AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

NOTE: The interview began taping at 11:35 a.m. in the Oval Office and continued on the Colonnade and in the Map Room at the White House, for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to President Mahmud Ahmadi-nejad of Iran; Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, President Jalal Talabani, and Vice Presidents Adil Abd Al-Mahdi and Tariq al-Hashimi of Iraq; Parliament Member Sa'ad Hariri and Prime Minister Fuad Siniora of Lebanon; President Bashar al-Asad of Syria; Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel; President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) and Prime Minister Salam Fayyad of the Palestinian Authority; and King Abdallah of Saudi Arabia. Portions of Mr. Nakouzi's remarks were in Arabic, and an English translation was provided. This transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 5. A tape was not available for verification of this interview.

Remarks on the National Economy and Homeland Security

October 5, 2007

I want to thank members of my economic team for coming into the Oval Office this morning to bring some good news here for America's families and America's working people. The—last month, our economy added 110,000 new jobs. And that's good news for people here in our country. It's an indicator that this economy is a vibrant and strong economy.

The folks briefed me on the fact that they are—numbers for July and August were revised—the job numbers, job creation numbers. And this economy added 118,000 new jobs in July and August as well. This means—with these revisions, it means that we've had 49 consecutive months of job creation. And that's the longest uninterrupted job growth on record for our country.

You know, I am really pleased with the economic news, but I don't take good news for granted. I understand people are worried about their mortgage payments or concerned about sending their child to college. I know that people are concerned whether or not they're going to have enough money to meet their needs. And so my call to the United States Congress is, keep taxes low. If you want this economy continue to grow and if you want to reinforce the fact that we've got—entrepreneurship is strong and people are working, don't raise taxes.

And I'm looking forward to working with the Congress to set priorities on how we spend the people's money. But I also am going to make it very clear to people in Congress that we're not going to raise the taxes on the working people.

And so I'm real pleased. I thank you all for coming in to bring this good news to me. It's—this good news is a real tribute to the hard-working Americans, the people out there working hard to put food on the table. And it's a tribute to the entrepreneurial spirit of the country.

I want to say something else. There's been a lot of talk in the newspapers and on TV about a program that I put in motion to detain and question terrorists and extremists. I have put this program in place for a reason, and that is to better protect the American people. And when we find somebody who may have information regarding an—a potential attack on America, you bet we're going to detain them, and you bet we're going to question them, because the American people expect us to find out information, actionable intelligence so we can help them, help protect them. That's our job.

Secondly, this Government does not torture people. You know, we stick to U.S. law and our international obligations.

Thirdly, there are highly trained professionals questioning these extremists and terrorists. In other words, we got professionals who are trained in this kind of work to get information that will protect the American people. And by the way, we have gotten information from these high-value detainees that have helped protect you.

And finally, the techniques that we use have been fully disclosed to appropriate Members of the United States Congress. The American people expect their Government to take action to protect them from further attack. And that's exactly what this Government is doing, and that's exactly what we'll continue to do.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:54 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

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.

September 29

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

October 1

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Fort Myer, VA.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

October 2

In the morning, the President had breakfast with Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Christopher R. Hill, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Eric S. Edelman, White House Chief of Staff Joshua B. Bolten, and National Security Adviser Stephen J. Hadley to discuss the six-party talks. Later, he had an intelligence briefing. Then, in the Oval Office, he met with President Jalal Talabani of Iraq.

The President declared a major disaster in Texas and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Tropical Storm Erin from August 14–20.

October 3

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Lancaster, PA, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Kennedy Kulish.

In the afternoon, the President met with family members of a soldier killed in the war on terror. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

October 4

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

The President announced the designation of the following individuals as members of the Presidential delegation to attend the Vilnius Energy Security Conference on October 10–11 in Vilnius, Lithuania: Jeffrey Clay Sell (head of delegation); John A. Cloud; and Karen Alderman Harbert.

October 5

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the evening, at the Hay-Adams Hotel, the President and Mrs. Bush attended a reception to celebrate the publication of Jenna Bush's book, "Ana's Story: A Journey of Hope."

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia to the White House on October 18.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Joseph Kabila of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the White House on October 26.

The President announced his intention to nominate Gus P. Coldebella as General Counsel at the Department of Homeland Security.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

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

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.