

Florida; Harvey Waite, husband of Representative Ginny Brown-Waite of Florida; Jim MacDougald, finance cochairman, Florida Victory 2006; and Mayor Richard T. Crotty of Orange County, FL. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

February 18, 2006

Good morning. This coming week, I will visit Wisconsin, Michigan, and Colorado to discuss our strategy to ensure that America has affordable, reliable, and secure sources of energy. The best way to meet our growing energy needs is through advances in technology. So in my State of the Union Address, I announced the Advanced Energy Initiative. We will pursue promising technologies that will transform how we power our vehicles, businesses, and homes so we can reduce our Nation's dependence on foreign sources of energy.

This morning, I want to speak to you about one part of this initiative: Our plans to expand the use of safe and clean nuclear power. Nuclear power generates large amounts of low-cost electricity without emitting air pollution or greenhouse gases. Yet nuclear power now produces only about 20 percent of America's electricity. It has the potential to play an even greater role. For example, over the past three decades, France has built 58 nuclear powerplants and now gets more than 78 percent of its electricity from nuclear power. Yet here in America, we have not ordered a new nuclear powerplant since the 1970s. So last summer, I signed energy legislation that offered incentives to encourage the building of new nuclear plants in America. Our goal is to start the construction of new nuclear powerplants by the end of this decade.

As America and other nations build more nuclear powerplants, we must work together to address two challenges: We must dispose of nuclear waste safely, and we must keep nuclear technology and material out of the hands of terrorist networks and terrorist states.

To meet these challenges, my administration has announced a bold new proposal called the Global Nuclear Energy Partner-

ship. Under this partnership, America will work with nations that have advanced civilian nuclear energy programs, such as France, Japan, and Russia. Together, we will develop and deploy innovative, advanced reactors and new methods to recycle spent nuclear fuel. This will allow us to produce more energy while dramatically reducing the amount of nuclear waste and eliminating the nuclear by-products that unstable regimes or terrorists could use to make weapons.

As these technologies are developed, we will work with our partners to help developing countries meet their growing energy needs by providing them with small-scale reactors that will be secure and cost-effective. We will also ensure that these developing nations have a reliable nuclear fuel supply. In exchange, these countries would agree to use nuclear power only for civilian purposes and forego uranium enrichment and reprocessing activities that can be used to develop nuclear weapons. My new budget includes \$250 million to launch this initiative. By working with other nations under the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership, we can provide the cheap, safe, and clean energy that growing economies need while reducing the risk of nuclear proliferation.

As we expand our use of nuclear power, we're also pursuing a broader strategy to meet our energy needs. We're investing in technologies like solar and wind power and clean coal to power our homes and businesses. We're also investing in new car technologies like plug-in hybrid cars and in alternative fuels for automobiles like ethanol and biodiesel.

Transforming our energy supply will demand creativity and determination, and America has these qualities in abundance. Our Nation will continue to lead the world in innovation and technology. And by building a global partnership to spread the benefits of nuclear power, we'll create a safer, cleaner, and more prosperous world for future generations.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:37 a.m. on February 17 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 18. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 17 but

was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks on Energy in Milwaukee, Wisconsin

February 20, 2006

John, thanks. Thanks for letting me come by to say hello. [Laughter] I've got something on my mind I want to share with you. First, Happy President's Day. It turns out most folks in Washington don't work on President's Day. [Laughter] The only one working is the President. [Laughter]

I want to talk to you about the fact that I think we're in an important moment in history and that we have a chance to transform the way we power our economy and how we lead our lives. That's what I'm here to talk about. It's a good place to come to talk about it because the truth of the matter is, in order to seize the moment, this country has got to remain technologically advanced.

Johnson Controls has been on the cutting edge of energy technology and other technologies for more than a century. And the innovators that work here and the smart folks who work here are on the leading edge of change, and that's why I've come. And there's a role for Government to help, and I want to explain that role. Before I do, again, I want to thank you, John. I want to thank all the folks who work for Johnson Controls. It's not easy to host the President. [Laughter]

I had the honor of touring the laboratory on the other side of town there, and it was really neat to see the engineers and the scientists and the Ph.D.s all working hard to apply their God-given talents to help this country remain on the leading edge of technology. It reminded me of one of the challenges we have in America, and that's to make sure a new generation of our citizens are interested in science and engineering and physics. And part of making sure this country is the leader in the world, we've got to make sure our children are properly educated so they'll be ready for the jobs of the 21st century.

I want to thank Congresswoman Gwen Moore for joining us; I appreciate you coming, nice to see you. They tell me this is your

congressional district, so it's awfully kind of you to let two other Congresspersons join us—that would be Congressman Mark Green and Congressman Paul Ryan. Thank you both for coming. We have eaten a lot of custard in the past. [Laughter] I'm still recovering, I want you to know. [Laughter]

I want to thank the speaker of the house who has joined us. The mayor of the great city of Milwaukee has joined us, and the county executive has joined us. Thank you all for coming; proud you're here.

By the way, it's always important, if any of you ever run for office, to always remember to recognize the sheriff. [Laughter] Sheriff Clarke, thank you for being here. Good to see you again. Thank you.

Our economy is strong. It's gaining steam too. We're now in our fifth year of uninterrupted economic growth. Last year our economy grew at a healthy rate of 3.5 percent, in spite of high energy prices and devastating storms. Real after-tax income is up nearly 8 percent per American since 2001. And that's one of the explanations, one of the reasons why retail sales last month made their biggest gain in more than 4 years. Homeownership is at record levels. That's a good sign. We want people owning things in America. More minorities own a home than ever before in our Nation's history. America's unemployment rate is down to 4.7 percent. That's the lowest level since 2001. We've added 4.7 million new jobs over the last 2½ years. We're doing fine.

The fundamental question is, how do we keep doing fine? The challenge that faces us is—is how we make sure that the economic growth today carries over for tomorrow. And that's what I want to talk about. In order to understand what to do, you've got to understand what got us to where we are today. Part of it is keeping taxes low, by the way, and that's exactly what I intend to do so long as I'm the President, is keep taxes low. Part of it is being wise about how we spend our money. Part of it is understanding how technology plays in the future of the country.

Think back 25 years ago, in the start of the 1980s. It's not all that long ago, really. Some of us remember the '80s pretty clearly—[laughter]—a lot of kind of gray-haired folks here that lived through the '80s.