

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