

The young men we remember today did not live to be called veterans. They died in a distant land fighting terror, spreading freedom, and protecting their fellow citizens from danger. The valor and selfless devotion of these men fills their families with immeasurable pride. Yet this pride cannot fill the hole in their loved ones' aching hearts or relieve the burden of grief that will remain for a lifetime. In their sorrow, these families need to know and families all across our Nation of the fallen need to know that your loved ones served a cause that is good and just and noble. And as their Commander in Chief, I make you this promise: Their sacrifice will not be in vain.

I know all the veterans gathered here and across the Nation feel a special bond with our fallen soldiers and their families. Many experienced the heartbreak and tragic losses of war. Our veterans know that—what it's like to lose a brother on the field of battle. And many of them recall the determination they felt when a beloved comrade fell—the determination to pick up the mantle, to carry on the fight, and to complete the mission.

That's precisely what today's generation of soldiers is doing in the war on terror. Since the attacks of September the 11th, 2001, more than 2 million Americans have stepped forward to put on our Nation's uniform, and during that same period, 1.5 million American troops have made the courageous decision to reenlist and to stay in the fight. These men and women saw the future the terrorists intend for our country, and they said with clear voices, "Not on my watch." America is blessed to have such brave defenders. They are tomorrow's veterans, and they're bringing pride to our country.

Their service is noble, and it is necessary. The enemies who attacked us 6 years ago want to strike our country again, and next time, they hope to kill Americans on a scale that will make 9/11 pale by comparison. By fighting this enemy in foreign lands, the men and women of our Armed Forces are helping to ensure we do not have to face them in our own land. And by spreading the hope of liberty to nations that have not known it, our troops are helping to defeat the ideology of the terrorists and secure a future of peace for generations to come.

As veterans, you have confidence in freedom's cause because you have seen with your own eyes the power of liberty to transform nations and secure the peace. The men and women gathered before me took an oath to defend America, and you upheld that oath with honor and decency and valor. You humbled tyrants, liberated continents, and freed millions from unspeakable oppression. And because of your service and sacrifice, the world has been transformed in once unimaginable ways. Today, across Europe and Asia, former adversaries in war have become allies in the cause of peace. And in towns and villages on both continents, there are still men and women who talk of the day when the Americans arrived to free them from tyranny.

I thank our Nation's veterans for the fine example that you have set for our country. I thank you for your courage and your patriotism and your devotion to duty. I thank you for standing up for the men and women of our Armed Forces. And I thank you for all you do to support the families they leave behind during this time of war.

May God bless and keep all who have made the ultimate sacrifice. May God bless and keep our brave and honored veterans. May God bless those who are in harm's way. And may God continue to bless our Nation. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:52 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Clayton Hueske, commander, American Legion Post 121.

Remarks Following a Lunch Meeting With Business and Community Leaders in New Albany, Indiana

November 13, 2007

Listen, I want to thank you all for joining me. Somebody told me Sam serves good food, and they're right. And it's good to be here in southern Indiana.

I was sitting with business leaders, civic leaders, community activists. I was listening to the concerns of the folks down here. I appreciate the spirit of entrepreneurship that exists. I'm glad people are working. I understand we got to deal with some of the issues, like high gasoline prices.

And it's been a real honor for me to visit with you. It's also good to be with an old family friend, Fuzzy Zoeller, who's been a friend of my family's for a long time. And I forgot that Fuzzy was from these parts and was so thrilled to see him when I walked in here.

Thank you all for your time. Appreciate your consideration, and I love visiting with you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:20 p.m. at Sam's Tavern. In his remarks, he referred to Sam Anderson, owner, Sam's Tavern; and professional golfer Frank U. "Fuzzy" Zoeller, Jr.

Remarks on the Federal Budget in New Albany

November 13, 2007

Thanks for coming. Please be seated. Thanks for the warm welcome. I needed that uplifting applause because I just finished eating lunch at Sam's. [Laughter] Had just a little too much chicken. [Laughter] But I'm honored to be with you. It's great to be back in New Albany. This is a fantastic hall. It is really special. I know you all are proud of it. I appreciate the great history of this part of the world. I appreciate the fact you got great people and great basketball. [Laughter]

It's also a good place to do business. And I thank One Southern Indiana for your efforts to strengthen the spirit of enterprise. I appreciate what you do. Your members create jobs, attract investment, and add to the vitality of this region and our country. People here know that customers should be treated respectfully, money should be spent carefully, and new taxes should be opposed strenuously.

And that's what I want to talk about today. Kerry, thanks for giving me a chance to come by. I appreciate it. I'm sorry my wife is not with me—so are most people when I travel. [Laughter] She's doing great, and she sends all her best.

I'm proud to be traveling today with Congressman Baron Hill. Congressman, thanks for coming. Good to see you, sir. He was reminding me of the days he was a point guard. He said, "Just don't remind them here

in New Albany that I used to tear them up." So I won't. [Laughter]

I want to thank the Lieutenant Governor of the great State of Indiana, Becky Skillman, for joining us today. Governor, appreciate you coming. The mayor, James Garner, has joined us from New Albany. Mr. Mayor, I appreciate you coming. Thanks for being here. Mayor Rob Waiz of Jeffersonville is with us today. Proud you'd be here, Mayor. I thank Mayor-elect Greg Ballard of the city of Indianapolis that has joined us here. Mr. Mayor, thanks for coming. We've got other State and local officials. Former Congressman Mike Sodrel and Keta are with us today. Glad you're here.

And I thank you for letting me come by to share some thoughts about what's happening in Washington. It's an important time for our economy. In October, America created 166,000 new jobs. We now have had 50 straight months of job growth, the longest period of uninterrupted job growth on record. Since August of 2003, American businesses—American small businesses and large businesses, American entrepreneurs and dreamers and doers have created more than 8.3 million new jobs. The national unemployment rate is a low 4.7 percent. Here in Indiana, the unemployment rate is even lower—4.5 percent. Thanks to America's workers and entrepreneurs, our economy grew at a vigorous rate of 3.9 percent in the third quarter. This economic vitality, this economic growth is lifting our Federal tax revenues, and that's driving down the deficit. The deficit today is at 1.2 percent of GDP, and that's low.

At the same time, this economy has got some strains, and you know it as well as I do: high oil prices; the housing market is challenged; the financial markets have got uncertainty. Families are working hard to meet rising mortgage payments and college and health care expenses and the cost at the gas pump.

These are serious challenges. But as we have seen in recent years, this economy of ours is resilient. And that's important for the American people to understand. Sure, there's some challenges facing us. But the underpinnings of our economy are strong, and we're a resilient economy.