

[laughter]—but I detected a bounce in people's step. I detected the fact that I'm here in an exciting place for people to work. I appreciated when the plant manager and the CEO tells me that there—spends a lot of time educating people, adding added value so that people will be able to find those jobs that are necessary in the 21st century.

I'll tell you this, that if government and private sector doesn't continue to work together to make sure people have a skill set, the jobs will go somewhere else. And therefore, now is the time to educate our people. We live in a global economy, and therefore, lawsuits matter. If you get sued all the time in America, it's going to make it harder for you to compete with people elsewhere. The amount of taxes you pay matters if you're going to be a competitive company and provide good jobs for people.

And the budget I've submitted to the United States Congress reflects all this. It says, we can balance the budget without raising your taxes. We're just going to have to be smart about how we spend your money. It also recognizes that the decisions made in the budget will affect how this company does business.

So you've got two things to pay attention to. One, will Micron remain competitive as a result of government policy, and two, will you have more money so you get to make the decisions? And my fundamental question to the American people is, who do you want making the decisions with your money? Do you want to make it yourself or do you want the government making those decisions? The budget I've submitted says we can meet our priorities and let you make the decisions with the hard money—with the money you've earned through your hard work.

So I'm honored to be here. I appreciate you giving me a chance to come and express my views on an important subject. And I ask for God's blessings on you all. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:23 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Steven R. Appleton, chairman of the board and chief executive officer and president, Patrick T. Otte, site director, and Stephen Silberstein, plant manager, Micron Technology, Inc.; and Mayor Douglas S. Waldron of Manassas, VA.

Statement on the Creation of the Department of Defense Unified Combatant Command for Africa

February 6, 2007

Today I am pleased to announce my decision to create a Department of Defense Unified Combatant Command for Africa. I have directed the Secretary of Defense to stand up U.S. Africa Command by the end of fiscal year 2008.

This new command will strengthen our security cooperation with Africa and create new opportunities to bolster the capabilities of our partners in Africa. Africa Command will enhance our efforts to bring peace and security to the people of Africa and promote our common goals of development, health, education, democracy, and economic growth in Africa.

We will be consulting with African leaders to seek their thoughts on how Africa Command can respond to security challenges and opportunities in Africa. We will also work closely with our African partners to determine an appropriate location for the new command in Africa.

NOTE: In his statement, the President referred to Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates.

Directive on Medical Countermeasures Against Weapons of Mass Destruction

January 31, 2007

Homeland Security Presidential Directive/
HSPD-18

Subject: Medical Countermeasures against Weapons of Mass Destruction

BACKGROUND

(1) Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)—chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear agents (CBRN)—in the possession of hostile states or terrorists represent one of the greatest security challenges facing the United States. An attack utilizing WMD