the debate, be considerate of the other person's point of view.

And the immigration debate is one where America needs to start, in my judgment. I'm very worried about the tone of this debate. We are a land of immigrants. One of the great things about America is, we've been able to assimilate people from all around the world into becoming Americans. And that debate—if that debate tends to divide this country or cause people to wonder about their worth as an individual, it will be a debate of—it will be a debate that will be harmful.

Now, I understand the emotions of this issue. It's a tough issue for Members to vote on. I happen to believe my comprehensive plan is the way to go. But if somebody doesn't agree with me, I'm not going to debase them in the public arena. And so whether the debate is immigration or tax or Iraq, it's really important, in my judgment, for us to conduct this debate with dignity. And that will help answer your question as to whether or not

people are going to be wanting to run for office.

You know, my buddies in Texas take a look at Washington and say, "Why are you even up there, man? Come on home." [Laughter] "What are you doing that for?" My answer is, I love my country. Public service is noble and necessary. I'm glad I ran for President. And I'll try to do my part to elevate the tone and hold people—and treat people with respect whether they agree with me or not.

I've got to go back to Washington. God bless. Thanks for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:37 a.m. at the Arie Crown Theater at Lakeside Center—McCormick Place. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago, IL; Edward R. Tinsley III, chairman of the board of directors, National Restaurant Association, and his wife, Meredith; Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, former President Saddam Hussein, President Jalal Talabani, and Speaker of the Council of Representatives Mahmoud al-Mashhadani of Iraq; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Prime Minister Stephen J. Harper of Canada; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida. Participants referred to President Hugo Chavez Frias of Venezuela; Ted Koppel, former anchor, ABC News; and former Vice President Al Gore.

## Statement on the Death of Lee Jong-wook

May 22, 2006

Laura and I were saddened to learn of the death of Dr. Lee Jong-wook. As the world's top health official, Dr. Lee worked tirelessly to improve the health of millions of people, from combating tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS to his aggressive efforts to eradicate polio. He provided tremendous leadership to the international community as it confronted the challenges of the 21st century, including the threat of an influenza pandemic. Dr. Lee's outreach to world leaders and entities increased awareness of potentially devastating public health dangers. We send our deepest condolences to his family.

## News Conference With Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel

May 23, 2006

**President Bush.** Thank you. Mr. Prime Minister, welcome. I'm particularly pleased to welcome Mrs. Olmert to the White House as well. Thanks for coming.

The Prime Minister and I have known each other since 1998, when he was the mayor of Jerusalem, and I was the Governor of Texas. And I remember you greeting me in your office there, and you probably thought you were going to be the Prime Minister—I wasn't sure if I was going to be the President. [*Laughter*]

We've just had a really productive meeting. We reaffirmed the deep and abiding ties between Israel and the United States. And those ties include our commitment to democracy and our strong belief that everybody has the right to worship freely. The ties include growing trade and economic relationships. The ties include important educational exchange programs that allow Israeli students to study at American colleges and universities, and American students to travel and study in Israel.

In our meeting, the Prime Minister and I recalled the great contributions to peace made by Ariel Sharon. I asked the Prime Minister to convey my very best wishes to Ariel Sharon's sons.

Prime Minister Olmert and I discussed peace and security in the Middle East, which the people of Israel seek and the American people support. In 2002, I outlined my vision of two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. Prime Minister Olmert told me that he and his Government share this vision. The international community seeks to realize this goal to the roadmap, which calls for a comprehensive settlement that resolves all outstanding issues between Israelis and Palestinians. I believe, and Prime Minister Olmert agrees, that a negotiated final status agreement best serves both the Israelis and the Palestinians and the cause of peace.

Palestinian Authority President Abbas favors and speaks out for peace and negotiations. Yet the Hamas-led Palestinian Government does not. Hamas needs to make a stra-

tegic choice for peace. The United States and the international community have made clear that Hamas must recognize Israel's right to exist, must abandon terror, and must accept all previous agreements between the Palestinian Authority and Israel. No country can be expected to make peace with those who deny its right to exist and who use terror to attack its population.

Today Prime Minister Olmert shared with me some of his ideas; I would call them bold ideas. These ideas could lead to a two-state solution if a pathway to progress on the roadmap is not open in the period ahead. His ideas include the removal of most Israeli settlements, except for the major Israeli population centers in the West Bank. This idea would follow Prime Minister Sharon's decision to remove all settlements in Gaza and several in the West Bank.

I look forward to learning more about the Prime Minister's ideas. While any final status agreement will be only achieved on the basis of mutually agreed changes, and no party should prejudice the outcome of negotiations on a final status agreement, the Prime Minister's ideas could be an important step toward the peace we both support. I'm encouraged by his constructive efforts to find ways to move the peace process forward.

And finally, the Prime Minister and I shared our concerns about the Iranian regime's nuclear weapons ambitions. The United States and the international community have made our common position clear: We're determined that the Iranian regime must not gain nuclear weapons.

I told the Prime Minister what I've stated publicly before: Israel is a close friend and ally of the United States, and in the event of any attack on Israel, the United States will come to Israel's aid. The United States is strongly committed, and I'm strongly committed, to the security of Israel as a vibrant Jewish state.

I look forward to our continuing discussions after this press conference. I'm not sure the delegations realize this yet, but we're going to shed ourselves of our delegations and the Prime Minister and I are going to go up to the Residence and sit down and have a continued dialog. And if we decide to brief our delegations on what we discuss,

we will do so. But if not, they're going to have to guess. [*Laughter*] And then I'm looking forward to dinner.

Welcome.

**Prime Minister Olmert.** Thank you, Mr. President. I thank you for your kind invitation to visit Washington, and for the opportunity to meet with you and discuss the many issues on our common agenda. Our meeting was enlightening, and I look forward to working closely with you in the coming years to deepen the friendship, understanding, and bilateral ties between the United States and Israel.

I also recall our meeting in the city hall when you and I were strolling around the beautiful building, at the terrace on the sixth floor, watching the walls of the city of Jerusalem. At that time you were the Governor; I was the mayor, and I think none of us thought that the day would come that I will have the honor and the privilege of being hosted by you, as President of the United States and Prime Minister of Israel.

I could sense then your deep connection to the Holy Land, and your friendship and commitment to the State of Israel. I must say, Mr. President, that my instincts did not fail me. I, and the entire people of Israel, appreciate your true friendship and unwavering commitment to Israel's security and its well-being as a vibrant Jewish state.

Your involvement in the Middle East and personal contribution to the efforts towards resolving the Israel-Palestinian conflict has been significant. The vision, which you outlined in your historic speech of June 2002, of two democratic states living side by side in peace and security, is the basis of any progress towards the solution in this region. Your unreserved support of the disengagement plan and your letter of April 14, 2004, to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon—and I join you in praying for his recovery—were the basis for the success of its implementation. What you immediately recognized to be an historic step was later adopted by all those who were skeptical in the beginning.

I intend to exhaust every possibility to promote peace with the Palestinians according to the roadmap, and I extend my hand in peace to Mahmoud Abbas, the elected President of the Palestinian Authority. I hope he

will take the necessary steps which he committed to in order to move forward.

Unfortunately, the rise of Hamas, a terrorist organization which refuses to recognize Israel's right to exist and regards terrorism as a legitimate tool, severely undermines the possibility of promoting a genuine peace process. As you stated, Mr. President, the Palestinian Authority headed by Hamas Government must abandon the path of terrorism, dismantle the terror infrastructure, honor agreements, and recognize Israel's right to exist. By doing so they will find us a willing partner in peace. However, we will not enter into any kind of partnership with a party which refuses to recognize our right to live in peace and security.

Despite our sincere desire for negotiations, we cannot wait indefinitely for the Palestinians to change. We cannot be held hostage by a terrorist entity which refuses to change or to promote dialog. If we come to the conclusion that no progress is possible, we will be compelled to try a different route.

I presented to the President ideas which I believe could help advance his vision and prevent a political stalemate. According to these ideas, we will remove most of the settlements which are not part of the major Israeli population centers in Judea and Samaria. The settlements within the population centers would remain under Israeli control and become part of the State of Israel as part of the final status agreement. This process of realignment would reduce friction between Israelis and Palestinians, ensure territorial contiguity for the Palestinians, and guarantee Israel's security as a Jewish state with the borders it desires.

The implementation of these ideas would only be possible with the comprehensive support of the United States and the international community. I anticipate working with you to explore ways to advance this.

We discussed the Iranian issue. The Iranian regime, which calls for Israel's destruction, openly denies the Holocaust, and views the United States as its enemy, makes every effort to implement its fundamentalist religious ideology and blatantly disregards the demands of the international community. The Iranian threat is not only a threat to Israel, it is a threat to the stability of the

Middle East and the entire world. And it could mark the beginning of a dangerous and irresponsible arms race in the Middle East.

Mr. President, we appreciate your efforts to curb Iran's nuclear ambitions, including through the U.N. Security Council. They are of crucial importance. The international community cannot tolerate a situation where a regime with a radical ideology and a long tradition of irresponsible conduct becomes a nuclear weapons state. This is a moment of truth. It is still not too late to prevent it from happening.

I thank you again for your gracious hospitality and for our discussions. I look forward to continue working with you, Mr. President. Thank you very much.

**President Bush.** We'll take two questions a side, starting with Steve Holland [Reuters].

#### **Middle East Peace Process**

**Q.** You mentioned that the West Bank plan could be an important step. Doesn't this sweep away the U.S. principle of a negotiated two-state solution? And should the Palestinian side approve any plan that would establish Israel's final borders?

**President Bush.** You just heard the Prime Minister say that he's going to exhaust all options to negotiate, that he wants to reach out a hand to President Abbas. And I agree. I said in my opening statement that the best solution is one in which there's a negotiated final status. And we discussed—we spent ways—we spent some time discussing about how it's important to get a Palestinian President to the table. And the Prime Minister says he looks forward to discussing the issue.

And so our preferred option, of course, is there to be a negotiated settlement. On the other hand, as the Prime Minister said, that if he's unable to find a partner in peace, if nothing can go forward, he is willing to think about ways to advance the process forward.

And in order to solve this problem, there needs to be willingness to take the lead and creativity and the desire to follow through on the vision. The most important aspect about peace is to have a vision for peace. And I appreciate the Prime Minister's vision of two states side by side—two democratic states side by side in peace. That's possible.

And so what I come away from the meeting with is that the Prime Minister, one, has a vision; two, willing to reach out to determine whether or not that vision exists with the Palestinian President, which I think it does; three, is willing to work to see whether or not it is possible for two sides to come together, and if not, is still willing to consider other ways to move the process forward. That's, to me, a very positive statement.

**Q.** You said you wanted to hear more. Is there anything that worries you about this plan?

**President Bush.** No, the only thing that worries me about the plan is that Hamas has said they want to destroy Israel. And the reason that worries me is, how can you have two states side by side in peace if one of the partners does not recognize the other state's right to exist? It's illogical for somebody to say, I'm for a state side by side with another state, and yet I don't want the state to exist. And so we spent time talking about Hamas, and I assured the Prime Minister that our position is steady and strong, that Hamas must change.

Now, we care about the Palestinian people—and I say, “we,” both of us—he can speak for himself on this issue—but we are trying to set up a mechanism that supports the Palestinian people. Our beef is not with the Palestinian people. Our beef is with the Government that—a group in the Government that says they don't recognize Israel. And so the United States, we're working with the Europeans—Condi's people in the State Department are working with the Europeans to come up with a mechanism to get food and medicine and aid to the Palestinians.

You may want to comment on it yourself, Mr. Prime Minister.

**Prime Minister Olmert.** Thank you, Mr. President. Indeed, the Government, Sunday, decided to spend 50 million shekels buying medical equipment—50 million shekels, about \$11 million—for the time being, to buy medical equipment and drugs needed for the hospitals in Gaza. And as I said during the Cabinet meeting, we will spend any amount of money needed in order to save lives of innocent Palestinians suffering from the indifference of their Government. We will not hesitate to do it. We will use the revenues

that we have collected, and more if necessary. We will make arrangements, together with our friends, so that the supplies will arrive directly to those who need them.

This is a humanitarian commitment. We are absolutely committed to help innocent people that suffer from the brutality and the intransigence of their own Government, and we will continue to do it at all times.

Thank you, Mr. President.

### *Iran*

**Q.** Mr. Prime Minister, are you satisfied from what you have learned out of your meeting with the President with regard to the Iranian issue? And what's your message to the Israeli public about this issue?

And, Mr. President, with your permission, there is a military option, from your point of view, to solve the threat of the Iranian problem, their work on—to getting nuclear weapons?

**Prime Minister Olmert.** The Iranian issue was discussed, indeed, between the President and myself. And we'll continue to talk about it later. Obviously, there is a major threat posed, as I've said already and the President said, by the Iranians and their attempts to have nonconventional capabilities and also to build up delivery systems and the ballistic missiles that can hit major centers all across Europe, not just in the Middle East.

This is something that needs to be stopped. We discussed this issue at length, and there is a total agreement and understanding between the President and myself that there is a need to stop it. And we reviewed the different ways how to do it, and I am very satisfied with what I heard from the President and on what we agreed that we would continue to do in order to achieve this goal.

**President Bush.** Our primary objective is to solve this problem diplomatically. I've told the American people that I will, on all issues, will try diplomacy first and exhaust diplomacy. And I explained to the Prime Minister that—about our diplomatic efforts—the most important thing in diplomacy is that there be a shared goal and—in other words, you have to have a common objective, a common goal in order to get people to come together

around it. And now we have got a common goal throughout most of the world, and that is, Iran should not have a nuclear weapon. And that's important, and we are now working the diplomatic front around that goal.

We have a variety of options, one of which, of course, is the United Nations Security Council, if the Iranians aren't willing to show progress toward that goal. We're working very closely with what's called the EU-3. That's Germany, England, and France. And I've been pleased and Secretary of State Rice has been pleased about their willingness to stay tough on the goal, of achieving the goal. Sometimes when you've got a variety of negotiating parties, it's easier for one—a non-transparent negotiator to pick off a weak link. And yet they've been firm, and that's important for Israel to know. It's important for me to praise our partners for that strength of purpose.

Obviously, there's other parties we have to work with, including Russia and China. In other words, you can't get anything out of the U.N. Security Council unless there's an agreement that the Iranians are not negotiating in good faith and aren't willing to go forward. And so we're spending a lot of time working with our Russian friends, in particular, to make it clear to them that Iran is showing no good faith.

And one of the interesting issues that the Iranians have tossed out in this debate is that they believe they have the sovereign right for civilian nuclear power. And my position has been, fine, it's just you just don't get to enrich the fuel necessary for the plant. And so we provided a—I thought—a very interesting opportunity for them—to say, if you want civilian nuclear power, you can have your plant and the international consortium will provide the fuel for the plant. And we'll pick up the spent fuel from the plant. And this was a very realistic and reasonable approach—and has been rejected by the Iranians.

And so I say to our friends in our consortium, I'm not so sure these people really do want a solution, and therefore, let us make sure that we're willing to be working together in the U.N. Security Council. That's where we are. We're headed—we're on the cusp of going to the Security Council. And I repeat to your question, obviously, we'd like to solve

this issue peacefully and diplomatically. And the more the Iranians refuse to negotiate in good faith, the more countries are beginning to realize that we must continue to work together.

Martha [Martha Raddatz, ABC News]. Yes, you.

### **Progress in Iraq**

**Q.** If we can switch to Iraq, sir.

**President Bush.** Iraq. Okay.

**Q.** I know that this is something you're leaving up to your commanders, but from what you've heard from your commanders, how confident are you that you can start drawing down troops by the end of the year?

**President Bush.** First of all, we are making progress in achieving our objective of training the Iraqis to take the fight to the enemy. And the reason I know that is because I talk to our commanders quite frequently. And we're making good political progress, as the world saw in the formation of a unity government. The Government has yet to get their full Cabinet in place, although we think that will happen relatively quickly. And then this sovereign Government is going to assess their security situation and their security forces and their needs, and work with our commanders. We haven't gotten to the point yet where the new Government is sitting down with our commanders to come up with a joint way forward.

However, having said that, this is a new chapter in our relationship. In other words, we're now able to take a new assessment about the needs necessary for the Iraqis. And when I get that report from our commanders, I'll share it with others and you.

**Q.** Sir, can I just add—

**President Bush.** Please—

**Q.** The U.S. has the most powerful military in the world, and they have been unable to bring down the violence in any substantial way in several of the provinces. So how can you expect the Iraqis to do that?

**President Bush.** If one were to measure progress on the number of suiciders, if that's your definition of success, I think it gives—I think it will—I think it obscures the steady, incremental march toward democracy we're seeing. In other words, it's very difficult—you can have the most powerful army of the

world—ask the Israelis what it's like to try to stop suiciders—it is a difficult task to stop suicide bombers. That's the—but that's one of the main—that's the main weapon of the enemy, the capacity to destroy innocent life with a suicider.

And so I view progress as, is there a political process going forward that's convincing disaffected Sunnis, for example, to participate? Is there a unity government that says it's best for all of us to work together to achieve a common objective, which is democracy? Are we able to meet the needs of the 12 million people that defied the car bombers? To me, that's success. Trying to stop suiciders—which we're doing a pretty good job of on occasion—is difficult to do. And what the Iraqis are going to have to eventually do is convince those who are conducting suiciders who are not inspired by Al Qaida, for example, to realize there's a peaceful tomorrow. And those who are being inspired by Al Qaida, we're just going to have to stay on the hunt and bring Al Qaida to justice. And our Army can do that, and is doing that right now.

### **Israel's Disengagement Plan/Moving the Peace Process Forward**

**Q.** Mr. President, the Prime Minister just said that the settlement blocks, the major population centers will be part of Israel, annexed to Israel in the future. Do you support that? Would the United States sanction that?

And, Mr. Prime Minister, can you give us some assessment of the time that you are willing to wait for the emergence of a Palestinian partner?

**President Bush.** My answer to your question is, refer to my April 14th, 2004, letter. I believed it when I wrote it, and I still believe it. [Laughter]

**Q.** [Inaudible]

**President Bush.** —rare that I wrote the letter, or rare that I believed what I wrote? [Laughter]

**Prime Minister Olmert.** First of all, I want to emphasize again what I said before—and what I said before the elections and immediately after the elections in Israel, and when my Government was inaugurated in the Knesset just a couple of weeks ago. I said

that we will make a genuine effort to negotiate with the Palestinian side on the basis of the roadmap, which is the framework for future negotiations towards, hopefully, a peace agreement between us and the Palestinians.

I meant precisely what I said. I'll make every possible effort. And in order to examine it carefully and seriously, I will certainly meet with the elected President of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas. We haven't yet decided about the timing. It will be in the near future. And I will do everything that I can in order to help create the necessary circumstances for such negotiations to take place, providing, of course, that the Palestinian partner will have to not just to make a public commitment but to be able to deliver on the basic requirements of the roadmap and the Quartet decisions, namely to recognize the State of Israel and its right to exist as a Jewish state, to unarm the terrorist organizations, and to implement all the obligations of the agreement signed between the State of Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

So we will make an effort. And I say time and again that we accept the sincerity of Mahmoud Abbas as the elected President of the Palestinian Authority. He is genuine; he is sincere; and we hope that he will have the power to be able to meet the requirements necessary for negotiations between us and the Palestinians. How soon it will be? The sooner, the better. I don't want to prejudge it at this point. I think it's too early. And I didn't come with a timetable to meet with the President of the United States.

We shared our observations. I entirely agree with the vision of the President as it was outlined so brilliantly in the famous speech in June of 2002, which really set the course for all the developments that took place in the Middle East since then and created the possibility for, ultimately, the disengagement, which was a turning point in the history of the Middle East. And we are grateful to the President for the courage that he manifested then in presenting this outline and in being the first to support the disengagement, and carry on in spite of the difficulties and the skepticism and the question

marks posed by different countries at the beginning. Most of them joined in later.

So we are anxious to have negotiations. And we will look and find every possible avenue to help establish a process of negotiations on the basis of these conditions. However, as I said, we will not wait indefinitely. If we will reach the conclusion that in spite of all these efforts, it is impossible to implement the principles of the roadmap through a negotiating process, we'll look for other ways to implement these principles and to ultimately create a situation where there are secured borders for the State of Israel with the population centers in the territories as part of a State of Israel and with a contiguous territory that will allow the Palestinians to establish their own Palestinian state alongside the State of Israel. And hopefully, this is something that will happen within the next three to four years.

Again, I am grateful to the President for the efforts that he was making and for his willingness to examine together with me these new ideas—as he called them, bold ideas—in the event that all other options will not be possible.

Thank you.

**President Bush.** Good job.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 5:05 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Aliza Olmert, wife of Prime Minister Olmert; former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel and his sons, Omri and Gilad; and President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority.

## Statement on the Death of Lloyd Bentsen

May 23, 2006

Laura and I and the entire Bush family are saddened by Lloyd Bentsen's death. Lloyd Bentsen served in the House of Representatives for 6 years, and he represented the people of Texas in the United States Senate for 22 years. During his time in Congress, he was known for his integrity and for seeking bipartisan solutions to issues facing our Nation. He later became Secretary of the Treasury in President Clinton's administration. As a young man, Lloyd Bentsen served

our country in battle in the United States Army Air Forces, and he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. In 1999, in recognition of his lifetime of service to the United States, he received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Nation's highest civil award. Lloyd Bentsen was a man of great honor and distinction. We send our condolences and prayers to B.A. and the Bentsen family.

### **Proclamation 8023—Great Outdoors Month, 2006**

*May 23, 2006*

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

Great Outdoors Month is an opportunity to celebrate and experience America's natural splendor and renew our commitment to conserve our air, water, and land. During this month, we also honor the dedicated men and women who volunteer to help protect our natural resources.

Americans live amid many wonders of nature. Our Nation's varied landscapes include sandy beaches, expansive forests, emerald waters, and towering mountains. Through biking, swimming, skiing, hiking, and many other activities, Americans are enjoying our country's magnificent scenery and the healthy benefits of outdoor recreation.

To ensure that our natural heritage remains a source of pride for all our citizens, my Administration is committed to conserving America's public lands and natural resources and pursuing environmentally responsible initiatives. We are working to accelerate research into cleaner sources of energy, protect our water sources, and encourage the use of hybrid cars. We have put in place a series of clean air regulations that will help us to meet air quality standards. Through efforts like these, we will continue our Nation's economic growth and protect the environment.

Our citizens play an important role in protecting our natural spaces. Throughout our country, Americans are volunteering in their communities for environmental education

programs, local parks, nature conservancies, and other stewardship opportunities. These devoted individuals are working to maintain park trails, restore wildlife habitats, plant trees, and clear overgrowth. I appreciate these volunteers for their efforts to keep America beautiful, and I encourage all Americans to demonstrate good stewardship and an appreciation for the outdoors. Individuals interested in volunteering can visit the Department of the Interior's Take Pride in America website at [takepride.gov](http://takepride.gov).

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush**, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 2006 as Great Outdoors Month. I call on all Americans to observe this month with appropriate programs and activities and to spend time enjoying the outdoors.

**In Witness Whereof**, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-third day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., May 25, 2006]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 26.

### **Remarks on Energy in Pottstown, Pennsylvania**

*May 24, 2006*

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks for the warm welcome. If I talk too long, it's going to be even warmer. *[Laughter]* I really appreciate the chance to come to the Limerick Generating Station. I'm glad to see it in action. More importantly, I was glad to see the people working here, glad to meet them, glad to get to know them. I appreciate their strong dedication to safety. I appreciate their dedication to the consumers you serve.

This plant serves 2 million homes in the area, and it does so in a way that does not require us to pollute the air. It's a perfect example of how we can grow our economy and protect our environment at the same

time. And so thanks for receiving me. I'm honored to be here.

I thank John Rowe for introducing me, and thanks for coming over from Chicago. Appreciate you being here. I want to thank Chris Crane. I want to thank Ron DeGregorio. Thank you for having me, Ron. I want to thank the mayor, Sharon Valentine-Thomas, of the Borough of Pottstown. Thanks for coming, Madam Mayor. I appreciate you being here. I want to thank all the folks from the local government—sorry about clogging the neighborhoods coming through, but thanks. [*Laughter*] Appreciate you letting me come by.

I want to talk about how the United States of America can continue to be the economic leader of the world. First of all, I think it's important that we're the economic leader of the world, because when you're the leader, it helps the folks who live in your country. See, it matters if we're on the cutting edge of change. It matters to people working every day in America if we're creating strong economic growth.

Today, we are creating strong economic growth. I mean, this economy of ours is moving forward with a full head of steam—fifth year in a row of uninterrupted growth. Our economy grew faster than any other major industrialized nation in the world. We added 5.2 million new jobs since August of 2003. The national unemployment rate is 4.7 percent. Productivity is high, and that's important. A productive society will yield a higher standard of living for our people. Hourly compensation grew at an annual rate of 5.7 percent in the first quarter of this year. Our workers are taking bigger—home bigger paychecks. The standard of living is on the rise. After-tax income is up. Things are good.

And the fundamental question is, can you keep them that way, see? And there's a lot of competition in the world that creates some uncertainty and anxiety amongst our people. And the temptation for some is to say, "Well, we can't compete anymore so let's protect ourselves and let's withdraw; let's become isolationists." I think that would be a wrong approach by our country. See, we ought not to fear the future; we ought to shape the future. We ought to be confident in our ability

to be able to compete and to remain the most innovative country in the world.

And so here are some ideas. First, if we want to be the economic leader in the world so our people can prosper, we need to keep taxes low. We need to be able to be a society that says, you get to earn more of that which you earn.

As you might recall, we went through a pretty tough time in this country over the past 5 years. We had a recession, corporate scandals, a stock market correction, an attack on our country. We went to war to defend ourselves; we've had high energy prices; and we had natural disasters. And yet this economy of ours is strong. And I believe the reason why is, is because of the tax cuts we passed in Washington, DC.

We believe that if you have more money in your pocket to save, spend, or invest, the economy grows. And so one way to make sure that we're the economic leader in the world is to make sure the tax cuts we passed are permanent. Now, people say, "Well, if you make the tax cuts permanent, you can't balance the budget." Well, let me talk a little bit about how Washington works. I've been there long enough to be able to give you an accurate report. [*Laughter*]

Don't believe it when they say they're going to raise your taxes to balance the budget. They're going to raise your taxes and figure out new ways to spend the money. The best way to balance the budget is to keep pro-growth economic policies in place. And, by the way, last year, because our economy was growing, we generated \$100 billion more for the Treasury than we thought. And this year, because of the economy growing strong, we're generating better rates than we did last year.

And so the best way to balance the budget is to keep growing the economy so we collect more tax revenues and be wise about spending your money. See, in Washington, everything sounds good there; every program sounds fantastic. But Government, in order to be wise about spending your money, has got to learn to set priorities. And my priority is this: So long as we have a soldier in harm's way, he or she will have what it takes to achieve victory and secure America.

We're on our way to cutting the deficit in half by 2009. Congress is now debating a supplemental bill. It's money to help fund our troops in Iraq, as well as helping the victims in Katrina. And I've made it very clear that I intend to participate with them in keeping the spending down. And if they exceed the \$92.2 billion request, plus monies for avian flu, I'm going to veto the bill. See, that's one way you keep fiscal discipline in Washington, DC.

We'll be competitive if we keep taxes low and be wise about how we spend your money. We'll be competitive, by the way, if we're smart about improving education for our people. See, this is a global economy, whether people like it or not. And the jobs of the 21st century will be either here in America or wherever the workforce is trained to fill those jobs. And therefore, it's important for us to make sure we educate our children early, and emphasize math and science so our kids have got the skills necessary to fill those jobs.

We changed how we view public education in Washington. We passed the No Child Left Behind Act, see. It basically said, we're going to make sure we fulfill our commitment to Title I students, but we're starting to ask some questions—questions that I'm sure are asked at this plant: Are you meeting objectives, for example. If you set a goal, are you meeting those goals? And so we set some goals: How about every child learning to read at grade level by the third grade? That didn't seem like an unrealistic goal to me. As a matter of fact, it was a necessary goal.

And then we said to the States, you measure. We're going to get you some money, but you measure to show us whether or not we're meeting the goal. And if you're not meeting the goal, figure out why. See, you can't solve a problem unless you diagnose the problem. And so the No Child Left Behind Act basically says, we're going to diagnose problems early and solve them before it's too late. This business about shuffling kids through the school—through our schools, based upon age, didn't work. It wasn't fair. It wasn't right. And so the No Child Left Behind Act says, we're going to measure early, and we're going to help children who

have fallen behind in reading early, and then we're going to extend that to math.

See, one of the interesting things is, because we measure, we know that we're doing fine in math in the eighth grade. But children get to high school—relative to other countries, we're not doing fine in math. And we better do something about it now if we want to be the economic leader of the world.

So we've got a plan to, one, make sure the same standards applied to reading for early grades are applied to math. If we measure in the eighth grade or ninth grade and you're falling behind, you're going to get extra help.

Secondly, advanced placement programs work. I bet I'm looking at some folks out here who took AP when they were in high school. AP means high standards. But we don't have enough teachers around the country to teach AP, so we've got a plan to train 70,000 Advanced Placement teachers to keep raising those standards.

We want to have 30,000 adjunct professors in our classrooms in high school and junior—sometimes it's not cool to be involved with science—and yet it is cool. And we need people who are on the frontlines of science explaining that. I went to a school in Maryland the other day, and there was a NASA scientist there, explaining to junior high kids why the sciences matter and why it's fun to be in science.

We're going to make sure our Pell grants—which, by the way, have expanded by a million kids since I've been the President—continue to have incentives in there for children to take rigorous academics coming out of high school and the first 2 years of college, and then if they maintain a 3.0 average or are taking math, science, or critical language, there's an additional \$4,000 on top of their Pell grant. In other words, this is an effort to make sure that we have a workforce that can compete in a global economy so we remain the economic leader of the world.

I want to talk about energy, see. If we don't get it right in energy, we can have the most educated workforce in the world, but we're not going to be able to compete. We can have the lowest taxes in the world, the least regulations, the fewest lawsuits, but if we haven't

done something about our energy situation, we're not going to be able to compete in the world.

And so that's why I've come to this important powerplant, to talk about how the United States can have a diversified energy policy that makes us less dependent on foreign sources of oil and more dependent on renewable sources of energy.

Now, one of the things I want to start off by telling the—telling you all, and I hope others are listening, is that over the past 30 years, our economy has grown three times faster than our energy consumption. Isn't that interesting statistics? In other words, we're becoming more technologically advanced. And during that same period of time, we created more than 55 million jobs while cutting air pollution by 50 percent.

So what I believe the American people should understand is that we can put policies in place that encourage economic growth so you've got a better standard of living, and at the same time, become less dependent on energy from overseas and protect the environment.

So what do we need to do? Well, the first thing we got to do is understand that we've got to change our driving habits over time. You've seen the price of gasoline going up. One of the reasons why your price of gasoline is going up is because demand for oil is increasing in places like India and China, and the supply for oil is not meeting that demand. And the key ingredient for gasoline is crude oil. So when the Chinese economy is growing or the Indian economy is growing, and that demand is going up, so is your price at the pump.

One way to make sure the price at the pump doesn't go up as global demand increases for hydrocarbons is to figure out how to drive our cars with different kinds of fuels, such as ethanol. One of the really interesting developments that's taking place now in America is the use of corn-based ethanol—pretty cool deal, isn't it, for the President to be able to say, you know, we're growing a lot of corn—[laughter]—and we're less dependent on foreign sources of oil. It's coming—particularly in the Midwest right now, there's a lot of ethanol pumps and plants

being developed there to manufacture ethanol from corn.

We've got to do more, though, if we're going to become less dependent on foreign sources of oil, when it comes to ethanol. And so we're spending a lot of your money to develop technologies that will enable us to be able to manufacture ethanol from wood chips or switch grass. Somebody said, "What is switch grass?" I said, "Well, it's grass that looks like a switch that grows in dry country." In other words, there's all kinds of opportunities to manufacture ethanol, and we're exploring ways to do so. America has always been on the leading edge of technology and research and development, and here's an area where we've got to stay on the leading edge of change.

Another way to help reduce our use of gasoline is through hybrid vehicles. They're coming; they're coming on the market. As a matter of fact, the energy bill I signed actually will pay you—give you a tax credit if you buy a hybrid. We're trying to stimulate demand through the Tax Code. It makes sense. But there's going to be an additional breakthrough—or additional breakthroughs—when it comes to hybrid vehicles, starting with the development of a battery that will enable you to drive your first 40 miles on electricity. And the Federal Government is very much involved in this research. We're spending your money, again, on research to help fund breakthroughs for battery technologies that will enable you to drive a plug-in hybrid battery.

And, oh, by the way, on ethanol, just one thing I forgot to tell you is that there are 5 million flex-fuel vehicles on the road today. Flex-fuel means you can either have gasoline or ethanol or a combination of the two. You've probably got one and you don't even know it. The technology—the barrier to change is not the automobile; it is the ability to make the fuel in quantities—economic quantities so we can get them to you at the pump.

And same with hybrid batteries; they're coming—hybrid—plug-in hybrid vehicles with new batteries—they're coming your way. And one of the reasons why is because the Government has entered into research

partnerships with the private sector to accelerate these technologies, all aimed at making us less dependent on oil.

A third way to help this country remain an economic leader when it comes to the cars you drive is hydrogen. We spend about a—over a billion dollars of research to bring hydrogen to the marketplace. One fellow reminded me, wisely, it costs—it takes quite a bit of power to make hydrogen. An interesting way to make hydrogen on an economic basis would be through nuclear power, see. But we're spending money and time and effort, all aimed at making sure that the automobiles of the future will require less crude oil. And we're close to some significant breakthroughs.

It's going to take time to move away from the hydrocarbon economy to the hydrogen economy, and in the meantime, it seems like it makes sense to me to do something about the refinery capacity of the United States. If you're worried about the price of gasoline—you don't like it when your price got over \$3.00—and I don't blame you—you might want to ask the question, how come the Government isn't working hard to expand refinery capacity so that there's more gasoline? If you have more gasoline on the market relative to demand, guess what—it takes the pressure off price.

We haven't built a new refinery in the United States since the 1970s. The regulatory burden is a lot. You're kind of used to that here in this industry. And so we got to cut through all that business. If we're serious about helping our consumers and getting more gasoline to the market, we got to have regulatory relief. I suggested to Congress that we put new refineries on abandoned military facilities. It seemed to make sense to me. And so we need to be wise about these policies so that we can say to the American people, we're on our way out of the hydrocarbon era. But in the meantime, let's be thoughtful of the consumers here in the United States.

We're also going to need a lot of electricity in the future. Electricity demand is projected to increase by nearly 50 percent over the next 25 years. That's a lot. And we better be wise about how we implement a strategy to meet that demand—otherwise, we're not going to

be the economic leader; otherwise, our people aren't going to be having the good jobs that we want them to have; otherwise, your children and my children, our grandchildren are not going to have the bright, hopeful America that we want for them.

Now, one of the things that people have got to understand is that we get our—we generate our electricity from four sources: coal—it's about 50 percent; nuclear power—about 20 percent; natural gas—18 percent; and then other renewable sources like hydroelectric, solar, and wind power. And that's the mix; that's the energy mix.

Coal is by far the most abundant and affordable energy resource. We got about 240 years at current rates of consumption. It's a valuable asset for the United States. The problem is, coal isn't—when you burn it, it isn't clean. It doesn't meet our standards. It's not—it doesn't enable us to say, you can grow your economy, and at the same time, protect the environment like we want.

And so we're developing clean coal technology. We're spending over \$2 billion in a 10-year period to be able to say to the American people that we're using the money wisely to determine whether or not we can have zero-emissions coal-fired powerplants. It's in our interests that we do that. It makes sense. About 2012, under the FutureGen Initiative, we think we will build the first powerplant to run on coal and remove virtually all pollutants.

Natural gas is an important commodity. By the way, we can explore for natural gas in environmentally friendly ways. And we ought to be exploring for natural gas in the ANWR, as well as off the gulf coast of the United States.

Here's another interesting way to help make sure there's enough natural gas for this economy to grow—by the way, natural gas, as you know, is not just used for power. It's used for fertilizers, a variety of uses. You can liquefy natural gas; you can put it in a ship, and you can send it long distances and still have an economic product. And there are places in this world where there's a lot of natural gas—a lot. And they're building liquefied production facilities. And they put them on these ships—but we don't have any

places to offload it in the United States. We got some, but not enough.

If we're really interested in diversifying our energy sources and making sure the American people have got enough energy to watch this economy grow, we have got to have LNG sites to offload the gas from abroad. And so what we've done is, I signed a new bill, energy bill, that clarifies Federal authority to license new sites, that reduces the bureaucratic obstacles to opening up the terminals and streamlines the development. It's in your interest that we enable liquefied natural gas to come into our country so that we can help take the burden off some of the pricing pressures that we're inevitably going to feel with demand going up and not enough electricity supply.

Thirdly, about 6 percent of the continental U.S. is highly suitable for the construction of wind turbines. And this is a really interesting opportunity for the country—they ought to put one big one in Washington, DC. [Laughter] They say—the experts tell me that this area alone has the potential to supply up to 20 percent of our Nation's electricity. I think that's an interesting opportunity. I don't know if it's true or not, but it's certainly worth trying to find out, in order to make sure this country has got a bright future. And so we got \$44 million for wind energy research. And the goal is to expand the use and lower the cost of wind turbine technology.

In other words, we're constantly researching and looking. I don't know if you know this or not, but the Federal Government does spend money on research in a variety of fronts, and it should. And I intend to double the basic—the budget for basic research over the next 10 years. The iPod—like, I like to ride my mountain bike and plug in the iPod. The technology for the iPod came as a result of Federal research. The Internet came about because of defense money research.

So we're spending money on research. The reason I keep repeating that is, not only is it going to help us diversify our energy sources and make us competitive in the world, but it also helps make sure America is always on the leading edge of technological change.

Solar energy—the dream in solar energy is to develop technology so that someday, your house is like a little generating plant, and if you don't use the power, you feed it back into the grid. It's possible, but it's not going to be possible if we don't spend money on research and development. So we're spending \$150 million to combine Government money with private research money in solar technologies to see if we can't help foster technologies that will be able to capture the sun, feed it into your house, generate enough electricity, and if you've got a little excess, feed it back into the grid. I think that's a pretty interesting idea, and it's certainly one worth exploring.

Finally, I want to talk about nuclear power—a subject you all are very familiar with. It is a really important way to meet our goals, which is to have abundant, affordable, clean, and safe sources of energy. The important thing for the American people to understand is this concept: One, nuclear power is abundant and affordable. In other words, you have nuclear powerplants, you can say, we've got an abundant amount of electricity. And once you get the plant up and running, the operating costs of these plants are significantly lower than other forms of electricity plants, which means the energy is affordable.

As I mentioned, nuclear power—it's the second leading source of electricity here. We have 100 nuclear powerplants that operate in 31 States. Now, we haven't built one in a long period of time.

People in our country are rightly concerned about greenhouse gases and the environment, and I can understand why; I am too. As a matter of fact, I try to tell people, let's quit the debate about whether greenhouse gases are caused by mankind or by natural causes; let's just focus on technologies that deal with the issue. Nuclear power will help us deal with the issue of greenhouse gases. Without nuclear energy, carbon dioxide emissions would have been 28 percent greater in the electricity industry in 2004. Without nuclear power, we would have had an additional 700 million tons a year of carbon dioxide, and that's nearly equal to the annual emissions from 136 million passenger

cars. Nuclear power helps us protect the environment.

And nuclear power is safe. It is safe because of advances in science and engineering and plant design. It is safe because the workers and managers of our nuclear powerplants are incredibly skilled people who know what they're doing.

For the sake of economic security and national security, the United States of America must aggressively move forward with the construction of nuclear powerplants. Other nations are. Interestingly enough, France has built 58 plants since the 1970s, and now gets 78 percent of its electricity from nuclear power. I think that's an interesting statistic, isn't it? The United States hasn't ordered a plant since the 1970s, and yet France has not only ordered them; they built 58 plants. And 78 percent of their electricity comes from nuclear power. They don't have to worry about natural gas coming from somewhere else. They worry about it, but they don't have to worry about it to the extent that we do.

China has 9 nuclear plants in operation, and they got—plan to build 40 more over the next two decades. They understand that in order to be an aggressive nation, an economic nation that is flourishing so their people can benefit, they better do something about their sources of electricity. They see it. India—I just came from India—they're going to build some nuclear powerplants.

To maintain our economic leadership, we got to do it again. And so here's the strategy: First, in the energy bill I signed in 2005, there are loan guarantees, production tax credits, Federal risk insurance for the builders of new plants. In other words, we said, this is an industry that hadn't got much going since the '70s. It's an over-regulated industry. It's highly risky because of the regulations to try to build a plant. People don't know this, but you get yourself a design for a nuclear powerplant; you start spending money for plans and engineering plans and everything; you get building; and all of the sudden, somebody can shut you down. And that makes it awfully difficult to take risk, if a lawsuit can cause you to spend enormous sums of money and have no productive use of the money spent.

And so we got together with the Congress and said, "Well, how—what can we do to create incentives to show the industry that we're serious about moving forward?" Well, one is loan guarantees, and that gives investors confidence that this Government is committed to the construction of nuclear powerplants. Secondly is production tax credits, and those credits will reward investments in the latest advanced nuclear power generation.

In other words, there's incentives—loan guarantee is an incentive, tax credits are incentives, Federal risk insurance. What the Federal risk insurance says—is offered for the first six new powerplant—nuclear powerplants. And the insurance helps protect builders of the plants against lawsuits or bureaucratic obstacles and other delays beyond their control. We have got what's called the Nuclear Power 2010 Initiative, which is a \$1.1 billion partnership between the Federal Government and the industry to facilitate new plant orders. In other words, I have said we need more nuclear powerplants, and here's a strategy to get them going, see. Here's a way to say to the industry, we're serious about this.

This time last year, only two companies were seeking to build nuclear powerplants. Now 16 companies have expressed an interest in new construction, and they're considering as many as 25 new plants, trying to get these plants—construction started by the end of this decade. I want it to be said that this generation of folks had the foresight necessary to diversify our—or to continue to diversify electricity supply and recognize that nuclear power is safe, and we did something about it. We just didn't mark our time. We actually did something about it so a generation of Americans coming up will be able to have a better America.

I understand the issue of waste, and we've got to do something about it. We've got to be wise about nuclear waste. I'm a believer that Yucca Mountain is a scientifically sound place to send the waste, and I would hope that the United States Congress would recognize that as well.

I also recognize that we can do something on a reprocessing front. And so I got our

administration to commit to the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership. I think you'll find this interesting—at least I did. Under the partnership, America is going to work with nations that have already got an advanced civilian nuclear energy program, such as France and Japan and Russia, and we're going to use new technologies that effectively and safely recycle spent nuclear fuel. In other words, we're coming together to say, how can we do a better job of reprocessing and recycling fuel?

And the reason that's important, at least for our fellow citizens to understand is, it will reduce the amount of the toxicity of the fuel and reduce the amount we have to store. To me, it's a smart way to combine with others to reduce storage requirements for nuclear waste by up to 90 percent. It's a good way to work with other nations that are spending money on research and development as well. It's a way to, kind of, leverage up an investment. We're going to—I've asked Congress to spend \$250 million on this partnership. I hope they follow through with it. It is a necessary expenditure of money to make sure that the nuclear power industry can move forward with confidence, and the American people move forward with confidence as well.

And so here are some ideas—not only ideas; this is what we're doing; this has gone from idea to action. What I'm telling you is, is that I understand the need to get off oil. I understand the need to work on renewable sources of energy. And I'm pleased to report we're working with Congress to do it. We're spending your money on research and development to find interesting technologies. You know, I hope that when my grandchildren and some of your children start taking their driver's test, they'll be cranking up a hydrogen-powered automobile, with hydrogen produced from electricity generated from plants such as these.

We have a duty to think about the problems this country is going to face. Listen, this economy is good, and I want to keep it that way—but I also want to make sure it's good 10 years from now. And I want to make sure that this global economy, this world that is becoming more connected, is one that doesn't cause us to fear and to neglect our

duties, but that we put policies in place that enable us to remain confident, that we're an entrepreneurial society, that we're well-educated people, that we're willing to work hard to raise our families and put bread on the table. And we've got to make sure we have a good energy policy to do that.

I want to thank you for giving me the chance to come and share with you today what the country is doing right now. I want to thank you very much for showing what is possible. I appreciate your hard work here.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:29 p.m. at the Limerick Generating Station. In his remarks, he referred to John W. Rowe, chairman, president, and chief executive officer, Christopher M. Crane, senior vice president, and Ron DeGregorio, site vice president of Limerick Generating Station, Exelon Corporation.

### **Remarks at a Pennsylvania Congressional Victory Committee Dinner in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania May 24, 2006**

Thank you all. Thanks for coming. I want to thank you for joining the Pennsylvania Congressional Victory Committee. I am so honored to be standing by two of the young stars of the United States Congress. You know, I've been up there long enough to be able to spot talent, and Jim Gerlach and Mike Fitzpatrick are really talented Congressmen, and they deserve to be reelected to the United States Congress.

I appreciate Karen. It's good to see you again, Karen. Thanks for coming. Katie, Rob, Joel, Jay, and Katelyn are also here. [*Laughter*] All you got to do is register them to vote, and it's a landslide. [*Laughter*]

And I appreciate Kathy Fitzpatrick and Jimmy for being here as well. And by the way, Mike's mother [father]\*, James, and mom, Mary, is with us. So it's good to have the Fitzpatrick family well represented to pay honor to this good man here.

I appreciate all the local officials who are here and the grassroots activists. See, you win campaigns by being able to raise money—

\* White House correction.

and we've raised a lot tonight, and thank you for that. But you also win campaigns by convincing people to put up the signs and make the phone calls and go to the coffee shops and go to your houses of worship and tell people, when you've got somebody who's decent, honest, and honorable, put them back in office. And we've got people who are decent, honest, and honorable representing the 6th and 8th Congressional Districts here from Pennsylvania.

And so thank you for what you have done and what you're going to do coming down the stretch of the elections. We're just kind of getting warmed up. [*Laughter*] We're in the jumping-jack phase of the political season. [*Laughter*] We're getting ready to run and win. And one of the interesting things about politics, you can't win without a good candidate, and we've got two really fine candidates standing right up here on the stage.

Jim Gerlach is an experienced leader. He's been involved for 16 years in the political process. He is a—he's an independent voice, which is good. It's good for the people of this congressional district. He believes in low taxes. I appreciate his strong stand on national security. He's a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and that's important for people in his congressional district because he's helped to improve traffic and roads, and he's promoted open spaces as well. He's a good, thoughtful Member of the United States Congress. And the people in his district are lucky to have him there, as far as I'm concerned.

Mike Fitzpatrick—I don't know what it's like in local politics here, but the county commissioner is somebody who generally knows the feelings of the people, and Mike was a county commissioner. And he's pretty—it means he was close to the constituents; he knows what they think. It's important to have people in Washington who don't lose touch with the constituents. And Mike Fitzpatrick certainly didn't lose the touch.

He is an Eagle Scout, and interestingly enough, he continually goes to Eagle Scout ceremonies. You know why? He wants to help some other youngster set high values and understand the importance of achievement, but he also wants to thank the parents

and those involved in the Scout troops for reaching out to help somebody.

I like Mike a lot. He's an honorable fellow who is for low taxes, good environmental policy; he cares a lot about health care. The people of his congressional district are really lucky to have him representing them.

We're going to win the elections in November of 2006. The reason why is we get things done on behalf of the American people. We've been given some challenges, and we've responded to meet those challenges. I spend the most time as your President working on ways to secure our country. The biggest challenge we face is to make sure that we prevent another attack on the American people. Much of my thinking about the presidency was formed on September the 11th, 2001. It's a day, of course, I will never forget; it's a day that all of us should never forget; it's a day in which our standing in the world changed dramatically. Because you see, we grew up thinking oceans could protect us, and we realized that there's an enemy out there that will do incredible harm to the American people. I'm proud to have allies in the United States Congress who understand that our most important job in Washington is to protect the American people.

We face an enemy that is totalitarian in nature. They've taken a great religion and have hijacked it to suit their own needs. They're Islamo-fascists. They will kill innocent life to achieve an objective. They have made it clear they'd like to hurt America again. They would like to drive us out of regions of the world so they could establish safe haven. They would like to mate their terrible ambitions with weapons of mass destruction. These are their words, not mine. They believe this country is soft, and it's just a matter of time before we lose our nerve. And I'm proud to have two Members of the United States Congress standing up here who understand the stakes and who are strong in the support of the men and women who wear our uniform and strongly support our efforts to bring the enemy to justice before they hurt us again.

A battlefield in the war on terror is, of course, Iraq. And people in our country are unsettled because of the war, and I understand that. I fully understand why people in

America are disquieted about what they're seeing on their TV screens. There's a concern about whether or not we can win. There's no doubt in my mind we will win. And our objective is to have an Iraq that can govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself; an ally in the war on terror, and an example for others in a region that is desperate for freedom.

The enemy cannot defeat us on the battlefield, but what they can do is put horrible images on our TV screens. And it's really important for those who wear our uniform and the enemy and the people of Iraq to know that the United States of America will complete the mission, and in so doing, will make our country more secure and will be laying the foundation for peace.

I appreciate working with Members of Congress who understand the lessons of history. And one of the really interesting lessons of history, one way I'd like to describe what's taking place in the world today, is my relationship—I describe my relationship with the Prime Minister of Japan, Koizumi. He's a good friend of mine, personally. He's an interesting fellow. He loved Elvis. *[Laughter]* Still does. *[Laughter]* You know what's interesting, though, about my talks with the Prime Minister—and by the way, when I sit down at the table with him, we talk about how we can keep the peace. We talk about how to deal with North Korean and the fact that he's trying to develop a weapon of mass destruction and, at the same time, creating starvation inside his country. We talk about the young democracy of Iraq, where Japan has 1,000 troops. We talk about a fledgling democracy in Afghanistan and how we can work together to help this young, new democracy grow and flourish.

It's really interesting, isn't it? What makes it even more interesting is the fact that 60 years ago or so, my dad went to war with the Japanese. And something happened between the 19-year-old Navy pilot, George H.W. Bush, and George W. Bush sitting at the table talking about the peace. And what happened was, my predecessor—one of my predecessors—Harry S. Truman, believed in what I believed in, the universality of freedom, the capacity of people to be—to take on democracy, and the knowledge that democracy yields the peace.

And so what you're seeing today is tyranny going to democracy, is people who demanded freedom—12 million people said, "I want to be free"—learning what it means to self-govern. Someday an American President is going to be able to tell the story of our generation. They're going to be able to tell the story of those of us who've been honored to serve our country and say, "Thank goodness they believed in the capacity of freedom to take a troubled country and convert it into an ally." Someday an American President is going to be sitting down with a duly elected leader from Iraq, working to keep the peace, and our children and grandchildren are going to be better off.

Here at home, we've got a strong economy. You know, the economy grew at 3.5 percent last year. That is faster than any other major industrialized nation in the world. The national unemployment rate is 4.7 percent, which happens to be the unemployment rate here in the State of Pennsylvania. We created 5.2 million new jobs since August of 2003. People are working. After-tax real income is up more than 8 percent per American since 2001. Productivity is on the rise; homeownership is high; small businesses are flourishing. This economy is strong, and we intend to keep it that way.

I think it's amazing to be able to tell you how strong the economy is, given through—what we have been through, however. We've been through a recession; we've been through corporate scandals; we've been through a stock market correction; we've been through an attack on our country; we've been through wars; we have been through natural disasters; we've been through high energy prices. Yet we have got a strong economy. You know why? Because we cut the taxes on the American people.

Our progrowth economic policies work. The three of us believe that when you have more of your own money in your pocket to save, invest, or spend, the economy grows. We would rather you spend your money than the Federal Government spends your money.

Now, you'll hear them in the campaign, they'll be talking about the deficit. I'm confident they'll be yelling about the deficit at these two Congressmen. Let me just set the record straight for you. See, they're going to

say, “We’re going to run up your taxes to balance the budget.” That’s not the way Washington, DC, works. They’re going to run up your taxes, and they’re going to figure out new ways to spend your money on new programs, and there will still be a deficit.

The best way to reduce the deficit is to keep progrowth economic policies in place and be wise about how we spend your money, which is exactly what we’re doing in Washington. We’re on our way to cut the deficit in half by 2009.

One of my concerns is that the United States will lose our nerve and fear competition and become an isolated place. You know, when you see the global competition these days from China and India, some in our country say, “Well, I don’t think we want to try to compete with them.” And so they worry about protectionism—they think about protectionism, or they’re isolators—that’s not my attitude, and I know it’s not the attitude of these Congressmen. We have nothing to fear about the future, because we intend to shape it, see. We intend to make America the most competitive nation in the world.

So I’m going to work with these two Congressmen to pass what we’ve called the American Competitive Initiative, which says that we will be the most—we’ll lead the world when it comes to research and development. The Federal Government should double its commitment to basic research in physical sciences over the next 10 years. People say, “Why would the Federal Government be investing?” Well, I’ll give you why—the Internet. The Internet came to be because of Federal research dollars—iPods—got one? I got one, you know—[*laughter*]—as a result of Federal research. It’s important for the United States to be the most technologically advanced nation in the world.

And that’s why I’ve called for Congress to make the research and development tax credit a permanent part of our Tax Code. And that’s why I look forward to working with these Congressmen to make sure that our schools are adept at teaching people the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century, which means strong math and science curriculum.

So today I went out to one of the most advanced nuclear powerplants in the world—

at least in our country. And I did so because I wanted to make this point: In order for us to be a competitive nation, in order for us to keep a high standard of living, we have got to get off of our addiction to oil. And I’m looking forward to working with these Congressmen to do that.

And so I talked today, and I’m going to work with the Congressmen to continue to spend your money on research and development; for example, to speed up new battery technology so that the hybrid—we’ll have plug-in hybrid batteries, which means, in Philadelphia, you’ll be driving the first 40 miles per day on electricity, not on gasoline; or more advanced uses of ethanol so we can be using crops grown here in America rather than oil from the Middle East to power our automobiles. Eventually, we’ll be firing up our automobiles using hydrogen.

I went to the powerplant today. It’s estimated that demand for electricity is going to increase by 50 percent over young people’s lifetimes, which means we better have the capacity to generate electricity and protect our environment at the same time. And a really good way to do so is through nuclear power.

I’m also going to work with the Congressmen to continue to spend research money on clean coal technology. We’ve got 240 years worth of coal; let’s burn it cleanly. Let’s use it in a way that says we can protect our environment and make sure we maintain our standard of living.

We’ll continue to invest in solar technology. Here’s the dream of solar technology—and by the way, we’ve got \$150 million in my budget for solar technology. The dream is, is that every house will have a solar roof to it. And if you do not use all the power generated that day from the sun, you feed it back into the grid. It’s like your little powerplant. [*Laughter*] You become a generator of electricity. It’s coming.

And we intend to lead the charge to change our habits when it comes to energy to protect our environment, on the one hand, and to make sure the United States is a competitive nation on the other.

I want to talk about health care. For years, Democrats have been talking about Medicare, see, how they’re going to make it work

better. They never did—they never got the job done. So we came along. We modernized Medicare for our seniors. We said, “If you make a pledge to the seniors of the United States, make it a good pledge; make it work.” You see, the Government would pay \$25,000 for an ulcer surgery but not a dime for the prescription drugs to prevent the surgery from being needed in the first place. What I’m telling you is, medicine had become modern, but Medicare hadn’t.

And so we changed it. And today, more than 32 million seniors have enrolled in Part D of Medicare, which means there’s a prescription drug benefit. The average senior saves one-half on his or her drug bills. And if you’re a poor senior—about a third of those eligible for Medicare—the Federal Government is going to pay 95 percent of your drug bills. The days of a senior having to choose between food and medicine are gone, thanks to the Republican Party.

But we also understand that we don’t want the Federal Government running your health care. The best health care system is one where the patient-doctor relationship is central to the decisionmaking, and that’s why we’re for transparency, information technology in the health care field. That’s why we’re strong believers in health savings accounts, which will help the uninsured and the small-business owners. We’re believers in association health plans that will allow small businesses to pool risk across jurisdictional boundaries so they can buy insurance at the same discounts that big businesses get to do.

I’ll tell you what else we’re for: We understand that frivolous and junk lawsuits run good doctors out of practice and run up the cost of your medicine. And you got a problem here in Pennsylvania. You got ob-gyns leaving your State. You got specialists who are fearful of practicing medicine. And you need people like these two Congressmen who are willing to stand up to the trial lawyers and promote good, strong medical liability reform.

Finally, although they’re not in the Senate, I appreciate them supporting me in picking judges, the right kind of judges—judges who will not legislate from the bench but judges who will strictly interpret the Constitution. I am proud to have nominated Chief Justice

John Roberts and Justice Sam Alito, and I’m even prouder they got confirmed by the United States Senate.

Ours is a philosophy that trusts people. We’d rather you have your money. We believe you can spend it wisely. We believe you can make the right decisions when it comes to medicine. We believe our seniors should be given modern medicine, and we delivered on our promises. The other bunch, they get angry, and they yell and they, you know, scream and holler. We just go about and get the job done. We’re people who can deliver results on behalf of the American people.

I’ve signed a Medicare reform bill; I’ve signed an energy bill; I’ve signed tax cuts; I’ve signed bills to make sure those who wear the uniform get the full support of the United States Government. And I’m proud to have these two accomplished men serving in Washington, DC. The people of Pennsylvania have got two good Congressmen in these two, and you need to send them back. They’re serving this State with dignity, and they’re serving our country with honor, and I’m proud to call them friends.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:46 p.m. at the Sheraton Philadelphia City Center. In his remarks, he referred to Karen Gerlach, wife of Representative Jim Gerlach; Kathleen Fitzpatrick, wife of Representative Michael G. Fitzpatrick; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea.

## **Proclamation 8024—National Homeownership Month, 2006**

*May 24, 2006*

*By the President of the United States of America*

### **A Proclamation**

Owning a home is an important part of the American dream. During National Homeownership Month, we raise awareness of homeownership and encourage more Americans to consider the benefits of owning their own home.

Nearly 70 percent of Americans enjoy the satisfaction of owning their own home, and my Administration continues to promote an ownership society where the promise of

America reaches all our citizens. The American Dream Downpayment Act of 2003 is helping thousands of low to moderate income and minority families with downpayment and closing costs, which represent the greatest barrier to homeownership. Since 2002, when I announced our goal to help 5.5 million minorities become homeowners by the end of this decade, the rate of minority homeownership has climbed above 50 percent, and more than 2.5 million minority families have become new homeowners. My Administration will continue to provide counseling and assistance for new homebuyers and expand homeownership opportunities for all Americans.

During National Homeownership Month and throughout the year, we applaud the men and women who work to achieve the dream of homeownership, and we are grateful for those who provide counseling, lending, real estate, construction, and other services to these individuals. The hard work, financial discipline, and personal responsibility of our country's homeowners help transform neighborhoods throughout our Nation and reflect the best qualities of America.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim June 2006 as National Homeownership Month. I call upon the people of the United States to join me in building a more hopeful society and recognizing the importance of expanding the ownership of homes across our great Nation.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fourth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., May 26, 2006]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 30.

## **Remarks at the Change of Command Ceremony for the Commandant of the United States Coast Guard**

*May 25, 2006*

Thank you all. Thank you for the warm welcome. I'm delighted to be here with you at Fort McNair. I'm pleased to join you in celebrating an historic moment for the United States Coast Guard. This morning we mark a change of command at the helm of America's oldest continuous maritime service.

Our Nation thanks a fine patriot, Admiral Tom Collins, for his leadership these past 4 years. And we thank his wife, Nancy, and their family for joining us today. We also congratulate Admiral Thad Allen, as he begins his duties as the 23d Commandant of the United States Coast Guard. And we appreciate the love and support of his wife, Pam, and their fine family as well.

I want to thank Michael Chertoff for his distinguished service to our country. I appreciate the other members of my Cabinet who have joined to celebrate Thad Allen beginning his duties as the Commandant: Secretary Elaine Chao and Secretary Norm Mineta and Secretary Sam Bodman and Acting Secretary Lynn Scarlett.

I'm honored to be on stage with General Pete Pace, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and I welcome his wife, Lynne, as well. I want to thank the Members of Congress who have joined us today. I appreciate Master Chief Frank Welch, who is the Master Chief Petty Officer of the United States Coast Guard. I want to thank Captain Wilbur Douglass for his fine invocation. I appreciate the members of the diplomatic corps who are here. Thank you all for coming.

The history of the Coast Guard dates back more than two centuries to the Revenue Cutter Service, established by Alexander Hamilton during the presidency of George Washington. Or as I call him, the first George W. [Laughter]

Through the generations, the men and women of the Coast Guard have stepped forward to defend our Nation, to protect our waterways and ports, to enforce maritime law, to safeguard commerce and natural resources, and to rescue those in peril on the

seas. Now the Coast Guard is carrying out those missions during a new kind of war. The Coast Guard is vital to our Nation's security, and the American people are grateful to stand behind your shield of freedom.

The Coast Guard is also the world's premier lifesaving service, and the whole world saw your skill and bravery during the hurricanes last year. They saw Coast Guard rescuers plunging from helicopters, lifting people from rooftops, hoisting them to safety. In all, more than 4,000 Coast Guard personnel came to the aid of their fellow Americans and rescued more than 33,000 citizens. One of those saved said this about her rescuers: "They're my guardian angels. I couldn't be here if it wasn't for them."

Countless others who lived through last year's hurricanes feel the same way. When Americans were at their most desperate, they looked to the skies for help, and they knew their prayers were answered when they saw those rescue choppers from the United States Coast Guard. The Coast Guard performed with courage and distinction, and your response to Hurricane Katrina will go down as one of the finest hours in the Coast Guard's 216-year history.

In all your work over the past 4 years, the Coast Guard has benefited from a superb leader in Admiral Tom Collins. Admiral Collins assumed his duties as Commandant shortly after September the 11th, 2001, and has worked tirelessly to transform the Coast Guard for this war on terror. Admiral Collins has led the men and women of this service with honor and respect and devotion to duty. And he's made recruitment and retention a top priority. Thanks to his leadership, recruitment is up, and the Coast Guard's retention rate is at its highest level since World War II.

Admiral Collins has a right to be proud of all that he accomplished in his time as Commandant. Now he has the right to take some time off. [*Laughter*] Maybe even spend a few afternoons at Fenway Park. [*Laughter*] Today Admiral Collins will mark the end of a distinguished 38-year career in the Coast Guard. He retires with the admiration and gratitude of the United States, and Laura and I wish him and Nancy all the best in the next chapter of their lives.

In a few moments, Admiral Collins will pass the duties of Commandant to an outstanding successor in Admiral Thad Allen. I came to know Admiral Allen well last September when he directed recovery efforts after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. We surveyed damage together. We sat one evening on the deck of the USS *Iwo Jima*, talking about how we could help the folks in that region recover. He gave me regular updates on what was taking place—an incredibly devastated part of our country.

It didn't take long to recognize his ability or his integrity or his ability to lead. I knew I could count on Admiral Allen to give me candid judgment. I relied on his steady nerves and his presence of mind in trying conditions. I was impressed by his compassion and his determination to help those who had lost so much.

Admiral Allen brings his experience with Hurricane Katrina to his new post, and he brings much more. The Admiral is a graduate of the Coast Guard Academy, where he was a star football player—he still looks like he could hold his own on the gridiron. [*Laughter*] He spent his life around the Coast Guard officers and enlisted personnel. Admiral Allen's father, Clyde, with us today, served in the Coast Guard. That means Thad followed in his father's footsteps; I see nothing wrong with that. [*Laughter*]

At every stage of his career, Admiral Allen has inspired those around him with energy and dedication to service. One of his former colleagues likened Admiral Allen to the Energizer bunny. [*Laughter*] Another said, "He brings out the best in people, especially in times of crisis." I want to thank Admiral Allen for his willingness to take on this incredibly important responsibility, and I look forward to calling him Commandant of the Coast Guard.

One of Admiral Allen's most important tasks as Commandant will be to help ensure the Federal Government is ready for the hurricane season, which begins a week from today. The Coast Guard performed heroically during last year's hurricanes, and other agencies of our Government can look to you for example.

We're determined to learn the lessons of Katrina, and we're doing everything possible

to be prepared for the next storm. The Department of Homeland Security has reviewed emergency plans for all 50 States and America's 75 largest cities. The Department is working closely with communities to identify any weaknesses in their plans and to find ways to improve them now.

Secretary Chertoff has taken steps to reform FEMA, improve partnerships with the Red Cross and the Department of Defense, expand the amount of supplies the Federal Government has on hand. We're also making it clear that all able-bodied Americans should have the resources necessary to sustain themselves for 48 to 72 hours after a disaster so that emergency personnel can focus on saving those who cannot help themselves.

I appreciate the many dedicated Americans who are working to prepare for this hurricane season, and I'm confident that if danger arrives, whether from nature or man, the United States Coast Guard will be ready.

The Coast Guard has always been ready to defend our people and our freedom, and I thank you for your dedicated service. *Semper Paratus*.

And now, in recognition of your exceptional service during Hurricane Katrina, I will present the Presidential Unit Citation to the United States Coast Guard.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:12 a.m. at Fort Lesley J. McNair. In his remarks, he referred to Capt. Wilbur C. Douglass III, USN, chaplain of the Coast Guard. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

### **Statement on House of Representatives Passage of Energy Legislation**

*May 25, 2006*

I applaud the House of Representatives for passing the energy and water appropriations bill. I am grateful for the House leadership's work on it. This bill marks a critical first step toward realizing my American Competitiveness Initiative, and it fully funds my request for the Energy Department's Office of Science. I appreciate the leadership of Chairman Hobson and Chairman Lewis in working to keep our economy the most

competitive in the world. This bill also will support my Advanced Energy Initiative and help make America more secure and less dependent on foreign sources of energy. I urge the Senate to join the House in supporting these important initiatives.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 5427.

### **Statement on the National Economy**

*May 25, 2006*

America's economy is on the fast track. Today's revised report by the Commerce Department indicates our economy grew at 5.3 percent for the first quarter of this year. That is the fastest growth in 2½ years and another clear sign that our economy is powerful, productive, and prosperous. I commend America's workers, small-business owners, and innovators for contributing to this strong economic growth. I will continue to work to pursue progrowth policies, make the tax cuts permanent, and restrain Government spending so that opportunity reaches every American neighborhood and every American family.

### **Statement on the Department of Justice's Handling of Representative William J. Jefferson's Materials**

*May 25, 2006*

Over the last several days, the House of Representatives and the Department of Justice have attempted to resolve a dispute over the execution of a search warrant on the Capitol Hill office of Congressman William Jefferson, who is under criminal investigation.

The Department of Justice's search was part of an important investigation of alleged public corruption. At the same time, the bipartisan leadership of the House of Representatives believes this search violated the Constitutional principle of separation of powers and the Speech or Debate Clause of the Constitution. They note these principles must be adhered to, even in the pursuit of a legitimate criminal investigation.

I recognize these are deeply held views. Our Government has not faced such a dilemma in more than two centuries. Yet after

days of discussions, it is clear these differences will require more time to be worked out.

So today I am directing the Department of Justice to seal all the materials recovered from Congressman Jefferson's office for the next 45 days and not to allow access to anyone involved in the investigation. I am also ordering the sealed materials to remain under the custody of the Solicitor General—who heads a separate office within the Justice Department and is not involved in the investigation.

This period will provide both parties more time to resolve the issues in a way that ensures that materials relevant to the ongoing criminal investigation are made available to prosecutors in a manner that respects the interests of a coequal branch of Government. The Justice Department and the House of Representatives should continue their discussions and resolve this matter as quickly as possible.

Let me be clear: Investigating and prosecuting crime is a crucial executive responsibility that I take seriously. Those who violate the law—including a Member of Congress—should and will be held to account. This investigation will go forward, and justice will be served.

**Memorandum on Handling of  
Materials Held by the Department of  
Justice Following Execution of a  
Search Warrant**

*May 25, 2006*

*Memorandum for the Attorney General and  
the Solicitor General of the United States*

*Subject:* Handling of Materials Held by the  
Department of Justice Following Execution  
of a Search Warrant

After taking appropriate account of the respective constitutional functions of the House of Representatives and of the executive branch, including important law enforcement interests, the protections afforded those functions under the Constitution, and the need for comity between the executive and legislative branches in the service of the American people, I direct that, with respect

to the materials taken pursuant to the warrant dated May 18, 2006, and captioned "In the Matter of the Search of Rayburn House Office Building Room Number 2113," including any copies thereof or items derived in whole or in part therefrom:

(1) The Attorney General, acting through the Solicitor General of the United States who shall for this purpose be subject to no supervision by any officer of the Department of Justice other than the Attorney General, shall (a) preserve and seal the materials, (b) ensure that no use is made of the materials, and (c) ensure that no person has access to the materials, except that Office of the Solicitor General personnel under the direct supervision of the Solicitor General may have the minimum physical access to the materials essential to the preservation of the materials.

(2) The Attorney General shall endeavor, and the House of Representatives is respectfully encouraged to endeavor, to resolve any issues relating to the materials through discussions between them in good faith and with mutual institutional respect and, if it should prove necessary after exhaustion of such discussions, through appropriate proceedings in the courts of the United States.

The Attorney General shall keep me informed of discussions to which this memorandum refers and proceedings relating to the materials. This memorandum shall expire on July 9, 2006.

**George W. Bush**

cc: The Speaker of the House of Representatives

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this memorandum.

**Statement on Senate Passage of  
Immigration Reform Legislation**

*May 25, 2006*

I commend the Senate for passing bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform before the Memorial Day deadline set by its leaders. I appreciate the hard work of the leadership and Senators on both sides of the aisle. An effective immigration reform bill will protect our borders, hold employers to account for the workers they hire, create a

temporary-worker program to take pressure off our border and meet the needs of our growing economy, address the issue of the millions of illegal immigrants already in our country, and honor America's great tradition of the melting pot. The House of Representatives began a national dialog by passing an immigration bill last year. Now that the Senate has acted, I look forward to working together with both the House of Representatives and the Senate to produce a bill for me to sign into law.

NOTE: The statement referred to S. 2611. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this statement.

### **Statement on House of Representatives Action on Energy Legislation**

*May 25, 2006*

I applaud today's vote in the House to allow for environmentally responsible energy exploration in a small part of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. A reliable domestic supply of energy is important to America's security and prosperity. This project will keep our economy growing by creating jobs and ensuring that businesses can expand. And it will make America less dependent on foreign sources of energy, eventually by up to a million barrels of crude oil a day—a nearly 20 percent increase over our current domestic production. I thank the House leadership and Chairman Pombo for their hard work on this issue. I urge the Senate to join the House in passing ANWR legislation.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 5429.

### **Statement on Signing the Coastal Barrier Resources Reauthorization Act of 2005**

*May 25, 2006*

Today I have signed into law S. 1869, the "Coastal Barrier Resources Reauthorization Act of 2005." This Act provides for digital mapping in support of the coastal barrier resources system and authorizes appropriations

through fiscal year 2010 for implementation of the Coastal Barrier Resources Act.

Section 3(c)(2) and section 4(c)(3)(C) and (D) purport to require executive branch officials to submit legislative recommendations to the Congress. The executive branch shall construe such provisions in a manner consistent with the Constitution's commitment to the President of the authority to submit for the consideration of the Congress such measures as the President judges necessary and expedient and to supervise the unitary executive branch.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
May 25, 2006.

### **Proclamation 8025—Black Music Month, 2006**

*May 25, 2006*

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

African-American musicians have added to the rich culture of our country and of countries around the world. During Black Music Month, we recognize the African-American artists who have enhanced our lives and created some of our Nation's most treasured art forms.

Throughout history, African-American artists have produced music with the power to change hearts and shape our national conscience. From gospel to blues, from jazz to rock and roll, the songs of America's black musicians have defined our times and enriched our culture. Performers such as Count Basie and Dizzy Gillespie and vocalists such as Lizzie Miles and gospel singer Mahalia Jackson have made their mark as great American musicians, strengthening our Nation's diversity and lifting the human spirit.

In 2005, Americans witnessed the power of music to help bring our country together. Following the devastation of the Gulf Coast by Hurricane Katrina, the musicians of that great region sought to preserve their unique musical style and culture and share it with the rest of the Nation. The soulful music of New Orleans and the Gulf Coast remains one

of our national treasures, a symbol of creativity and hope.

Black Music Month recognizes some of the brightest lights of American creativity and honors the African-American men and women whose art entertains and inspires us. The incredible talents of black musicians continue to speak to every heart, reflecting the beauty and pride of our great Nation.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 2006 as Black Music Month. I encourage all Americans to learn more about the history of black music and to enjoy the great contributions of African-American musicians.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fifth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., May 30, 2006]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on May 31.

### **The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom**

*May 25, 2006*

**President Bush.** Thank you all. Good evening. I want to thank Prime Minister Tony Blair for coming to Washington to discuss his recent visit to Iraq. The Prime Minister met with key leaders of the new Iraqi Government that represents the will of the Iraqi people and reflects their nation's diversity. As Prime Minister Blair will tell you, Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki outlined an aggressive agenda to bring security to the Iraqi people, to improve electricity and other essential services, and to pursue a strategy for national reconciliation.

The agenda that Prime Minister Maliki has outlined demonstrates that Iraq's new Government understands its duty to deliver real improvements in the daily lives of the Iraqi

people. The formation of a new government represents a new beginning for Iraq and a new beginning for the relationship between Iraq and our coalition. The United States and Great Britain will work together to help this new democracy succeed. We'll take advantage of this moment of opportunity and work with Iraq's new Government to strengthen its young democracy and achieve victory over our common enemies.

As we celebrate this historic moment, it's important to recall how we got there and take stock on how far we've come over the last 3 years. The violence and bloodshed in Iraq has been difficult for the civilized world to comprehend. The United States and Great Britain have lost some of our finest men and women in combat. The car bombings and suicide attacks and other terrorist acts have also inflicted great suffering on the Iraqi people. And Iraqis have increasingly become the principal victims of terror and sectarian reprisal.

Yet in the face of this ongoing violence, each time the Iraqi people voiced their opinion, they chose freedom. In three different elections, millions of Iraqis turned out to the polls and cast their ballots. Because of their courage, the Iraqis now have a government of their choosing, elected under the most modern and democratic Constitution in the Arab world.

The birth of a free and democratic Iraq was made possible by the removal of a cruel dictator. The decision to remove Saddam Hussein from power was controversial. We did not find the weapons of mass destruction that we all believed were there, and that's raised questions about whether the sacrifice in Iraq has been worth it. Despite setbacks and missteps, I strongly believe we did and are doing the right thing. Saddam Hussein was a menace to his people; he was a state sponsor of terror; he invaded his neighbors. Investigations proved he was systematically gaming the Oil-For-Food Programme in an effort to undermine sanctions, with the intent of restarting his weapons programs once the sanctions collapsed and the world looked away. If Saddam Hussein were in power today, his regime would be richer, more dangerous, and a bigger threat to the region and

the civilized world. The decision to remove Saddam Hussein was right.

But not everything since liberation has turned out as the way we had expected or hoped. We've learned from our mistakes, adjusted our methods, and have built on our successes. From changing the way we train the Iraqi security forces to rethinking the way we do reconstruction, our commanders and our diplomats in Iraq are constantly adapting to the realities on the ground. We've adapted our tactics, yet the heart of our strategy remains the same: to support the emergence of a free Iraq that can govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself.

All our efforts over the past 3 years have been aimed towards this goal. This past weekend, the world watched as Iraqis stood up a free and democratic government in the heart of the Middle East. With our help, Iraq will be a powerful force for good in a troubled region and a steadfast ally in the war on terror.

With the emergence of this Government, something fundamental changed in Iraq last weekend. While we can expect more violence in the days and weeks ahead, the terrorists are now fighting a free and constitutional government. They're at war with the people of Iraq, and the Iraqi people are determined to defeat this enemy, and so are Iraq's new leaders, and so are the United States and Great Britain.

It is vital that Iraq's new Government seize this opportunity to heal old wounds and set aside sectarian differences and move forward as one nation. As Prime Minister Maliki has made his priorities clear, we have learned they're the right priorities. He's said he will focus on improving the security situation in Baghdad and other parts of the country. He has declared he will use maximum force to defeat the terrorists. He's vowed to eliminate illegal militias and armed gangs. He wants to accelerate the training of the Iraqi security forces so they can take responsibility from coalition forces for security throughout Iraq. He wants to improve health care and housing and jobs, so the benefits of a free society will reach every Iraqi citizen.

Our coalition will seize this moment as well. I look forward for continued indepth discussions with Tony Blair, so we can de-

velop the best approach in helping the new Iraqi Government achieve its objectives. The new Government of Iraq will have the full support of our two countries and our coalition, and we will work to engage other nations around the world to ensure that constitutional democracy in Iraq succeeds and the terrorists are defeated.

Mr. Prime Minister.

**Prime Minister Blair.** Thank you, Mr. President, and can I say what a pleasure it is to be with you again at the White House. And thank you for your welcome.

As everyone knows, I was in Iraq earlier in this week, in Baghdad. And I was able to discuss with the new leaders of Iraq, firsthand, their experience and their hopes and expectations for the future. And I came away thinking that the challenge is still immense, but I also came away more certain than ever that we should rise to it. And though it is at times daunting, it is also utterly inspiring to see people from all the different parts of the community in Iraq—the Sunni, the Shi'a, the Kurds—sitting down together, all of them democratic leaders—democratically elected by their people—elected for a 4-year term; elected and choosing to come together as a government of national unity, and completely determined to run their country in a different way for the future.

Anybody who studies the program of the Iraqi Government can't fail to see the similarities with the type of program that any of us would want to see for our countries. And what is remarkable about it is that they put the emphasis, of course, on the issues to do with economic recovery and reconstruction and all the problems of infrastructure that they have in their country, but they also very clearly commit themselves to reconciliation between the different parts of the country, to the fight against sectarianism, and to the defeat of terrorism.

And I think what is important now is to say that after 3 years, which have been very, very difficult indeed, and when, at times, it looked impossible for the democratic process to work—I think after these 3 years and the democratic process working and producing this Government, then it is our duty, but it

is also the duty of the whole of the international community, to get behind this Government and support it, because the other thing that came across to me very strongly from talking to them was that the reason there is bloodshed and violence in Iraq is that the very forces that we are confronting everywhere, including in our own countries, who want to destroy our way of life, also want to destroy their hope of having the same type of life. In other words, the very forces that are creating this violence and bloodshed and terrorism in Iraq are those that are doing it in order to destroy the hope of that country and its people to achieve democracy, the rule of law, and liberty.

And I think there is a pattern here for us in the international community. I know the decision to remove Saddam was deeply divisive for the international community, and deeply controversial. And there's no point in rehearsing those arguments over and over again. But whatever people's views about the wisdom of that decision, now that there is a democratic Government in Iraq, elected by its people, and now they are confronted with those whose mission it is to destroy the hope of democracy, then our sense of mission should be equal to that, and we should be determined to help them defeat this terrorism and violence.

And I believe very, very strongly indeed—even more so having talked to the leaders there and now coming back and examining our own situation and how we help—I'm more than ever convinced that what is important for them in Iraq is to know that we will stand firm with them in defeating these forces of reaction.

I believe the same, incidentally, is true of the struggle in Afghanistan, where again, exactly the same forces of terrorism and reaction want to defeat the hopes of people for progress. I would also like to think—and this is something the President and I were discussing earlier—we will carry on discussing over tonight and tomorrow—and that is the importance of trying to unite the international community behind an agenda that means, for example, action on global poverty in Africa and issues like Sudan; it means a good outcome to the world trade round, which is vital for the whole of the civilized

world, vital for developing countries but also vital for countries such as ourselves; for progress in the Middle East; and for ensuring that the global values that people are actually struggling for today in Iraq are global values we take everywhere and fight for everywhere that we can in our world today.

So I would like to pay tribute also to the work that our forces do there. I think both our countries can be immensely proud of their heroism and their commitment and their dedication.

But one very interesting thing happened to me when I was there and talking to some of our Armed Forces and talking, also, to the Iraqi soldiers that were working alongside them, and that is, for all the differences in culture and background and nationality, both of them were working together in a common cause, and that was to help a country that was once a brutalized dictatorship become a country that enjoys the same rights and the same freedoms that we take for granted here and in the United Kingdom. And for all the hardship and the challenge of the past few years, I still think that is a cause worth standing up for.

Thank you, Mr. President.

**President Bush.** Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

### **Timetables for Iraq**

**Q.** Mr. President, Pentagon officials have talked about prospects for reducing American forces in Iraq to about 100,000 by year's end. Does the formation of a unity government in Iraq put you on a sound footing to achieve that number?

And Mr. Prime Minister, is it realistic to think that Iraqi forces will be able to take control of all Iraq by the end of next year as Mr. Maliki suggests?

**President Bush.** First of all, we're going to work with our partners in Iraq, the new Government, to determine the best way forward in achieving an objective, which is an Iraq that can govern itself and sustain itself and defend itself.

I have said to the American people, as the Iraqis stand up, we'll stand down. But I've also said that our commanders on the ground will make that decision. And I have—we'll talk to General Casey once he is—conferred

with the new Government of Iraq. They don't have a defense minister yet; they're in the process of getting a defense minister. So it probably makes a lot of sense for our commander on the ground to wait until their defense structure is set up before we discuss with them, and he with me, the force levels necessary to achieve our objective.

**Q.** So the 100,000—

**President Bush.** That's some speculation in the press that I—they haven't talked to me about. And as the Commander in Chief, they eventually will talk to me about it. But the American people need to know that we'll keep the force level there necessary to win. And it's important for the American people to know that politics isn't going to make the decision as to the size of our force level; the conditions on the ground will make the decision. And part of the conditions on the ground, Terry, is a new government, and we believe the new Government is going to make a big difference in the lives of the Iraqi people.

I told you earlier that when you attack an Iraqi now, you're at war with an Iraqi Government that's constitutionally elected. And that's a different attitude from the way it's been in the past.

**Prime Minister Blair.** I think it's possible for the Iraqi security forces to take control progressively of their country. That's exactly the strategy we've outlined at the beginning. And I think it's possible to happen in the way that Prime Minister Maliki said. For that to happen, obviously, the first thing that we need is a strong government in Baghdad that is prepared to enforce its writ throughout the country. My very strong feeling, having talked to the leaders there, is that they intend theirs to be such a government.

Secondly, what they intend is to come down very hard on those people who want to create the circumstances where it's difficult for the Iraqi forces to be in control. And the truth of the matter is, there is no excuse now for anyone to engage in violence in Iraq. I mean, if people's worry is to do with being excluded from the political process, everybody has got their place in the political process today. And, obviously, there are still issues to do with the capability of the Iraqi forces, but all the time they are building

up, both in number and in capability, and we've got to support that all the way through.

But I'll tell you one interesting thing from talking to all the different groups—because sometimes, certainly in our country, the impression is given that the Iraqi people wish that we were gone from Iraq and weren't there any longer in support of the Iraqi Government or the Iraqi forces. Not a single one of the people I talked to, not one of the political leaders from whatever part of the spectrum, in Iraq, that I talked to—and these are all people from all the different communities elected by their people—not one of them wanted us to pull out precipitately. All of them wanted us to stick with it and see the job done.

Now, of course, they want to take back control of their own country fully, and we want them to do that. But when the Prime Minister Maliki talked about an objective timetable, what he meant was, a timetable governed by conditions on the ground. And we will be working with them now over the coming period of time to see how we can put that framework together. But they have a very, very clear sense of what they want the multinational force to do. They want us there in support until they've got the capability, and then they want us to leave and them to take full charge of their country. And I believe that can happen.

Yes, Adam.

### **United Nations**

**Q.** One gets a clear sense of your mutual relief that a Government has now been formed, an elected Government has been formed in Iraq. But, nonetheless, the current Secretary-General of the United Nations has said that he believes that the invasion of Iraq was probably illegal. When you look at your legacy and you look ahead to the reforms of the United Nations you want to see, are you really saying that what you'd actually like to see is a United Nations which could take preemptive action legally?

**Prime Minister Blair.** I think what we need to do is to recognize that there are threats in our world today that require us to act earlier and more effectively. And I think we can debate the institutional structure within which that should happen in the

United Nations and elsewhere. But I also think that when we look at this global terrorism that we face, there is—to me, at any rate—a very clear link between the terrorism that is afflicting virtually every country in the Western world, either in actuality or potentially, the terrorism that is happening all over different countries of the Middle East and in Asia and elsewhere, and the terrorism that is there in Iraq and Afghanistan.

And one of the things, I think, certainly for our people, they find most difficult to understand is, they will say, “Well, is it—can it be worth everything that we are doing? I mean, it’s such a huge sacrifice that is being made. Can it be worth it?” And I think the answer to that is, it is worth it to those engaged in this violence and terrorism to try to stop us, and we should have the same faith and confidence in our determination to succeed as they have in their determination to make us fail.

And I think that is an issue for the whole of the international community, because I’ve got no doubt at all that if we do succeed, as I believe that we will in Iraq, difficult though it will be, and we succeed in Afghanistan, then the whole of this global terrorism will suffer a defeat. And that’s why I think we need an international community that’s capable of recognizing these problems and acting on them.

**President Bush.** I’d like to see a United Nations that’s effective, one that joins us in trying to rid the world of tyranny; one that is willing to advance human rights and human dignity at its core; one that’s an unabashed organization—is unabashed in their desire to spread freedom. That’s what I’d like to see, because I believe that freedom will yield the peace. I also believe freedom is universal. I don’t believe freedom is just a concept only for America or Great Britain; it’s a universal concept. And it troubles me to know that there are people locked in tyrannical societies that suffer. And the United Nations ought to be clear about its desire to liberate people from the clutches of tyranny. That’s what the United Nations ought to be doing, as far as I’m concerned.

Yes, Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

### **Iran**

**Q.** Thank you, Mr. President. How close are you to an agreement on a package of incentives for Iran? And what does Iran stand to gain if it were to give up its enrichment program? And why are you ignoring these recent back-channel overtures from Iran?

**President Bush.** We spent a great deal of time talking about the Iranian issue, and one of the goals that Tony and I had was to convince others in the world that Iran with a nuclear weapon would be very dangerous, and therefore we do have a common goal. And this fundamental question is, how do you achieve that goal, obviously. We want to do it diplomatically.

Right now we, as a matter of fact, spent a lot of time upstairs talking about how to convince the Iranians that this coalition we put together is very serious. One option, of course, is through the United Nations Security Council. And we strategized about how do we convince other partners that the Security Council is the way to go if the Iranians won’t suspend like the EU-3 has asked them to do. The Iranians walked away from the table. They’re the ones who’ve made the decision, and the choice is theirs. Now, if they would like to see an enhanced package, the first thing they’ve got to do is suspend their operations, for the good of the world. It’s incredibly dangerous to think of an Iran with a nuclear weapon.

And therefore, Steve, to answer your questions, of course, we’ll look at all options, but it’s their choice right now. They’re the folks who walked away from the table. They’re the ones who said that, “Your demands don’t mean anything to us.”

Now, in terms of—you said back channels—

**Q.** Back-channel overtures.

**President Bush.** Well, I read the letter of the President, and I thought it was interesting. It was, like, 16 or 17 single-spaced typed pages of—but he didn’t address the issue of whether or not they’re going to continue to press for a nuclear weapon. That’s the issue at hand.

And so it’s—we have no beef with the Iranian people. As a matter of fact, the United States respects the culture and history of Iran, and we want there to be an Iran that’s

confident and an Iran that answers to the needs of the—we want women in Iran to be free. At the same time, we're going to continue to work with a government that is intransigent, that won't budge. And so we've got to continue to work to convince them that we're serious; that if they want to be isolated from the world, we will work to achieve that.

**Q.** Should this enhanced package include a light-water reactor and a security guarantee?

**President Bush.** Steve, you're responding to press speculation. I've just explained to you that the Iranians walked away from the table, and that I think we ought to be continuing to work on ways to make it clear to them that they will be isolated. And one way to do that is to continue to work together through the United Nations Security—if they suspend and have the IAEA in there making sure that the suspension is real, then, of course, we'll talk about ways forward, incentives.

#### **United Nations/Iran**

**Q.** Prime Minister, you've both talked a little about the U.N. I know that you believe the U.N. needs vigorous leadership, and you're going to pick up on these themes in your speech tomorrow. Is that a job application? And if not—

**President Bush.** Wait a minute. [*Laughter*]

**Q.** —do you both have a sense—do you have someone in mind? And if not, how are you going to get the reform of the U.N. you want to see?

**Prime Minister Blair.** No, no, and I'm not sure—[*laughter*—is the answer to those ones. Look, what we want to do is to make sure that the U.N. is an effective instrument of multilateral action. That's what everyone wants to see. And the fact is, there are multiple problems in the world; they require the international community to respond on a collective basis, but you've got to have an effective set of multilateral institutions to do that. And that's true whether you're tackling global poverty or trying to resolve disputes or, indeed, when you're dealing with issues like Iran.

The whole point about the international community today is that these problems are urgent; they need to be tackled. If they're not tackled, the consequences are very quickly felt around the world, and you've got to have institutions that are capable of taking them on and tackling them and getting action taken.

Now, we were just talking about Iran a moment ago. I mean, we want to have this resolved through the process of the multilateral institutions. There's a way we can do this. I mean, after all, we are the ones saying the Atomic Energy Authority—their duties and obligations they lay upon Iran should be adhered to. And we've got absolutely no quarrel with the Iranian people. The Iranian people are a great people; Iran is a great country. But it needs a government that is going to recognize that part of being a great country is to be in line with your international obligations and to cease supporting those people in different parts of the world who want, by terrorism and violence, to disrupt the process of democracy.

So I think that our position with Iran is a very reasonable one. And we want to see how we can make progress and help them to do the things that we believe that they should do, but they must understand that the will of the international community is sure and is clear, and that is that the obligations that are upon them have got to be adhered to.

**President Bush.** Stretch [Richard Keil, Bloomberg News].

#### **Secretary of the Treasury John W. Snow/ National Economy**

**Q.** Thank you, Mr. President.

**President Bush.** I call him Stretch.

**Q.** And I've been called worse. [*Laughter*] Has Treasury Secretary Snow given you any indication that he intends to leave his job any time soon?

**President Bush.** Secretary of Treasury Snow?

**Q.** Has he given you any indication he intends to leave his job any time soon? And related to that, Americans—macroeconomic numbers are indeed good, but many Americans are concerned, increasingly concerned

about rising health care costs, costs of gasoline. And does that make it hard for your administration, Treasury Secretary Snow, and everyone else to continue to talk up the economy?

**President Bush.** No, he has not talked to me about resignation. I think he's doing a fine job. After all, our economy is—it's strong. We grew at 3.5 percent last year; a good, strong first quarter this year. We added five—2.5 million new jobs; we've got 4.7 percent unemployment rate nationwide. Productivity is up; homeownership is high; small businesses are doing well. He's done a fine job.

And our—obviously, people are concerned about rising fuel prices—all the more reason to get off oil and to promote alternatives, such as ethanol or battery technologies that will enable us to drive the first 40 miles on electricity. We're spending about \$1.2 billion over the next 10 years to develop hydrogen fuel cells. We want—we need to get away from hydrocarbons here in America for economic security, for national security, and for environmental reasons as well.

One way we could help alleviate gasoline prices here in America is for the Congress to pass some regulatory relief so we can actually expand refining capacity. We haven't built a new refinery here since the 1970s. And curiously enough, when demand for a product goes up with tight supply, price follows. And so we put out some logical ways for Congress to work with the administration to relieve price pressures on gasoline.

As far as health care goes, there are some practical ways to deal with health care costs, and one of the most practical ways is to get rid of these junk lawsuits that are running good doctors out of practice and running up the price of medicine. Passed it out of the House; they can't get it out of the Senate because the lawyers won't let it out. But we put forth a commonsense practice to deal with rising health care costs as well.

### **Progress in Iraq**

**Q.** You both presented the Iraqi Government as a substantial vindication of the conflict. Do you also accept, as a matter of harsh political reality, that the Iraq conflict has also left both of you politically weakened and,

whether justly or unjustly, less able to give the kind of moral leadership that you're discussing today?

**President Bush.** No question that the Iraq war has created a sense of consternation here in America. I mean, when you turn on your TV screen and see innocent people die, day in and day out, it affects the mentality of our country.

But here's what they're asking in America; they're asking, "Can we win?" That's what they want to know. Do we have a strategy for victory? And so the talk about the unity Government—you might remember, there was some—a lot of speculation as to whether there would even be a unity government. A couple of months ago, people were saying, "Well, they can't even get a unity government going." But we have a unity government—a Kurd President, a Prime Minister who is a Shi'a, a Speaker who is a Sunni. These are strong leaders. It's an indication that progress is being made.

Part of progress, of course, is on the political track. You know, we had elections in Iraq; 12 million people voted last December. Now, it seems like an eternity ago, I know, like a decade. But that's not all that long ago in the larger scope of things. Twelve million people said, we want to be free. It was an astounding moment. And this unity Government is now formed as a result of those elections, under a Constitution approved by the Iraqi people. That's progress. It's certainly a far sight from the days of a tyrant who killed hundreds of thousands of his own people and used weapons of mass destruction and threatened the neighborhood. I mean, that is progress.

No question, however, that the suicides and the killers and the IEDs and the deaths have an effect on the American people. But one of the reasons that I appreciate Tony coming is that he brings a fresh perspective of what he saw. And the American people need to know, we are making progress toward a goal of an Iraq that can defend itself, sustain itself, and govern itself; that will deny the terrorists a safe haven.

You know, Al Qaida has made it clear what their intentions are in Iraq. I'm sure you've read some of the intercepts that are laid out there for people to see. And they have made

it clear that it's just a matter of time for countries like Great Britain and the United States to leave. In other words, if they make life miserable enough, we'll leave. And they want us to leave because they want a safe haven from which to launch attacks, not only on us but on moderate Muslim governments as well. These people are totalitarians. They're Islamic fascists. They have a point of view; they have a philosophy; and they want to impose that philosophy on the rest of the world. And Iraq just happens to be a—one of the battles in the war on terror.

And Tony brings up a good point: Why are they resisting so hard; what is it about democracy they can't stand? Well, what they can't stand about democracy is this: Democracy is the exact opposite of what they believe. They believe they can impose their will; they believe there's no freedom of religion; they believe there's no women's rights. They have a dark vision of the world, and that's why they're resisting so mightily.

So yes, I can understand why the American people are troubled by the war in Iraq. I understand that. But I also believe the sacrifice is worth it and is necessary. And I believe a free Iraq is not only going to make ourselves more secure, but it's going to serve as a powerful example in the Middle East.

You know, foreign policy, for awhile, just basically said, if it seems okay on the surface, just let it be. And guess what happened? There was resentment and hatred that enabled these totalitarians to recruit and to kill, which they want to continue to do to achieve their objectives. And the best way to defeat them in the long run is through the spread of liberty.

And liberty has had the capacity to change enemies to allies. Liberty has had the capacity to help Europe become whole, free, and at peace. History has proven that freedom has got the capacity to change the world for the better, and that's what you're seeing.

You know, the amazing thing about dealing with Prime Minister Blair, has never once has he said to me on the phone, we better change our tactics because of the political opinion polls. And I appreciate that steadfast leadership. And I appreciate somebody who has got a vision, a shared vision for how to

not only protect ourselves in the war on terror but how to make the world a better place.

**Prime Minister Blair.** I don't really think it's a matter of our vindication. I think, in a way, that's the least important part of it. But I do think that occasionally, we should just take a step back and ask, why are we doing this? Why is it so important?

Saddam was removed from power 3 years ago. Since then, incidentally, our forces have been there with the United Nations mandate and with the consent of the Iraqi Government itself—the Iraqi Government becoming progressively more the product of direct democracy.

So whatever people thought about removing Saddam—you agree with it, you didn't agree with it—for these last 3 years, the issue in Iraq has not been, these people are here without any international support, because we haven't had any United Nations resolution governing our presence there. The issue is not, you're there, but the Iraqi people don't want you there, because the Iraqi Government and now this directly-elected Iraqi Government has said they want us to stay until the job is done.

So why is it that for 3 years, we have had this violence and bloodshed? Now, people have tried to say it's because the Iraqi people—you people, you don't understand; you went in with this Western concept of democracy, and you didn't understand that their whole culture was different; they weren't interested in these types of freedom. These people have gone out and voted—a higher turnout, I have to say—I'm afraid to say, I think, than either your election or mine. These people have gone out and voted—

**President Bush.** Depends on which one—2000 or 2004? [Laughter]

**Prime Minister Blair.** I think both of them.

**President Bush.** I think you're right. [Laughter]

**Prime Minister Blair.** They have gone out and voted despite terrorism, despite bloodshed, despite literally the prospect of death for exercising their democratic right. So they have kept faith with the very democratic values that we say we believe in, and the people trying to wrest that democracy

from them are opposed to absolutely everything we stand for and everything the Iraqi people stand for.

So what do we do in response to this? And the problem we have is very, very simple. A large part of the perspective with which we look at this is to see every act of terrorism in Iraq, every piece of ghastly carnage on our television screens, every tragic loss of our own forces—we see that as a setback and as a failure, when we should be seeing that as a renewed urgency for us to rise to the challenge of defeating these people who are committing this carnage. Because over these past 3 years, at every stage, the reason they have been fighting is not, as we can see, because Iraqi people don't believe in democracy; Iraqi people don't want liberty. It is precisely because they fear Iraqi people do want democracy; Iraqi people do want liberty.

And if the idea became implanted in the minds of people in the Arab and Muslim world that democracy was as much their right as our right, where do these terrorists go? What do they do? How do they recruit? How do they say, America is the evil Satan? How do they say the purpose of the West is to spoil your lands, wreck your religion, take your wealth? How can they say that? They can't say that.

So these people who are fighting us there know what is at stake. The question is, do we?

**President Bush.** Must say, that was a great answer. [*Laughter*]

**Prime Minister Blair.** Yours was pretty good too. [*Laughter*]

**Q.** You have your chance now. [*Laughter*]

**President Bush.** Another chance; good. Well, thank you, Martha [Martha Raddatz, ABC News].

### **Troop Levels in Iraq**

**Q.** Mr. President, you have said time and time again, and again tonight, when Iraqi forces stand up, coalition forces can start standing down.

**President Bush.** Right.

**Q.** But the fact is, you have been standing up Iraqi forces in great numbers. The administration says you have hundreds of thousand trained and equipped, tens of thousand leading the fight. And yet during the same period

they've been standing up, there has not been a substantial decrease in U.S. and coalition forces. So what does that tell us about how meaningful the figures are on Iraqi troops? And what does that tell us about a potential for a drawdown?

**President Bush.** It tells you that the commanders on the ground are going to make the decision, that's what that tells you. And when they feel comfortable in recommending to me fewer troops, I will accept that. But they're going to make that recommendation based upon the conditions on the ground. I know I keep saying that, and it probably bores you that I keep giving the same answer, but I haven't changed my opinion.

I talk to our commanders all the time. They feel strongly that the Iraqi Army is getting better. It's hard to have a command and control system with an Iraqi Army when you don't have a defense minister. And so Mr. Maliki is going to have to pick one soon. And then our commanders will gauge as to whether or not the command and control structure is sufficient to be able to enable the Iraqis to take more of the fight. They are taking more of the fight, by the way. They're in more provinces than ever before. They're taking over more territory. They're taking over more missions. There are some gaps that we need to continue to work on to fill. The transportation issue is going to need to be dealt with over time.

All I can report to you is what General Casey—in whom I have got a lot of confidence—tells me, and that is, the Iraqis are becoming better and better fighters. And at some point in time, when he feels like the Government is ready to take on more responsibility and the Iraqi forces are able to help them do so, he will get on the telephone with me and say, “Mr. President, I think we can do this with fewer troops.” We've been up to 165,000 at one point; we're at about 135,000 now.

**Q.** [*Inaudible*]

**President Bush.** Hold on for a second. Actually, he moved some additional troops from Kuwait into Baghdad. Conditions on the ground were such that we needed more support in Baghdad, to secure Baghdad, so he informed me, through Donald Rumsfeld,

that he wanted to move troops out of Kuwait into Baghdad.

So these commanders—they need to have flexibility in order to achieve the objective. You don't want politicians making decisions based upon politics. You want the Commander in Chief making decisions based upon what the military thinks is the right way to achieve the objective. I've set the objective; it's clear for everybody—a country that can sustain itself, defend itself, and govern itself. And we're making progress on all fronts. But as to how many troops we have there will depend upon the generals and their commanders saying, "This is what we need to do the job, Mr. President." And that's the way it's going to be so long as I'm standing here as the Commander in Chief, which is 2½ more years.

**Prime Minister Blair.** I spoke to General Casey and to our own General Fry in Baghdad on Monday. We sat down and talked this very issue through. And I think what you will find is that progressively, there will be more and more parts of Iraq that are policed by the Iraqi security forces themselves, and their capability is improving. But I also think you will find, probably over the next few months, there will be a real attempt by the antidemocratic forces to test them very, very strongly. And remember, a lot of the attacks are now happening not on the multinational force, although those attacks continue, of course, but actually on the Iraqi forces themselves, on their police, on their army, and so on. And the purpose, of course, of that is to deter them from the very buildup of capability that we want to see.

But over the course of the next few months, you will see progressively those provinces in Iraq coming under Iraqi control, and then, of course, it will be for the Iraqis to sort out that responsibility.

**President Bush.** One thing, Martha, is that we want to make sure we complete the mission, that we achieve our objective. A loss in Iraq would make this world an incredibly dangerous place. Remember, there is not only sectarian violence, a hangover from Saddam's era, but there is an Al Qaida presence in the form of Zarqawi, who wants to sow as much havoc as possible to cause us to leave before the mission is complete.

Listen, I want our troops out; don't get me wrong. I understand what it means to have troops in harm's way. And I know there's a lot of families making huge sacrifices here in America. I'll be going to a Memorial Day ceremony next Monday, paying tribute to those who have lost their life. I'm sure I will see families of the fallen. I fully understand the pressures being placed upon our military and their families. But I also understand that it is vital that we do the job; that we complete the mission. And it has been tough. It's been really tough, because we're fighting an unconventional enemy that is willing to kill innocent people. There are no rules of war for these people. But make no mistake about it, what you're seeing in Iraq could happen all over the world if we don't stand fast and achieve the objective.

No, I had the followup answer; you can't have a followup question. Nice try, though.

#### **Prime Minister Tony Blair**

**Q.** Prime Minister, this is possibly your last official visit to Washington as Prime Minister—

**President Bush.** Wait a minute. [*Laughter*] Back-to-back disses.

**Q.** At least the beginning of the end of your particular special relationship. Will you miss the President? What will you miss about him? [*Laughter*]

And for the President, what will you miss about Tony Blair, and what are you looking for in an eventual replacement?

**President Bush.** I'll miss those red ties, is what I'll miss. [*Laughter*] I'll say one thing—he can answer the question—don't count him out; let me tell it to you that way. I know a man of resolve and vision and courage. And my attitude is, I want him to be here so long as I'm the President.

**Prime Minister Blair.** Well, what more can I say? [*Laughter*] Probably not wise to say anything more at all. [*Laughter*]

You guys, come on, I want you to—the British delegation, ask a few serious questions. [*Laughter*]

**President Bush.** Right.

**Prime Minister Blair.** Or we'll go on to one of you guys. [*Laughter*]

**President Bush.** Plante [Bill Plante, CBS News].

**Iraq**

**Q.** Perhaps I can change the mood. Mr. President, you talk about setting the objective. But our people, my colleagues on the ground in Iraq, say that when they talk to American troops, the rank and file, they say they don't believe that they've had enough to do the job. They say further that while the Iraqi Army may be improving, there is absolutely no way to depend upon the police, who they say are corrupt and aligned with militias. All of this going on—what reason is there to believe that the new Government can do any better with these people than we've been able to do so far?

**President Bush.** There are several tracks, Bill. One is the political track. I think it's very important for the Iraqi people to have a government that has been elected under a Constitution they approved. In other words, the political track has been a vital part of having a country that can govern itself and defend itself.

There's a security track. And there's no question that there are a lot of Iraqis trained to fight, and many of them are good fighters—117,000 have been trained and equipped. There needs to be more equipment; no question about that. The Iraqis—I think if you were to get a—at least the assessment I get, is that the Iraqi Army is moving well along and they're taking more and more of the territory over in order to defend their country.

No question we've got a lot of work to do on the police. General Casey has said publicly that year 2006 is the year that we'll train the police up and running. Perhaps the place where there needs to be the most effective police force is in Baghdad. I just told you, we're moving more troops in. There's a—General Casey met today with the Prime Minister to talk about how to secure Baghdad. It's really important that Baghdad—that capital city become more secure. And there's plans to deal with the contingencies on the ground. All I can tell you is, is that we're making progress toward the goal.

**Prime Minister Blair.** Can I just—and I'd like to say something, again, out of the discussions I had on Monday. I think that what is important is, try and get a sense of balance in this. Look, it would be completely

foolish for us to say, there are no problems with either the police or the army; you've got a full force capability in the way that we want. And nobody is actually saying that.

It would also be wrong to turn it around the other way, though, even in respect to the police. I had quite a detailed discussion, not, in fact, with the generals, but some of the ordinary soldiers who—British soldiers there, up in Baghdad, and also with some of the people who are working with the police at the moment. And what they said to me is, yes, there are real problems to do with corruption in parts of the police force, but actually, there is also another side to it, which there are people who are really dedicated and really committed to a nonsectarian Iraq, who also are playing their part.

Now I think the whole question is whether this new Government can then grip this in the way, in a sense, that only they can. You see, I think this is where, inevitably, over time, we have to transfer responsibility. And that is, of course, what we wish to do, and part of that is because it is easier for an Iraqi interior minister who is the product of an Iraqi-elected Government, to go in and take the really tough measure sometimes that is necessary to sort some of these issues out.

But I can assure you of two things: First of all, there is another, more positive side to the Iraqi forces—both the army and in parts of the police as well; and secondly, the Iraqi Government knows that this is the absolute prerequisite of success for them. It's just—one of the ministers said to me, he said, "You should understand, our State was a completely failed state." The police—people didn't go to the police in Iraq if they had a problem under Saddam. They had a problem if they were in contact with the police because of the way the State was run.

And so you're talking about literally building the institutions of a state from scratch. And I don't think it's, in one sense, very surprising that it is both difficult and taking time. But I think that they do know that this is of vital importance for them to succeed. And I think you may find that it is easier for Iraqis to do this themselves and take some of these measures necessary, than it is for us, although we would be there, obviously, in support of what they're doing.

**Lessons Learned in the War on Terror**

**Q.** Mr. President, you spoke about missteps and mistakes in Iraq. Could I ask both of you which missteps and mistakes of your own you most regret?

**President Bush.** Sounds like kind of a familiar refrain here—saying “bring it on,” kind of tough talk, you know, that sent the wrong signal to people. I learned some lessons about expressing myself maybe in a little more sophisticated manner—you know, “wanted dead or alive,” that kind of talk. I think in certain parts of the world it was misinterpreted, and so I learned from that. And I think the biggest mistake that’s happened so far, at least from our country’s involvement in Iraq, is Abu Ghraib. We’ve been paying for that for a long period of time. And it’s—unlike Iraq, however, under Saddam, the people who committed those acts were brought to justice. They’ve been given a fair trial and tried and convicted.

**Prime Minister Blair.** I think inevitably, some of the things that we thought were going to be the biggest challenge proved not to be, and some of the things we didn’t expect to be challenges at all proved to be immense. I think that probably in retrospect—though at the time it was very difficult to argue this—we could have done the de-Baathification in a more differentiated way than we did.

I think that the most difficult thing, however, has been the determination of people to move against the democratic process in Iraq in a way that, I think—as I was saying a moment or two ago—indicates our opponents’ very clear view from a very early stage that they have to stop the democratic process working. And I think it’s easy to go back over mistakes that we may have made, but the biggest reason why Iraq has been difficult is the determination of our opponents to defeat us. And I don’t think we should be surprised at that.

Maybe in retrospect, when we look back, it should have been very obvious to us, and is obvious still in Afghanistan, that for them, it is very clear. You know, they can’t afford to have these countries turned round, and I think that probably, there was a whole series of things in Iraq that were bound to come out once you got Al Qaida and other

groups operating in there to cause maximum destruction and damage. And therefore, I’m afraid in the end, we’re always going to have to be prepared for the fall of Saddam not to be the rise of democratic Iraq; that it was going to be a more difficult process.

**President Bush.** Mr. Prime Minister, can I buy you dinner?

**Prime Minister Blair.** Certainly.

NOTE: The President’s news conference began at 7:31 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, former President Saddam Hussein, President Jalal Talabani, and Speaker of the Council of Representatives Mahmoud al-Mashhadani of Iraq; Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran; and senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi. Prime Minister Blair referred to Lt. Gen. Sir Robert Fry, the Royal Marines, deputy commander, Multi-National Force—Iraq. A reporter referred to Secretary-General Kofi Annan of the United Nations.

### **Memorandum on Assignment of Certain Functions Relating to the Global War on Terror**

*May 25, 2006*

*Memorandum for the Secretary of State and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget*

*Subject:* Assignment of Certain Functions Relating to the Global War on Terror

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and laws of the United States, including section 301 of title 3, United States Code, the functions of the President under the heading “Peacekeeping Operations” in chapter 2 of title II in Division A of the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief, 2005 (Public Law 109–13) are assigned to the Secretary of State. The Secretary should consult the Director of the Office of Management and Budget as appropriate in the performance of such functions.

The Secretary of State is authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

**George W. Bush**

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 26. An original was not available for verification of the content of this memorandum.

**Statement on Senate Confirmation of Michael V. Hayden To Be Director of the Central Intelligence Agency**

*May 26, 2006*

I commend the Senate for confirming Michael Hayden as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency by a bipartisan majority. Winning the war on terror requires that America have the best intelligence possible, and his strong leadership will ensure that we do. General Hayden is a patriot and a dedicated public servant whose broad experience, dedication, and expertise make him the right person to lead the CIA at this critical time. I look forward to working with Ambassador Negroponte, General Hayden, and the other leaders of our intelligence community as we continue to address the challenges and threats we face in the 21st century. I congratulate General Hayden and his family on his confirmation and thank him for his continued service to our Nation.

**Statement on Senate Confirmation of Brett M. Kavanaugh To Be a United States Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia**

*May 26, 2006*

I applaud the Senate's vote to confirm Brett Kavanaugh to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. Brett Kavanaugh is superbly qualified for the Court of Appeals and will be a brilliant, thoughtful, and fair-minded judge. I appreciate his distinguished service in the executive branch for the last 5 years, as Associate Counsel and then Senior Associate Counsel to the President, and since July 2003 in the vital role of Staff Secretary. I congratulate

Brett and his family on today's confirmation and thank him for his continued service to the law and our Nation.

**Statement on Senate Confirmation of Dirk Kempthorne To Be the Secretary of the Interior**

*May 26, 2006*

I applaud the Senate for confirming Dirk Kempthorne as Secretary of the Interior. Dirk has an abiding love of nature and the outdoors and is dedicated to conserving our natural resources. He will continue my administration's efforts to effectively manage our national parks, support historic and cultural sites through our Preserve America Initiative, and pursue environmentally responsible energy development on Federal lands and waters. He will also work to maintain good relations with Native American tribes and will play a leadership role in my cooperative conservation approach to environmental stewardship. I congratulate Dirk and his family on today's confirmation and thank him for his continued service to our Nation.

**Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom**

*May 26, 2006*

The United States has no closer ally than the United Kingdom. U.S. and U.K. forces are fighting terror in Afghanistan, Iraq, and around the globe. The Prime Minister and the President discussed ways to strengthen defense cooperation.

The two leaders are pleased to announce that the United States and United Kingdom recently signed an agreement that allows appropriately cleared British and U.S. personnel to use the same computer network to access military and intelligence information and other planning tools to support joint military operations in the defense of freedom.

Additionally, the leaders recognize that as American and British soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines are right now standing together in harm's way, we must plan for the

future capabilities that will enhance our ability to cooperate. Both governments agree that the UK will have the ability to successfully operate, upgrade, employ, and maintain the Joint Strike Fighter such that the UK retains operational sovereignty over the aircraft. Further, both governments agree to protect sensitive technologies found within the Joint Strike Fighter program. Together, we are working out the details, while remaining committed to these principles.

Finally, the President and Prime Minister have a shared view that we need to continue to strengthen and deepen the relationship between our defense establishments to achieve fully interoperable forces and to leverage the respective strengths of U.S. and U.K. industries. The Prime Minister and President look forward to new ways we can achieve that goal.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

### **Memorandum on Assignment of Certain Functions Related to the Use of Cooperative Threat Reduction Funds for States Outside the Former Soviet Union**

*May 26, 2006*

*Memorandum for the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Energy, and the Director of National Intelligence*

*Subject: Assignment of Certain Functions Related to the Use of Cooperative Threat Reduction Funds for States Outside the Former Soviet Union*

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and laws of the United States, including section 301 of title 3, United States Code, I hereby assign to the Secretary of State the functions of the President under:

(1) subsection 1203(d) of the Cooperative Threat Reduction Act of 1993 (22 U.S.C. 5952(d)), as it relates to section 1308(e) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1994 (22 U.S.C. 5963);

(2) subsections 1306(a) and (b) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003 (Public Law 107-314), as amend-

ed (22 U.S.C. 5952 note), as they relate to section 1308(e); and

(3) section 1304 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 (Public Law 109-163).

The Secretary of State shall consult the Secretary of Defense prior to making a determination specified in section 1308(a)(2).

The Secretary of State is authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

**George W. Bush**

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this memorandum.

---

### **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.

---

#### **May 20**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

#### **May 21**

In the afternoon, the President had a telephone conversation with Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans to congratulate him on his election victory.

#### **May 22**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Chicago, IL, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteers Barry and Tanya Jeong.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

#### **May 23**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the evening, the President had a working dinner with Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel.

The White House announced that the President will welcome Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom to the White House on May 25.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Manuel Zelaya Rosales of Honduras to the White House on June 5.

The President announced his intention to nominate Richard E. Hoagland to be Ambassador to Armenia.

The President announced his intention to nominate Clifford M. Sobel to be Ambassador to Brazil.

The President announced his designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to attend the Inauguration of President Ahmed Abdallah Mohamed Sambi of Comoros on May 26: Frederick W. Schieck (head of delegation); and James David McGee.

#### **May 24**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Rose Garden, he participated in a photo opportunity with members of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Pottstown, PA, where he participated in a tour of the Limerick Generating Station. Later, at the Saratoga Court Elder Care Center, he greeted residents of Pottstown. He then traveled to Philadelphia, PA, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Reggie Waller.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President and Mrs. Bush will welcome Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan to the White House on June 29.

The President announced his intention to nominate Robert O. Blake, Jr., to be Ambassador to Sri Lanka.

The President announced his intention to nominate Elizabeth Dougherty to be a member of the National Mediation Board.

The President announced his intention to nominate Patrick W. Dunne to be Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs for Policy and Planning.

The President announced his appointment of Karl Zinsmeister as Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy.

#### **May 25**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, on the South Lawn, the President participated in an arrival ceremony for Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Paul Kagame of Rwanda to the White House on May 31.

The President declared a major disaster in Maine and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding beginning on May 13 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in Massachusetts and ordered Federal aid to supplement Commonwealth and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding beginning on May 12 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in New Hampshire and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding beginning on May 12 and continuing.

#### **May 26**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Camp David, MD.

The White House announced that the President will welcome Prime Minister Stephen J. Harper of Canada to the White House on July 6.

---

## **Nominations Submitted to the Senate**

---

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

---

### ***Submitted May 23***

Richard E. Hoagland, of the District of Columbia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Armenia.

Clifford M. Sobel, of New Jersey, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Federative Republic of Brazil.

### ***Submitted May 24***

Patrick W. Dunne, of New York, to be an Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs (Policy and Planning), vice Claude M. Kicklighter, resigned.

### ***Submitted May 25***

Anna Blackburne-Rigsby, of the District of Columbia, to be Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals for the term of 15 years, vice Frank Ernest Schwelb, retiring.

Robert O. Blake, Jr., of Maryland, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Maldives.

Elizabeth Dougherty, of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the National Mediation Board for a term expiring July 1, 2009, vice Read Van de Water, term expiring.

Phyllis D. Thompson, of the District of Columbia, to be Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals for the term of 15 years, vice John A. Terry, retired.

---

## **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 May 22***

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Tony Snow

### ***Released May 23***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Tony Snow

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of British Prime Minister Tony Blair

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit by President Zelaya of Honduras

### ***Released May 24***

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Tony Snow

Statement by the Press Secretary: Official Visit of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan

Fact sheet: The Advanced Energy Initiative: Ensuring A Clean, Secure Energy Future

### ***Released May 25***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Tony Snow

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit by President Kagame of Rwanda

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Maine

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Massachusetts

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to New Hampshire

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S. 1165 and S. 1869

***Released May 26***

Statement by the Press Secretary congratulating the Government of Nigeria on supporting democracy by calling for national elections in 2007

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit by Prime Minister Harper of Canada

---

**Acts Approved  
by the President**

---

***Approved May 25***

S. 1165 / Public Law 109–225  
James Campbell National Wildlife Refuge  
Expansion Act of 2005

S. 1869 / Public Law 109–226  
Coastal Barrier Resources Reauthorization  
Act of 2005