Weekly Compilation of

Presidential Documents

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Contents

Addresses and Remarks

See also Bill Signings; Meetings With Foreign Leaders
Georgia, reception for congressional candidate Mac Collins in Macon—1777
Illinois, reception for congressional candidates Peter Roskam and David McSweeney and the Illinois Congressional Victory Committee in Chicago—1808
Maryland, discussion on school safety in Chevy Chase—1770
Missouri, National Renewable Energy Conference in St. Louis—1802
National economy and the Federal budget—1796
North Korea—1767
President's Management Council, meeting—1818
Radio address—1765
Virginia, christening ceremony for the USS *George H.W. Bush* in Newport News—1766

Bill Signings

National Heritage Areas Act of 2006, statement—1815
Rio Grande Natural Area Act, statement—1815
SAFE Port Act
Remarks—1815
Statement—1817

Communications to Federal Agencies

Presidential Determination on FY 2007 Refugee Admissions Numbers and Authorizations of In-Country Refugee Status, memorandum—1801
Presidential Determination on Waiver and Certification of Statutory Provisions Regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Office, memorandum—1818

Interviews With the News Media

News conference, October 11—1782

(Continued on the inside of the back cover.)

Editor's Note: The President was at Camp David, MD, on October 13, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Contents—Continued

Joint Statements

United States of America and the Republic of Peru—1769

Meetings With Foreign Leaders

Peru, President Garcia Perez—1768

Proclamations

General Pulaski Memorial Day—1799
National Energy Awareness Month—1813
To Modify Rules of Origin Under the North American Free Trade Agreement—1800
White Cane Safety Day—1814

Statements by the President

Death of John J. "Buck" O'Neil—1767
USS *Cole*, sixth anniversary of terrorist attack—1813

Supplementary Materials

Acts approved by the President—1821
Checklist of White House press releases—1820
Digest of other White House announcements—1819
Nominations submitted to the Senate—1820

Week Ending Friday, October 13, 2006

The President's Radio Address

October 7, 2006

Good morning. In recent days, we have seen shocking acts of violence in schools across our Nation. Laura and I are praying for the victims and their families, and we extend our sympathies to them and to the communities that have been devastated by these attacks.

I have asked Secretary of Education Spellings and Attorney General Gonzales to host a conference on school safety this Tuesday. We will bring together teachers, parents, students, administrators, law enforcement officials, and other experts to discuss the best ways to keep violence out of our schools. Our goal is clear: Children and teachers should never fear for their safety when they enter a classroom.

As we work to keep our classrooms safe, we must also ensure that the children studying there get a good education. I believe every child can learn. So when I came to Washington, I worked with Republicans and Democrats to pass the No Child Left Behind Act, and I was proud to sign it into law. The theory behind this law is straightforward: We expect every school in America to teach every student to read, write, add, and subtract.

We are measuring progress and giving parents the information they need to hold their schools accountable. Local schools remain under local control. The Federal Government is asking for demonstrated results in exchange for the money we send from Washington. Thanks to this good law, we are leaving behind the days when schools just shuffled children from grade to grade, whether they learned anything or not.

Earlier this week, I visited the Department of Education, where I was briefed on our progress under the No Child Left Behind Act. The most recent national tests show encouraging results. In reading, 9-year-olds have made larger gains in the past 5 years than at any point in the previous 28 years. In math, 9-year-olds and 13-year-olds earned the highest scores in the history of the test. In both reading and math, African American and Hispanic students are scoring higher, and they are beginning to close the achievement gap with their white peers.

The No Child Left Behind Act also gives parents more options. If your child's school consistently fails to show progress, you can get free, intensive tutoring for your child or transfer your child to a better public school. By shining a spotlight on schools that are not performing and offering parents and children a way out, the No Child Left Behind Act is ushering in a new era of accountability and choice. And this is putting America's children on the path to a better life.

The No Child Left Behind Act has brought good progress, yet we still have a lot of work to do. So I will be talking more about education in the coming months, especially as we discuss the reauthorization of this law next year. I will focus on three areas where we can improve. First, we must improve teacher quality, so that every child has an excellent teacher. Second, we must give more options to parents whose children are trapped in struggling schools. And third, we need to bring the same high standards and accountability of the No Child Left Behind Act to our high schools, so that every high school graduate has the tools he or she needs to go to college and to get a good-paying job.

When we set expectations high, America's children will rise to meet them. And by helping our children succeed, we're creating a brighter future for them and for our Nation.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:50 a.m. on October 6 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 7. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 6 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office

of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at a Christening Ceremony for the USS *George H.W. Bush* in Newport News, Virginia

October 7, 2006

Mr. Secretary, thank you very much. Laura and I are honored to be here to honor our dad. We appreciate you coming. Mother, it's good to see you. Members of the Bush family, all of you, distinguished Members of Congress, Governor, ex-Governors, the men and women of the United States Navy, military veterans, the workers who helped build this great ship—I join you; I know you join me in saying to our father: President Bush, your ship has come in. [*Laughter*]

In a few minutes, my sister Dorothy will christen the newest and most advanced aircraft carrier in the Navy—the *George H.W. Bush*. For the pilots of the World War II generation who are with us today, this carrier may seem a little more inviting than the ones you landed on. As you can see, our Navy has made a few upgrades. The *George H.W. Bush* is the latest in the Nimitz line of aircraft carriers. She is unrelenting; she is unshakable; she is unyielding; she is unstoppable. As a matter of fact, probably should have been named the "Barbara Bush." [*Laughter*]

In accord with a long and honored tradition, we gather to christen this fine ship. We recall the service and sacrifice of earlier generations. And we pay tribute to a new generation of sailors and marines who have stepped forward to serve in freedom's cause.

The *George H.W. Bush* is named for a man who exemplifies the great character of our country. On the day Pearl Harbor was attacked, George H.W. Bush was a teenager—he was a high school senior. Six months later, he was sworn into the Navy. A year later, he received his wings at a ceremony in Corpus Christi, Texas. Here is what he said. He said, "I had an ensign's stripe and an admiral's confidence." [*Laughter*] "I was a Navy pilot."

Our dad would become known as one of the Navy's youngest pilots, but that wasn't his only distinction. While training along the Chesapeake Bay, the pilots in our dad's flight class learned about a beach across the way where young ladies liked to sunbathe. It became popular for the pilots to fly low over the beach. So one day he came in low to take a look. It just so happened to be the same day that a traveling circus had set up its tents. Dad's flyover upset an elephant, causing him to break loose and make a run throughout the town. He was called in for a reprimand from his commander. He puts it this way: "I was grounded for causing an elephant stampede"—probably the only Navy pilot in American history who can make that claim.

After training, he was assigned to a light carrier. He took part in the Great Turkey Shoot of the Marianas. He knew the horror of kamikaze attacks. He would complete 58 combat missions. These were tough days, but he had something that kept him going. And if you look closely at the photographs of the planes he flew, you will find what kept him going in the name he had painted under his cockpit: Barbara.

One of Dad's most important missions was a strike on a radio tower on an island called Chichi Jima. The Japanese were using that tower to intercept U.S. military radio transmissions and alert the enemy about impending American air strikes. On September 2, 1944, his squadron was given a simple assignment: to take it out. The pilots knew they would face heavy enemy fire because the Japanese had fortified the island. But Dad and his fellow pilots did their duty without complaint or hesitation. During that raid, his plane was hit by antiaircraft artillery, and it caught on fire. Yet, he kept his plane on course. He released his four bombs and scored four direct hits on that tower; he headed out to sea; he ejected.

Japanese boats were sent out to capture him. And after more than 2 harrowing hours at sea alone in a rubber life raft, he was rescued by the crew of the USS *Finback*. For his action, he earned the Distinguished Flying Cross. Yet it is characteristic that from those moments aboard his life raft to this ceremony today, Dad's thoughts have always been of the two fine members of his crew who did not make it home: Radioman Second

Class John Delaney and Lieutenant JG Ted White. On that day over Chichi Jima, a young American became a war hero and learned an old lesson: With the defense of freedom comes loss and sacrifice.

The *George H.W. Bush* honors a generation that valued service above self. Like so many who served in World War II, duty came naturally to our father. In the 4 years of that war, 16 million Americans would put on the uniform, and the human costs were appalling. From the beaches of Normandy to the jungles of Southeast Asia, more than 400,000 Americans would give their lives.

From the beginning of that war, there were those who argued that freedom had seen its day and that the future belonged to the hard men in Tokyo and Berlin. Yet the war machines of Imperial Japan and Nazi Germany would be brought down by American GIs who only months before had been students and farmers and bank clerks and factory hands. The generation of World War II taught the world's tyrants a telling lesson: There is no power like the power of freedom and no soldier as strong as a soldier who fights for a free future for his children.

The *George H.W. Bush* will serve—as a new generation of Americans every bit as brave and selfless as those who have come before them. The 21st century—in the 21st century, freedom is again under attack, and young Americans are volunteering to answer the call. In the years since September the 11th, 2001, more than 1.6 million Americans have volunteered to wear the uniform of the United States. Today, they serve in distant lands and on far seas—from the islands of Southeast Asia to the Horn of Africa to the mountains of Afghanistan and in Iraq. And once again, with perseverance and courage and confidence in the power of freedom, a new generation of Americans will leave a more hopeful and peaceful world for generations to come.

The men and women of the United States military represent the best of America, and they deserve the best America can give them. And the *George H.W. Bush* is the best America can give them.

During his time in the South Pacific, Ensign Bush served on a light carrier called the USS *San Jacinto*. That ship was named for the 1836 Battle of San Jacinto. And in that battle, the free Texas forces led by Sam Houston defeated a Mexican army that was much larger in size—and Sam Houston succeeded in capturing the Mexican general responsible for the slaughter of the Alamo just a few weeks before. Yet on the eve of the battle, the outcome was far from certain, and the Mexicans seemed to hold the advantage. So Sam Houston called his Texans together, and he reminded them what they were fighting for. He told them: "Be men—be free men—that your children may bless their father's name."

On this proud day, the children of George H.W. Bush bless their father's name; the United States Navy honors his name; and the ship that bears his name sails into this young century as a symbol of American strength and freedom. May God watch over all those who sail this ship, all those who fly from her deck, and all those at home who pray for their safe return.

It is my honor to bring to you the 41st President, a great dad, George H.W. Bush.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:55 a.m. at the Northrop Grumman Newport News Shipyard. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Timothy M. Kaine of Virginia.

Statement on the Death of John J. "Buck" O'Neil

October 7, 2006

Buck O'Neil represented the best of America's national pastime. He devoted his long and full life to baseball and refused to allow injustice and discrimination to diminish his love of the game and his joyous, generous spirit. Laura and I extend our sympathies to his family and friends, and on behalf of all Americans, we give thanks for the life of one of the great ambassadors in baseball history.

Remarks on the Situation in North Korea

October 9, 2006

Last night the Government of North Korea proclaimed to the world that it had conducted a nuclear test. We're working to

confirm North Korea's claim. Nonetheless, such a claim itself constitutes a threat to international peace and security. The United States condemns this provocative act. Once again North Korea has defied the will of the international community, and the international community will respond.

This was confirmed this morning in conversations I had with leaders of China and South Korea, Russia, and Japan. We reaffirmed our commitment to a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula, and all of us agreed that the proclaimed actions taken by North Korea are unacceptable and deserve an immediate response by the United Nations Security Council.

The North Korean regime remains one of the world's leading proliferator of missile technology, including transfers to Iran and Syria. The transfer of nuclear weapons or material by North Korea to states or non-state entities would be considered a grave threat to the United States, and we would hold North Korea fully accountable of the consequences of such action.

The United States remains committed to diplomacy, and we will continue to protect ourselves and our interests. I reaffirmed to our allies in the region, including South Korea and Japan, that the United States will meet the full range of our deterrent and security commitments.

Threats will not lead to a brighter future for the North Korean people nor weaken the resolve of the United States and our allies to achieve the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Today's claim by North Korea serves only to raise tensions, while depriving the North Korean people of the increased prosperity and better relations with the world offered by the implementation of the joint statement of the six-party talks. The oppressed and impoverished people of North Korea deserve that brighter future.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:58 a.m. in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Hu Jintao of China; President Roh Moo-hyun of South Korea; President Vladimir Putin of Russia; and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Alan Garcia Perez of Peru

October 10, 2006

President Bush. *Bienvenidos, Mr. Presidente, a la Casa Blanca.* I'm proud to welcome the President of Peru to the Oval Office. We've had a fascinating and important discussion. First of all, I appreciated his experience, and I appreciated his advice on some key issues. He comes to the Oval Office as a friend, somebody with whom I can have good working relations.

We talked about world issues; we talked about issues regarding South America and Central America; and we talked about our bilateral relations. The central issue facing us right now is the passage of a free trade agreement. I assured the President that I will work with Congress as soon as possible to get this agreement passed. We talked about the need for both countries to work closely to fight drugs, and I appreciated the President's attitude and understanding of this important issue.

And we talked about the need to work together to help promote social justice. The President has a big heart. He cares deeply about those who suffer. And I assured the President it's in our Nation's interest that we work with our friends in the—in South America to promote good education and good health care and good opportunities.

All in all, it was an excellent meeting. And, Mr. President, welcome.

President Garcia Perez. Thank you. I am very happy to be here for the first time in the Oval Office. President Bush and I have agreed on the general topics that we discussed in terms of strengthening democracy and also strengthening relations between developed countries and developing countries. And one basic tool for that goal is free trade. And we are very satisfied to have heard President Bush's promise to work with the Congress to push forward the passage of a free trade agreement with Peru.

And we have explained today that in terms of free trade, we are looking for an agreement that does much as focus on the most modern or the most significant economic groups in the country. We are also looking to have a free trade agreement that is focused

internally and that will benefit our entire population, all our productive sectors, including the less advantaged sectors, so that they may export to the world and to the United States in particular.

We see the free trade agreement as one of our tools in our fight against poverty and also a tool for us to strengthen equality. Also, however, it is a tool that will help us achieve security through democracy and to give our population a road, a goal, and an aspiration in terms of economic development in the country.

We see our role as a country in terms of helping strengthen democracy and achieving friendship without threat in our region. And in this regard, Peru will continue to work towards the democratization of Latin America. As I said, it's a comprehensive democratization that we are looking for. We are looking to strengthen the options that our populations have in participating in the benefits of modernization and democratic civilization everywhere in the continent.

And one issue that we need to work on is a full eradication of the threat of drugs. And this is a commitment that we share with the United States. It's a commitment that will be strengthened and revised. And at some point, we will propose a high-level meeting on this topic in order to relaunch the fight against drugs in terms of offering other alternatives, such as alternative development, and the free trade agreement is one of these tools. And the goal is to allow the poorest sectors, the farmers in the Andes, to have access to the buying power of the U.S. market and other markets in the world.

In the relationship between the United States and Latin America, there have been several missed opportunities in the 20th century. There was an opportunity that was put forward by President Roosevelt in the '40s, with his proposal. There was also the Alliance for Progress, proposed here by the United States, by President Kennedy. And now we have a third possibility involving—or increasing world trade and the use of free trade as a tool to fight poverty. And it is an opportunity that Latin American countries must take advantage of this time. What could have been done almost 50 years ago with the Alliance for Progress is something that we can do now, thanks to the technological and computer revolution that we are experiencing. And this is a way also to reach the poor in our countries and give them access to the world market.

And finally, I want to say that I'm a leader who belongs to a party that is a popular party, that believes in social justice and fights for sovereignty in our country. However, I recognize the opportunities that this time offers us in terms of our economies, and I believe it is important for our peoples to have specific and concrete gains in terms of the economy, education, and health. And I believe that this free trade agreement that we have been referring to is a very important tool in its regard.

And we have told the President that even though we are coming from a more modest position, we believe that with our leadership, we can stand side by side with the U.S. and make contributions in order to strengthen democracy and peace in the world and social justice among nations and also within our societies.

And I want to thank the President for his hospitality. I look forward to continuing to work together, and I hope that we will see the President soon in Peru. And thanks again for your invitation. Thank you a lot, Mr. President. Thank you very much.

President Bush. *Muchas gracias, senor.* Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:11 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. President Garcia Perez spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Joint Statement by the United States of America and the Republic of Peru

October 10, 2006

Presidents George W. Bush and Alan Garcia underscored the strong relationship between the United States and Peru, and reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening democracy and expanding free trade in the region as a means of improving the well-being of all citizens by securing freedom and delivering the greatest possible economic

benefits to the largest number of people. They pledged to continue working together toward these and other shared objectives.

The two leaders agreed that democracies must strive to improve basic services for all citizens, and emphasized the importance of expanding health and education as a means of empowering citizens with the tools to fully participate in society, providing opportunities for economic growth and social development. They further concurred that democracy and democratic governance are the right and responsibility of all, and that an educated, engaged citizenry is the foundation for strong democratic institutions. They also agreed that all citizens should have the ability to participate fully and fairly in a modern economy, under the protection of the rule of law.

Both stressed the central role of initiatives such as the mutually beneficial U.S.-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement (PTPA) in strengthening bilateral ties while leveling the trade playing field, spurring job creation, and reducing poverty and inequality. In this regard, President Bush reaffirmed his commitment to securing congressional approval of the PTPA as quickly as possible. Both Presidents noted that domestic capacity-building programs, such as President Bush's Center for Education Excellence in Teacher Training and the Poverty Reduction and Alleviation Program initiatives, and President Garcia's Sierra Exportadora and "Internal FTA" programs, ensure that the opportunities derived from free and open markets accrue to the broadest number of Peruvians.

Presidents Bush and Garcia reaffirmed their strong commitment to protect their people and the hemisphere from the depredations of transnational terrorist and criminal organizations, pledging to promote speedy extradition of drug cartels' members. Among the many ways our countries work together to combat the scourge of narcotrafficking, based on the principle of shared responsibility, are Peru's comprehensive efforts against drug trafficking and illegal coca cultivation and U.S. programs that provide infrastructure and training to develop a police presence east of the Andes and alternative development to people in former coca growing areas, giving them hope for a sustainable, legal livelihood to provide for their families.

The Presidents reaffirmed their commitment to a strong bilateral relationship and to promoting prosperity and social justice for all people of the Americas.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this joint statement. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks in a Discussion on School Safety in Chevy Chase, Maryland

October 10, 2006

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you all for coming. In many ways, I'm sorry we're having this meeting. In other ways, I know how important it is that we're having this meeting. The violence that has been occurring in our schools is incredibly sad, and it troubles a lot of folks, and it troubled me and Laura. And so I asked Margaret and Al to host a gathering of concerned citizens, the purpose of which is to come up with best practices and just shared experiences so that others might know how to react—to prevent and react to inexplicable and—violence that is hard to imagine.

All of us in this country want our classrooms to be gentle places of learning, places where people not only learn the basics—basic skills necessary to become productive citizens but learn to relate to one another. And our parents, I know, want to be able to send their child or children to schools that are safe places. And the violence we've seen—this is upsetting to a lot of people, and I know it's upsetting to the professionals who are with us. But rather than be upset, it's best for all of us who are responsible for helping folks not only cope but to prevent action from taking place. It's best to be proactive. And that's what this meeting is. And so I want to thank you all for joining.

I got a firsthand report on one of the panels from Laura, who said that—I think if I could summarize your words, it was, like, really interesting and very important. And so I thought what I would do is ask Al and Margaret to begin this session and maybe hear from some of the folks here—and then, if time permitting, hear from you all out in the audience.

Again, I want to thank Margaret and Al for setting this up, and really thank you all for coming and taking an interest. I know we got people from all around the country, and it's—this is a nationwide effort to help people who are responsible, protect our children.

Attorney General Alberto Gonzales. Thank you. Mr. President, thank you for asking Margaret and I to host this important conference. We've had some good panel discussions, as you've already heard already. You've met some of the panelists that we've invited back. And just for our audience, again, we've asked Dr. Marleen Wong, Craig Scott, Fred Ellis, and Sheriff Jeff Dawsy to help us speak with the President about this important issue.

[*At this point, Attorney General Gonzales continued his remarks.*]

The President. I like the Secret Service, too, Art. [*Laughter*]

[*Art Kelly, former police chief, New Bedford, MA, made brief remarks.*]

The President. Let me ask you a question, Al—not you, Chief, but—well, I can ask you too. I presume out of this there will be a series of best practices that you will share with principals and schools districts that explain, for example, what people could look for to determine whether or not there's an early warning sign, and then how to respond.

Attorney General Gonzales. Exactly.

The President. Okay, good. Thanks, Chief.

[*Attorney General Gonzales made further remarks, and Jeff Dawsy, sheriff, Citrus County, FL, made brief remarks.*]

The President. Is there an opportunity to share, between sheriffs around the country, how they're dealing with this issue? Does it make sense to have the National Sheriff's Association contact members, ask for stories, practices, and then condense them and send them back out so that people can—who probably aren't listening to this will be able to——

Sheriff Dawsy. I think it would be a wonderful initiative. One of the things I learned today was not more about questions but more of solutions. There was many different speakers that came up and told us about different resources to use.

The President. Yes, that's my point.

Attorney General Gonzales. Mr. President, I think that Sheriff Dawsy would say that this program helps him to do his job, which means that I'm sure all the sheriffs around the country would like that kind of program as well, to help them do their job.

The President. That's my point. Yes, so who is responsible for talking to the head of the Sheriff's Association or the police chiefs to make sure that happens?

Audience member. I'm right here, sir, and it will be done.

The President. Thank you, sir. Very good.

[*The discussion continued.*]

The President. Did you say 81 percent of the students were aware of a violent act?

Fred Ellis. Some of the data that I had heard today from the Secret Service and some of their research, that much information was out there.

The President. It seems like a pretty good opportunity to prevent an attack if 81 percent of the—there's an 81-percent awareness of a potential attack, which then I guess would lead to making sure principals explain to students: "When you hear something, please tell me."

[*Mr. Ellis, director, Office of Safety & Security, Fairfax County Public Schools, Centreville, VA, made brief remarks, and the discussion continued.*]

The President. Is it typical of a student that expresses a wish to die, makes that clear to his or her peers and to—if people are attuned to what that means, to pay attention to somebody who exhibits the behavior that says, "I am depressed, and I want to die?" I mean, is it—it's a pretty strong statement.

Marleen Wong. It's a wonderful question, because there are behaviors, and there are expressions of hopelessness that come before that. And so I think we have to do a lot of education with just folks who say, you know, "They've changed; they don't have joy in life," and that this is an early warning sign.

The President. But is it easy to define the behavior that would tip off an adult in a

school, or some—a coach or an art teacher that this is the kind of behavior that ought to say to us, we better pay attention to this person, this child?

Ms. Wong. Yes. There's a short list, and actually, the student who sat on the previous panel did an excellent job of naming all of those things. I was so proud of her. I thought she ought to come and do some training with our——

The President. And how many educators do you think that can name—good job, by the way—how many adults do you think around the schools in America can name the traits that would say, we better pay attention to this person?

Ms. Wong. Not enough.

The President. And therefore, what can we do to make sure that people understand what to look for? It seems like to me that a lot of our focus ought to be on preventing. And no question, we ought to worry about recovering, but preventing is—makes the recovery not necessary.

Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings. Chiarasay, you did such a nice job this morning; why don't you go to the microphone real quick and tell us the nine signs.

The President. Where are you from Chiarasay?

Chiarasay Perkins. Mr. President, I'm from Walton County, Florida.

The President. Good. I know your Governor. [*Laughter*]

[*Ms. Perkins, student, Walton Senior High School, DeFuniak Springs, FL, made brief remarks.*]

The President. That's great. Thank you.

Ms. Wong. Thank you.

The President. Let me ask you a question. From your experience, Marleen, if a teacher were to notice those traits, is it typical that someone would act on them? In other words, I'm just trying to make sure I understand. If a student sees—I mean, a teacher sees a student begin to change clothes and begin to—does a principal and a teacher tend to say, "Well, that's really not my business; it's the parents' business?" In other words, awareness requires, by the way, some kind of response.

Ms. Wong. And I think that varies around the country.

The President. Yes, I'm sure it does.

Ms. Wong. I think that more and more people are beginning to pay attention just because we have paid such a dear price for ignoring some of the warning signs.

The President. So maybe an outcome for this is to encourage—for you to get in touch with the principals' organizations or the teachers' organizations and help——

Secretary Spellings. ——them be aware of the warning signs.

The President. And then—I guess there's a certain confidence that has to come with interfering—not interfering but interceding in a child's life. My only question is, is there hesitancy when an adult says, "Well, maybe this is just the way it's supposed to be," or "Maybe it's none of my business"? And the question is, if that's the case—if you can determine that's the case, how do you get people to respond differently?

Secretary Spellings. Cathy Paine from Oregon told us about—where they had an incident there, that there were dozens of signs of this particular shooter and that the full picture didn't become clear until after the incident.

The President. Can you—do you mind sharing that? Thanks, Cathy.

[*Cathy Paine, special programs administrator, Springfield School District, Springfield, OR, made brief remarks.*]

The President. The whole purpose of this exercise is to help educate and, if there needs to be cultural change inside schools, for teachers to become more aware and more active—or principals—is to try to stimulate these kinds of discussions, obviously, outside of Washington, at the local level or State levels, in the hopes of preventing these from happening in the first place.

Thank you for coming to share your experience and appreciate your sharing your expertise.

Secretary Spellings. One of the people who's been doing that in a very meaningful way is Craig Scott, who has talked all over the country to teenagers and teachers and educators and school leaders. And he has a

very powerful story, as you know. His sister, Rachel, was murdered in Columbine.

So, Craig, why don't you share your thoughts.

[*Craig Scott, former student, Columbine High School, Aurora, CO, made brief remarks.*]

The President. Good job. Whew. Which one of us up here can now talk after that? Thank you. Yes, that's great. You are changing our society. You may not realize it, but thank you—powerful statement.

I'd be glad to hear from people in the audience. [*Laughter*] Yes, I probably won't be able to hear from all of you in the audience.

That was great, Craig. Thank you. Could I have that?

Mr. Scott. Oh, absolutely.

The President. Thank you. Yes, sir.

Character Education/Community Involvement in Schools

Q. Mr. President, I haven't had this feeling since I was 17, and that's the last time that I asked you a question in Herbert, Texas. I've spoken to hundreds of thousands of people since. Last time I was nervous was when I was 17 in Herbert, Texas, and you were campaigning in Herbert, Texas.

The President. Don't tell them I came in second place in a two-man race. [*Laughter*]

Q. My name is Pete Vargas. I'm the national director for Rachel's Challenge, the program——

The President. Oh, fantastic, Pete.

Q. ——that Craig just talked about. And I want to echo something that's very dear to my heart and Darrel, his father who is sitting right here.

The President. Your dad is there? Where is your dad? Excuse me. Okay, thank you. Raised a good man here.

Q. I talk to thousands of educators every month—our team does—thousands. And one of the things that disturbs me is there's hundreds that say, "Pete, you all have changed the culture of our school." But then there's thousands that say, "It's so hard for us to fit our—we want your program so bad, but we have testing and testing and testing and this and that," and it made me think about something, President. It made me think about growing up—I was going the wrong direction completely. I was stealing; I was doing everything possibly wrong—vandalism, beating up kids. And in seventh grade there was a teacher, Mrs. Muldanado, who touched my heart. In 10th grade there was a lady that you know from Herbert, Texas, that touched my heart. And in ninth grade my tennis coach touched my heart, and those three people changed my life. And as we—why I believe in what I'm doing so much is Darrel's motto is that if we touch the heart of the kid, the head will follow. If we touch their heart, the head will follow, and the hands will make the difference.

My question to you today is, I don't want us to look at the warning signs; I want us to eliminate the warning signs.

The President. Right, right.

Q. What can we do—what can we do, and this is echoing Darrel and what Craig just said—what can we do from the government's standpoint to go back to touching the heart of the kid, to teaching character education? Because we hear that all the time about the testing.

The President. I agree. Pete, let me say—first on the tests. Thanks for coming. It's good to see you again. I was probably more nervous than you were when you asked the question. [*Laughter*]

Q. You look the same. [*Laughter*]

The President. I like selected memory. [*Laughter*]

First, in terms of testing, I don't think it's zero sum. I think you can make sure a child learns, and I think you can instill character at the same time. I don't think you have to choose. As a matter of fact, I know we can't say that one doesn't beget the other. I happen to believe that self-esteem comes when a child realizes he or she can read early, at grade level. And I think one of the real problems—[*applause*]—I think one of the real problems we have, Pete, is a school system across the country that basically gives up on children because we don't measure to determine whether or not they have the skills necessary to read, for example.

And so I'm concerned about a system that socially promotes children, because I think that at some point in time, that begins to

affect a child's vision of the future, and a grim vision of the future may be that which triggers a response that is negative.

Character education is—I know we funded quite a bit of it when I was the Governor of Texas. Let me put the funding issue right on the table. The Federal Government is a limited funder of education, and I happen to believe that's the way it should be. I don't think it's possible for the people to have expectations that the Government should fund public schools. This is a local responsibility. It's been that way throughout our history. I think it makes sense to do so, because it tends to make control of our schools more localized, which I happen to think is the best way to achieve excellence.

And so therefore, not to try to pass responsibilities, although we do have character education grants out of Washington, and we've got school safety grants out of Washington, but the best place to facilitate that kind of initiative, to make sure that character is taught in schools, is at the State level.

Secondly, it's really important, Pete, that people not think government is a loving entity. Government is law and justice. Love comes from the hearts of people that are able to impart love. And therefore, what Craig is doing is—he doesn't realize it—he's a social entrepreneur. He is inspiring others to continue to reach out to say to somebody who is lonely, "I love you." And I'm afraid this requires a higher power than the Federal Government to cause somebody to love somebody. And therefore, it's a—[*applause*]—and therefore, one of the things we can do, though, is to call upon people—we've got the USA Freedom Corps Initiative, for example, that calls on volunteers to take active participation in their communities.

You know, Craig said something interesting. I believe societies change one heart at a time. I don't mean to mimic what you said, but I was actually praising what you said, because that's how it works. And the truth of the matter is, if we really think about it, the primary responsibility, the primary teacher of character is the parent. That is the frontline of enabling our society to be a compassionate, decent place. You wouldn't be sitting here if your mother and father hadn't instilled in you a—something inside your soul that caused you to sit here in front of the President of the United States and give an unbelievably eloquent testimony about compassion.

And the second line of defense in schools is, obviously, teachers. And the hope is, is that out of this violence and terror comes this notion that teachers have got to be—and by the way, the teachers have got an unbelievably hard job—to not only teach but to show concern and compassion. They've got their own lives to live. They've got their own families to raise many times, and now they've got to deal with yet another family situation, Pete. But yet, nevertheless, that is where the compassion—you notice, you didn't say, "I went to a program." You named three individuals that were heroic in your lives. And that's the way it works.

Now, teaching character matters—no question about it—and there's some great curriculum to do it. But the truth of the matter is, all this need to say, "I love you," comes from your soul. And so hopefully, out of these tragedies will come the sense of communal obligation all throughout our country, for people to take an extra effort to comfort the lonely. That could be a student or a teacher—Pete, in your case, a tennis coach. Still got a backhand? Anyway, thank you, buddy. It's good to see you again.

Yes, ma'am. Oh, yes, sir.

Voluntarism

Q. My name is John Kavelin. Up until yesterday, I was a Walt Disney Imagineer for 16 years, but I have quit that activity to commit myself for the rest of my life to a character education program that my sister, her husband, and I created 15 years ago, on a little island in the Pacific Northwest, called The Virtues Project. And it is exactly what I think many people are looking for, because it reaches the heart. It is a multifaith, multicultural effort to simply teach five strategies that help people practice virtues in everyday life.

What we've learned in 85 countries where this is applied is that values are culture specific; virtues are universal to every sacred tradition. So simply practicing virtues in the home, in the school, in the workplace makes a shift in the culture.

And I am offering my love and my admiration for so many good-willed people in this room for bringing this group of people together. It's so exciting. And we're simply here to support whatever is going on.

The President. Yes, thanks for doing what you're doing. See, this is a—our country is blessed by the fact that we have people who stand up and say, "I want to contribute," like you. Just retired yesterday? You don't look a day over 60. Anyway—[*laughter*].

But, see, Craig, what you're doing and what this gentleman is doing will stimulate a lot of—as you said, you've talked to a million kids, or a million people—same with you, sir. I believe that there is no single answer, no single program. It's a mosaic of programs all stimulated because people have decided to do something about the problem. And it's really the uniqueness of the country.

I like to remind our fellow citizens that de Tocqueville recognized this in 1832, the fact that voluntary organizations came together to help solve local problems. And it is—in my judgment, it is this capacity of citizens to take action to solve problems that defines the true greatness of America.

And, Pete, to answer your question about government: Government's role, in many ways, is to stimulate and to encourage and to thank people who have taken it upon themselves to either start character education or go into classrooms and to change society one person at a time.

Yes, sir.

Parent and Community Involvement in Schools

Q. Mr. President, my name is Marvin Nash. I represent the Bullying Hurts Program and the NASH Foundation, which stands for "No Adolescent Should Hurt," from Cheyenne, Wyoming. I want to let you know that I will be traveling back to Nashville, Tennessee, where Storme Warren, with Great American Country, and Charlie Daniels will be helping me make PSAs to address this issue. Instead of talking about my program though, I want to give my time up to this lady right here. She spent seven—she spent her time with 17 students locked in a closet at Columbine, and she has a question for you. So we're not going to talk about me; we're going to talk about her.

The President. Thank you, buddy. Nice-looking hat.

Q. Mr. President, Madam Secretary of Education, Marleen, Craig, and everybody else, my name is—[*inaudible*]—and I'm just a regular person. I don't have a radio talk show. [*Laughter*] And I don't—I'm not in charge of a big, major organization. I am a flight attendant for Frontier Airlines, and I'm shaking right now because I didn't think I was going to get up here. And I'm also a proud, retired teacher from Columbine High School.

And I think everything I was going to say just kind of flew out of my mind. I'm also a professional volunteer, and I am not here to ask for money for any program. When I said "professional volunteer," I don't mean I make money volunteering, but there are a whole group of just regular people like me out there. Even though I retired from Columbine, I have a daughter at Columbine right now who is a junior. I volunteer in the post-grad center there. I volunteer with the cheer squad, the football team, and it doesn't always take a lot of money to get things done. It's little people like me—I don't mean in size. I mean, it's little people like me who get there, little people like us. Like Grand Daddy Wong used to say, "Okay, one stick—you break it one at a time," but if we stick together, we can get it done.

I'm just saying, unless us volunteers—I always have time to volunteer, and I know other people do too, and it's what Craig was saying, it comes from the heart. President Bush, it's what you were saying. It's what our parents taught us, and it's what we need to teach our kids. It's that—I hope I don't pronounce it wrong—generativity, where we help to make the next generation better. So I'm sorry I forgot what my question was. [*Laughter*]

The President. What matters is your testimony, not your question. Thank you.

Last question, and I've got to go. Gonzales is also reminding me; actually I'm on a schedule here. I apologize. I'd like to sit here all day, listening, and I am inspired that so many came to talk about this subject.

Yes, ma'am.

Character Education in State Curricula

Q. Good afternoon, Mr. President, Madam Secretary. My name is—[*inaudible*]—and I'm a youth programs director in New York City for a nonprofit called Art of Living Foundation. And like a lot of these wonderful people here, we teach a program in human values and stress management for teenagers and how to handle their negative emotions—which they just don't learn, I'm finding nowadays. And what I have students constantly asking me is, "Can't this be a class in our school? Can we learn human values and universal ethics that are found in every culture?" But they're not being taught—a lot of times not at home—they're not being taught. And they're definitely not always being taught in schools. There's some amazing public school teachers, but there's also some very stressed-out public school teachers.

The President. Absolutely.

Q. Can this be—is there a way to have a class in public school where students learn stress management, the ability to deal with their own anger, frustration, and violent tendencies, and also to learn human values and actually practice them? Can they receive credit for a class like this? This is what students are asking, and I have superintendents coming to me saying, "What can you do?—in our suspension centers—we'll give credit to students for doing this." Is there a way we can do that?

Secretary Spellings. Well, those are State curriculum issues, and lots of States have included character education or programs like that as part of their required curriculum and give credit for it. But I would commend all those superintendents to their State board of education and put them to work. We had some of that in Texas and gave a lot of credit for peer mentoring and those sorts of things that are so supportive of kids.

The President. I am sorry for those of you standing in line. I know; I apologize.

Q. Time for one more?

The President. Okay, one final guy—go ahead. [*Laughter*]

Voluntarism

Q. I wanted to explain why I had on a bright red jacket.

The President. Yes, that's why. [*Laughter*]

Q. I appreciate it.

The President. Thank you for coming.

Q. My name is Michael Wade Smith, and I'm the national president for Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America. We are an in-school, high school, and middle school organization focusing on the family. Our main mission is to promote family as the basic unit of society.

And I'm happy I got to follow up after your question because we are—family consumer sciences—its curriculum in high schools and middle schools is teaching character education, that is teaching youth violence prevention. We're teaching career exploration. Because of our title, Family and Consumer Sciences and Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America, we address every one of the issues that's been presented in the discussions and in this room. And we are willing and wanting to partner with every single person in here to help students get this message out to students. We're about peer-to-peer message sharing. We want each and every student in our organization, which reaches about a quarter of a million students, to be a lot broader than that. We want to touch every student in America through our programs and through our mission to promote family as the basic unit of society—and the values thereof.

So I thank you, Mr. President, Mrs. Bush——

The President. Why the red coat? [*Laughter*] Just so you got called on? I mean, is there a—[*laughter*].

Q. I just wanted that. No, our colors in the organization are red and white.

The President. Fabulous.

Q. So all of the officers wear our red jackets.

The President. I, once again, apologize. I've got to get on an airplane. But I do want to thank you all for coming. I hope you have found this interesting. I am a results-oriented person, and I expect from Margaret and Al to make sure that out of all this effort comes some concrete action to help people understand what is possible, what is doable, the programs that are working. And the head of

the sheriff's department readily sprung to his feet to say, "You can count on me."

The purpose has got to be more than just hoping somebody is listening to TV. The purpose has got to be—out of this—that we share information so that we can save lives, encourage parents, and help people respond.

And I want to thank you all very much for coming. I'm proud you're here. God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:24 p.m. at the National 4–H Conference Center. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida. Participating in the event was Marleen Wong, director, Crisis Counseling and Intervention Services, Los Angeles Unified School District, and director, Trauma Services Adaptation Center for Schools and Communities, Los Angeles, CA.

Remarks at a Reception for Congressional Candidate Mac Collins in Macon, Georgia

October 10, 2006

Thanks for coming. It's good to be in Macon. Thanks for coming out. One thing about old Mac is, you know where he stands. That's the kind of Congressman you need from this part of the world, and that's the kind of Congressman we need in Washington, DC—straightforward thinker, bringing common sense to the Nation's Capital.

I'm proud to stand here with Mac Collins. I know him well. I've worked with him; I've listened carefully to his ideas. No doubt in my mind he's the best person to represent the Eighth Congressional District from the State of Georgia.

I'm also for him because he married well. Of course, that's why he invited me, because I married well. [*Laughter*] And I want you to know, Julie and Mac, that Laura sends her very best to you both. I know she was your first choice for this fundraiser. [*Laughter*] She's got to be the most patient woman in America. I know we've got some Texans here, and they went to the same college as Laura did. And when she went there, she, frankly, wasn't interested in politics and, I think, didn't care for politicians. [*Laughter*] Now here she is as the Nation's First Lady, and I firmly believe this country is better off with Laura as the First Lady.

I'm not only proud to be here with Mac Collins—and I want to thank you for supporting him, by the way. I cannot thank you enough for helping this good man. He not only needs to fill the hat in order to run a good campaign, he's going to need your work coming down the stretch. He's going to need you to help make the phone calls and put up the signs and turn out the vote. He's going to need the grassroots activists to step up and say to their fellow citizens, you've got a good man in Mac Collins. He knows what happens in Washington, DC. He's not a novice up there. When he gets back up there, he knows what he needs to do. And he's going to represent the will of the people of this district, see. That's the thing I like about Mac. And so I want to thank you for giving of your money, and thank you for giving of your time when we come down the stretch.

I also want to thank you for supporting one of the Nation's fine Governors, Governor Sonny Perdue. You know what—all Sonny is doing is—in office is what he said he's going to do. He said he's going to do this; he's going to do it; and he does. And I'm proud to be with Sonny, and I want to thank you for helping him.

I'm also proud to be able to work with a really fine United States Senator in Senator Saxby Chambliss, and I see sweet Julianne is with you. Thanks for coming, Julianne. Now, let me say this about Saxby—if you're interested in agriculture, you don't have to worry about your interests being represented in the United States Senate. The man has got some stroke up there in Washington—[*laughter*]—and he knows what he's talking about. And those of us in the White House listen to him. Senator, we're proud you're here.

Georgia has got a fine congressional delegation, and one of the Congressmen is with us today—Lynn Westmoreland. Congressman, thanks for coming. Good to see you. Appreciate your time. We've spent some quality time together, and I know he's a good one, and I know he's looking forward to getting Mac up there to work with him to do what's right for the country.

I want to thank Alec Poitevint—with us; he's the chairman of—the national committeeman. It seems like I've been saying his name for two decades, or three decades. [*Laughter*] Thanks for coming, Alec. Perry McGuire—Perry McGuire is with us; he's the candidate for the attorney general for the State of Georgia. Perry, thanks for coming. Good luck to you, Perry.

I want to thank all the local officials and State officials who are here. Appreciate you serving.

There are a lot of issues that I'll be talking about. I know Mac will be talking about them. We've got issues such as making sure we become less dependent on foreign oil. It's going to be helpful to have these Georgia farmers growing oil—growing the feedstock for oil—[*laughter*]—like soy diesel or ethanol. It's coming. I look forward to working with Mac to spend some money to help new technologies evolve. We can't be complacent just because the price of gasoline is going down. Being dependent on oil from overseas is still a national security concern. And I intend to push hard for technologies that will enable us to diversify.

I'm going to work with Mac to make sure health care costs are reasonable so people can have affordable insurance. There's a lot of issues we can talk about, but one of the most important issues is taxes. It's a big national issue. I want to spend a little time talking about it today because there's a fundamental difference between the Republican and Democrat Parties on this important issue. And I'm going to discuss this issue and these differences between now and election day. And I'm going to spend some time right here in Macon, Georgia, talking about it.

Mac and I share a philosophy about taxes. We believe that the people who best know how to spend your money are the people who earn the money in the first place. And that's you. So we worked to ensure that working families are able to keep more of their paycheck. And that—those weren't just empty campaign words. Those are actually deliverables; that's what we did. Mac stood squarely for cutting the taxes. My administration and the Congress have enacted the largest tax relief since Ronald Reagan was in the White House. We cut the taxes for every American who pays taxes.

If you paid income taxes, we cut your taxes, see. We doubled the child tax credit; we reduced the marriage penalty; we cut taxes on small businesses; we cut taxes on capital gains and dividends to promote investment and jobs. And to reward family businesses and farmers for a lifetime of hard work and savings, we put the death tax on the road to extinction.

The Republican record on taxes is clear, and the Democrats in Washington have a clear record of their own. The trouble is, they don't want you to know about it. Recently the top Democrat leader in the House made an interesting declaration. She said, "We love tax cuts." Given her record, she must be a secret admirer. [*Laughter*] It's not just the so-called tax cuts for the rich she opposes. When we cut taxes for everybody who pays income taxes, she voted against it. When we reduced the marriage penalty, she voted against it. When we cut taxes on small businesses, she voted against it. When we lowered the taxes for families with children, she voted against it. When we put the death tax on the road to extinction, she voted against it. Time and time again, she had an opportunity to show her love for tax cuts—[*laughter*]—and she voted no. [*Laughter*] If this is a Democrat's idea of love—[*laughter*]—I wouldn't want to see what hate looks like.

Now she and other Democrats are trotting out their old line about how they're only going to raise taxes on the rich. We've heard that before. Sounds like a nice idea until you start doing the math. Let me just give you one example. Earlier this year, the Democrats put forward a budget alternative that called for $177 billion in additional spending authority over the next 5 years—a number that does not include all the other spending they proposed. The problem is, even if they raise taxes on everyone making over $200,000, they would bring in only $108 billion of new revenues. And that means the Democrats would have to come up with $69 billion for additional spending they proposed. And guess who's going to have to pay?

When the Democrats find themselves short of money to pay for all their spending promises, it's the middle class Americans

who get stuck with the bill. Recently the top Democrat on the House Ways and Means Committee—that's the committee that writes taxes—said he can't think of one of our tax cuts that should be extended. Think of that, not one—not the tax cuts for families with children, not the reduction in the marriage penalty, not the tax cuts on small businesses, not the tax cuts on dividend and capital gains, not the cut in the death tax. Even when asked to explain his remarks, he refused to commit to extending a single tax cut we passed. If he's not going to commit to extending these tax cuts now, think of what he would do if the Democrats gained control over the United States Congress and he became chairman of this important committee.

The difference between our parties could not be clearer, and so is your choice on election day. If you want to keep the tax cuts we passed, vote Republican on November the 7th.

What they don't seem to understand, what the national Democrats don't seem to understand, is that the economy grows when you control more of your own money. The tax cuts we passed put more than a trillion dollars in the hands of American workers and families and small businesses. And you've used that money to help fuel our strong and growing economy. The national unemployment rate is now 4.6 percent. People are working in the United States of America. Since August of 2003, our economy has added more than 6.6 million new jobs. Our progrowth economic policies work. They're making a difference for the people of America.

And this strong and growing economy has helped us reduce the Federal deficit. When I set a goal of cutting the deficit in half by 2009, Democrats said we couldn't get it done. Last year the ranking Democrat on the House Budget Committee said that my budget brought us nowhere near the goal of cutting the deficit in half. Here's what actually happened: A growing economy has helped produce record tax revenues, and in July, I announced that we were a year ahead of schedule in our plans to cut the deficit in half.

The Democrats' approach to cutting the deficit is taking more of your money to pay for their spending. The Republican approach is to restrain spending and let you keep more of your own money so this economy grows. And there's a fundamental difference, and it's clear as night and day.

Next month, our Nation has got this choice to make: Do we keep taxes low so we can keep this economy growing, or do we let the Democrats in Washington raise taxes and hurt the economic vitality of this country? The decision is yours to make in the voting booth. This decision will have a huge impact on the working people all across the United States of America. Whether you're a worker worried about the size of your paycheck or a business owner who's thinking about hiring more workers or a family worried about gas prices or health care costs, the last thing you need is higher taxes. To keep this economy growing and delivering prosperity to more Americans, we need to make the tax relief we passed permanent. And the best man for the Eighth Congressional District from Georgia to do that is Mac Collins.

Now, there are a lot of issues we got to discuss on the campaign trail, lot of domestic issues. But there is no bigger issue facing the voters than who best to protect the United States of America. You know, when I was campaigning in Georgia in 2000, I didn't believe I'd be saying such a statement. I didn't want to be a war President. I don't remember a lot of discussion about war in the 2000 campaign. But war came to our shores, a war we didn't ask for and a war we must win for the sake of future generations.

People ask me, what's it like to be the President. I said, it's a decisionmaking experience. [*Laughter*] And I make a lot. And a lot of decisions I make are based upon the knowledge I learned from that attack on September the 11th, 2001. I learned we face an enemy that is ruthless, that will kill the innocent in order to achieve objectives. I learned we face an enemy that has got an ideology, an ideology that is hard for a lot of Americans to understand, an ideology that does not believe in the same freedoms we believe.

Let's talk about religion for a second. One of the great, great beliefs of America and the fundamental cornerstone of our liberty is the fact that in America, you can worship any way you so choose. If you're a Jew, Christian,

Muslim, Hindu, atheist, agnostic, you're equally American—equally American. That's a sacred right for all of our citizens. It's a right that we must never abandon in America. And it stands in stark contrast to what the enemies of freedom believe. They say if you don't worship the way they tell you to worship, you'll be held to account. They say that if you don't view religion the way they view religion, you'll be punished.

We're in the ideological struggle of the 21st century. It's a struggle between rational, reasonable people who believe in basic freedoms versus extremists and radicals who murder the innocent in order to achieve their objectives. Right after 9/11, I made it clear that if one were to harvest—harbor one of these extremists or radicals, they will be judged as equally as guilty as those who commit murder.

And that's why we went into Afghanistan. I said, "You've been harboring Al Qaida"—remember, they were providing safe haven for Al Qaida to train. I gave them time to turn over Al Qaida to us; they chose otherwise. And as a result of defending ourselves, which is the most important job of government, we liberated 25 million people from the clutches of that ideology.

This Nation cannot wait for threats to fully materialize. If we're to do our most important job, which is to protect the American people, we must make sure we deal with threats before they hurt us. That's one of the fundamental changes of September the 11th. And it's important to have people in Congress who understand that. It's important to have a person like Mac Collins who knows that we must deal with the threat overseas so we do not have to face that threat here at home. I saw a threat; the Congress saw a threat; the United Nations saw a threat in Saddam Hussein; and the world is better off without him in power.

And now the challenge is to do the hard work of helping the Iraqis defend their freedom, the hard work of helping this young democracy survive the onslaught of murder from those who would prevent democracy from taking root. It's in our interests that we do so, because, you see, we must defeat the enemy overseas so we don't have to face them here at home. And if we were to retreat before the job is done, they would follow us straight to America.

And I understand it's hard on the American people, because the enemy is able to take innocent lives, and it gets on our TV screens. And it's hard. I know it's hard, because Americans are compassionate people. We care about innocent life. We care about the human condition. But it's necessary work. We'll continue to make sure our commanders have that which they need to do the job. We will be flexible in our tactics in order to help this young democracy survive. We will deploy the assets necessary to bring people to justice overseas so we don't have to face them here at home.

And I need people by my side in the United States Congress like Mac Collins, who will make sure our brave men and women who wear the uniform have all that's necessary to defend the United States of America. We will stay; we will fight; and we will win, for the security of the United States.

But we must do more than just stay on the offense against these killers. We pressure them every day. It's harder to plot and plan when you're on the run or you're hiding in a cave. But I recognized after 9/11, we must also deploy all assets to protect you. I think about my job of protecting you every day. It's the most fundamental of all requirements of government. And so after 9/11, I called upon Congress, and sometimes—and a week later called upon Congress to give our folks on the frontline of fighting terror the tools necessary to protect you.

There were walls set up between intelligence and criminal investigators that made it impossible for folks to share intelligence with those who are hired to protect you. It's hard for me to explain why that was the case—just take my word for it. [*Laughter*] It was there. You had somebody get some intelligence—they couldn't share it with the person charged with criminal justice matters. And it made us vulnerable to attack.

And so I asked Congress to pass the PATRIOT Act. Congressman Mac Collins didn't hesitate. He said it's the right thing to do, to give those on the frontline of fighting terror the tools necessary to protect you. As a matter of fact, right after 9/11, it wasn't hard

to get the bill passed. Five years later, however—or 4 years later, I came back and said, "We need to renew the bill," and on the floor of the United States Senate, Democrats filibustered the bill. See, that's Democrat-talk—I mean, Washington-talk for killing it, trying to kill it. They must think differently about this war on terror. It's a fundamental issue in this campaign, the difference about how to defend America.

The Senate minority leader openly bragged about—"We killed the bill," he said, killed the PATRIOT Act. To me, it speaks volumes in this campaign about which party clearly sees the enemy as it is and which party is willing to do the hard work necessary to protect the American people. I do not question the patriotism of anybody. I just know there's a different mindset, when they fought the PATRIOT Act's renewal.

As you know, I put in place a plan that said if Al Qaida is calling into the United States, we want to know why. We want to know why. In this war on terror, we're capturing people. And sometimes, for example, we might find something in somebody's pocket, and, say, it had a phone number of—an American phone number, and that phone number gets called from overseas—not with a call within the United States but from outside in. We need to know. If the most important job is to protect the American people, we need to know why that person, that Al Qaida and/or Al Qaida affiliate, is making a phone call.

So the United States Congress had a vote on this recently, out of the House of Representatives—166 Democrats voted against the bill, voted against giving our people the tools necessary to protect you. These are fine people; I know a lot of them. They're decent citizens of our country. They just have a different view about the world in which we live. Perhaps one way to summarize it is, okay, we'll get tough; we'll respond after we're attacked. My attitude is, we better give our folks the tools necessary to protect you before we get attacked, to protect the American people.

As you, I'm sure, read, we have been capturing people on the battlefield—I call it a battlefield because this is a war—and we have interrogated those people in order to find out whether or not they know about attacks on the United States. In my discussion to the American people about this issue, I talked about some of the examples. For example, we have captured and interrogated a fellow named Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, who our intelligence people believe was the mastermind of the September the 11th attacks.

This country is under threat. The enemy still wants to hurt us. And therefore, it seemed like it made sense to me that when we found the mastermind, or the presumed mastermind of the September the 11th attacks, that our professionals should find out what this fellow knows. If the most important job is to protect the American people, we must give our professionals the tools necessary to protect you.

This bill came up for a vote recently in the House and the Senate. The overwhelming majority of Democrats voted against giving our professionals the tools necessary to protect you. There's a fundamental difference in this campaign, and it's a clear difference. And the American people need to understand there's a difference in this campaign. Our most important job is to protect you from attack, and the Republican Party will make sure our professionals have the tools necessary to defend you.

And the people of this congressional district don't need to worry about where Mac Collins stands. I look forward to working with this good man to help protect you from the threats we face.

We're in an ideological struggle. It's the challenge of our time. It's the call of our generation. We've got a great military. We've got wonderful professionals working hard to protect you. We've got one other fantastic way to defend America, a great asset, and that's freedom. I believe in the universality of freedom. I believe there's an Almighty. I believe one of the great gifts of the Almighty is the desire for people to be free. And I believe that the United States of America—it's in our interest that we promote liberty. Oh, not every democracy is going to look like ours. Each democracy ought to represent their own history and traditions. But it's in our interest that liberty flourish, because that's how you ultimately win the ideological struggle

that pits reasonable people against extremists. That's how you win a struggle with those who want their children to grow up in a reasonable society, a hopeful society, against those who will create chaos so that they can't do so.

You know, I recently—you might remember, I just had an interesting experience recently when the Prime Minister of Japan and I went down to Elvis's place. [*Laughter*] Laura and I had never been there, and so—[*laughter*]—I thought that would be fun. [*Laughter*] Prime Minister Koizumi really wanted to go there—[*laughter*]—because he is a—he's an Elvis fan. He loves Elvis. But I also wanted to tell a story. I'm going to tell it right quick and then head back up—and have dinner with Laura. Here it is: I find it is a really interesting kind of twist of history, I guess you could put it, that I'm going to Elvis's place with the Prime Minister of Japan, and my dad fought the Japanese. Eighteen-year-old George H.W. Bush—I'm sure you've got relatives, the same thing happened to them—responded to the violent attack on the United States, and said, "I want to volunteer," like thousands of other kids.

And we fought the Japanese with all we had. And it was a bloody war—really bloody war. And yet 60 years later, I'm on Air Force One flying to Memphis—[*laughter*]—talking about the peace, working with Prime Minister Koizumi on issues like North Korea. And I will tell you, we're more likely to solve this issue peacefully when we've got people like Japan and China and South Korea and Russia saying the exact same thing as the United States is to the man in North Korea.

It helps to be able to sit down and talk ally to ally about the peace. We talked about the fact that the Japanese had 1,000 troops in Iraq helping this young democracy fight off the extremists that can't stand the thought of a free society in their midst. We talked about the strategic implications of abandoning those who long for liberty in the Middle East. He knows what I know, that there could be a world in which moderate governments get toppled, which is precisely what the enemy said they want to do, so that these extremists control energy resources in which they'd be able to blackmail the free world.

And combine that with a nuclear weapon in the hands of an Iran, and Koizumi and I understand that the world would look back and say, "What happened to them? How come they couldn't see the threat?" We're all flying on Air Force One with the former Prime Minister of Japan—he recently left office—talking about the peace. And I found that to be amazing. Something happened between when George H.W. Bush became a Navy pilot, and his son is talking about the peace. And what happened was, Japan adopted a Japanese-style democracy. Liberty has got the capacity to change an enemy into an ally. Liberty has got the capacity to bring hope where hope is needed and light where there's darkness.

I believe if this generation does its duty to protect future generations of Americans, someday, an American President will be sitting down talking with the duly elected leaders of the Middle East and talking about the peace, and a generation of Americans will be better off.

Those are the stakes of the elections of 2006, the stakes of the world in which we live. And I'll be proud to work with Mac Collins to bring the peace we all want. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:35 p.m. at the Macon Centreplex. In his remarks, he referred to former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and Chairman Kim Jong Il of North Korea.

The President's News Conference

October 11, 2006

The President. Thank you. Before I take your questions, I'd like to discuss a couple subjects. First, I want to briefly mention that today we've released the actual budget numbers for the fiscal year that ended on September the 30th. These numbers show that we have now achieved our goal of cutting the Federal budget deficit in half, and we've done it 3 years ahead of schedule. The budget numbers are proof that progrowth economic policies work. By restraining spending in Washington and allowing Americans to keep more of what they earn, the economy is creating jobs and reducing the deficit and

making our Nation a more prosperous nation for all our citizens.

I'm going to talk about the progrowth economic policies that helped bring about the dramatic reduction in the deficit this afternoon, and I'm going to remind our fellow citizens that good tax policy has a lot to do with keeping the economy strong, and therefore, we'll continue to urge the Congress to make the tax cuts permanent.

I also want to talk about the unfolding situation in North Korea. Earlier this week, the Government of North Korea proclaimed to the world that it had conducted a successful nuclear test. The United States is working to confirm North Korea's claim, but this claim itself constitutes a threat to international peace and stability.

In response to North Korea's actions, we're working with our partners in the region and the United Nations Security Council to ensure there are serious repercussions for the regime in Pyongyang. I've spoken with other world leaders, including Japan, China, South Korea, and Russia. We all agree that there must be a strong Security Council resolution that will require North Korea to abide by its international commitments to dismantle its nuclear programs. This resolution should also specify a series of measures to prevent North Korea from exporting nuclear or missile technologies and prevent financial transactions or asset transfers that would help North Korea develop its nuclear and missile capabilities.

Last year, North Korea agreed to a path to a better future for its people in the six-party talks—September of last year. We had an agreement with North Korea. It came about in the form of what we call the six-party joint statement. It offered the prospect for normalized relations with both Japan and the United States. It talked about economic cooperation in energy, trade, and investment. In that joint statement, North Korea committed to abandoning all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs and to adhering to the Treaty on Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to IAEA safeguards. They agreed.

The United States affirmed that we have no nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula. We affirmed that we have no intention of attacking North Korea. With its actions this week, North Korea has once again chosen to reject the prospect for a better future offered by the six-party joint statement. Instead, it has opted to raise tensions in the region.

I'm pleased that the nations in the region are making clear to North Korea what is at stake. I thank China, South Korea, Japan, and Russia for their strong statements of condemnation of North Korea's actions. Peace on the Korean Peninsula requires that these nations send a clear message to Pyongyang that its actions will not be tolerated, and I appreciate their leadership.

The United States remains committed to diplomacy. The United States also reserves all options to defend our friends and our interests in the region against the threats from North Korea. So, in response to North Korea's provocation, we'll increase defense cooperation with our allies, including cooperation on ballistic missile defense to protect against North Korean aggression and cooperation to prevent North Korea from exporting nuclear and missile technologies.

Our goals remain clear: peace and security in Northeast Asia and a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula. We will take the necessary actions to achieve these goals. We will work with the United Nations. We'll support our allies in the region. And together we will ensure that North Korea understands the consequences if it continues down its current path.

I'd like to discuss the latest developments in Iraq. This morning I just had a meeting with Secretary Rumsfeld and General George Casey, who is in town today. General Casey, as you know, is the top commander on the ground in Iraq. The brutality of Iraq's enemies has been on full display in recent days. Earlier this week, Deputy President Tariq al-Hashimi lost his brother, Major General Hashimi, when gunmen dressed in police uniforms broke into his house and shot him in the head. Only a few months ago, his sister and other brother were assassinated. On behalf of the United States, I express my heartfelt condolences to the al-Hashimi family. And we express our condolences to all those who've suffered at the hands of these brutal killers.

The situation is difficult in Iraq, no question about it. The violence is being caused by a combination of terrorists, elements of former regime criminals, and sectarian militias. Attacks and casualties have risen during the Ramadan period. A rise in violence has occurred every Ramadan period in the last 3 years.

Attacks and casualties have also increased recently because our forces are confronting the enemy in Baghdad and in other parts of Iraq. The past weekend, U.S. and Iraqi forces engaged militias—or members of an illegal militia—during a mission to capture a high-value target. The reason I bring this up is that we're on the move. We're taking action. We're helping this young democracy succeed. The reasons we went after the illegal militia was to capture a man responsible for killing many innocent Iraqis, and we accomplished that mission. Our troops have increased their presence on the streets of Baghdad, and together with Iraqi forces, they're working to ensure that terrorists and death squads cannot intimidate the local population and operate murder rings.

Amid the violence, important political developments are also taking place. The Iraqi legislature reached a compromise and set up a process for addressing the difficult issues of federalism and constitutional reform. In addition, the Government of Prime Minister Maliki has taken three important steps to build confidence in his Government and in the Iraqi security forces. First, Prime Minister Maliki announced a plan to bring together Sunni and Shi'a parties and stop sectarian violence. The Prime Minister's plan has received support from every major political group in Iraq, including some hard-line Sunni elements that chose not to join the unity Government. Among the steps the Prime Minister announced is a new system of local and neighborhood committees, made up of both Sunni and Shi'a members, that will work directly with Iraqi security forces to resolve tensions and stop sectarian strife.

Second, this past weekend Prime Minister Maliki met with tribal leaders from the Anbar Province. These tribal leaders told him they've had enough of the terrorists seeking to control the Sunni heartland, and they're ready to stand up and fight Al Qaida. The Prime Minister told them that he welcomed their support and would help them.

Third, Prime Minister Maliki's Government suspended the Eighth Brigade, Second Division of the national police after learning that this unit was not intervening to stop sectarian violence in and around Baghdad. This police brigade has been decertified by the Iraqi Ministry of Interior; it's been removed from service; it's now being reviewed and retrained. With this action, the Iraqi Government has made clear, it's not going to tolerate the infiltration of the Iraqi security forces by militias and sectarian interests.

The reason I bring this up, these examples up, is that there's a political process that's going forward. And it's the combination of security and a political process that will enable the United States to achieve our objective, which is an Iraq that can govern itself, sustain itself, defend itself, and be an ally in this war on terror.

Iraq's Government—Iraq's democratic Government is just 4 months old. Yet in the face of terrorist threats and sectarian violence, Iraq's new leaders are beginning to make tough choices. And as they make these tough decisions, we'll stand with them—we'll help them. It's in our interests that Iraq succeed.

Look, I fully understand the American people are seeing unspeakable violence on their TV screens. These are tough times in Iraq. The enemy is doing everything within its power to destroy the Government and to drive us out of the Middle East, starting with driving us out of Iraq before the mission is done. The stakes are high. As a matter of fact, they couldn't be higher. If we were to abandon that country before the Iraqis can defend their young democracy, the terrorists would take control of Iraq and establish a new safe haven from which to launch new attacks on America. How do I know that would happen?—because that's what the enemy has told us would happen; that's what they have said. And as Commander in Chief of the United States military and as a person working to secure this country, I take the words of the enemy very seriously, and so should the American people.

We can't tolerate a new terrorist state in the heart of the Middle East, with large oil

reserves that could be used to fund its radical ambitions or used to inflict economic damage on the West. By helping the Iraqis build a democracy—an Iraqi-style democracy—we will deal a major blow to terrorists and extremists; we'll bring hope to a troubled region; and we'll make this country more secure.

With that, I'll take some questions, starting with Terry Hunt [Associated Press].

Diplomatic Efforts With North Korea

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Democrats say that North Korea's reported test shows that your policy has been a failure, that you got bogged down in Iraq, where there were no weapons of mass destruction, while North Korea was moving ahead with a bomb. Is your administration to blame for letting North Korea get this far?

The President. North Korea has been trying to acquire bombs and weapons for a long period of time, long before I came into office. And it's a threat that we've got to take seriously, and we do, of course.

In 1994, the Government—our Government—entered into a bilateral arrangement with the North Koreans that worked to make sure that they don't have the capacity to develop a bomb, and North Korea agreed that there would be no program whatsoever toward the development of a weapon. And yet we came into office and discovered that they were developing a program, unbeknownst to the folks with whom they signed the agreement, the United States Government. And we confronted them with that evidence, and they admitted it was true and then left the agreement that they had signed with the U.S. Government.

And my point—and then I—as I mentioned in my opening statement, we, once again, had North Korea at the table—this time with other parties at the table—and they agreed once again, through this statement as a result of the six-party talks, to verifiably show that they weren't advancing a nuclear weapons program. And they chose again to leave. And my point to you is that it's the intransigence of the North Korean leader that speaks volumes about the process. It is his unwillingness to choose a way forward for his country—a better way forward for his country. It is his decisions. And what's changed since then is that we now have other parties at the table who have made it clear to North Korea that they share the same goals of the United States, which is a nuclear-weapons-free peninsula.

Obviously, I'm listening very carefully to this debate. I can remember the time when it was said that the Bush administration goes it alone too often in the world, which I always thought was a bogus claim to begin with. And now all of a sudden people are saying, the Bush administration ought to be going alone with North Korea. But it didn't work in the past, is my point. The strategy did not work. I learned a lesson from that and decided that the best way to convince Kim Jong Il to change his mind on a nuclear weapons program is to have others send the same message.

And so, in my phone calls that I recently made right after the test, I lamented the fact that he had tested to Hu Jintao and also lamented the fact that Hu Jintao had publicly asked him not to test. I talked to the South Korean President, and I said, "It ought to be clear to us now that we must continue to work together to make it abundantly clear to the leader in North Korea that there's a better way forward." When he walks away from agreement, he's not just walking away from a table with the United States as the only participant, he's walking away from a table that others are sitting at.

And my point to you is, in order to solve this diplomatically, the United States and our partners must have a strong diplomatic hand, and you have a better diplomatic hand with others sending the message than you do when you're alone. And so, obviously, I made the decision that the bilateral negotiations wouldn't work, and the reason I made that decision is because they didn't. And we'll continue to work to come up with a diplomatic solution in North Korea.

This is a serious issue. But I want to remind our fellow citizens that the North Korean issue was serious for years. And I also remind our citizens that we want to make sure that we solve this problem diplomatically. We've got to give every effort to do so. But in my discussions with our partners,

I reassured them that the security agreements we have with them will be enforced if need be, and that's in particular to South Korea and Japan.

Terry. I mean—you're not Terry; you're Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Iraq Study Group/Democracy Efforts in the Middle East

Q. Thank you very much, sir.

The President. It's a huge insult, I know.

Q. Senator Warner says Iraq appears to be drifting sideways, and James Baker says a change in strategy may be needed. Are you willing to acknowledge that a change may be needed?

The President. Steve, we're constantly changing tactics to achieve a strategic goal. Our strategic goal is a country which can defend itself, sustain itself, and govern itself. The strategic goal is to help this young democracy succeed in a world in which extremists are trying to intimidate rational people in order to topple moderate governments and to extend a caliphate.

The stakes couldn't be any higher, as I said earlier, in the world in which we live. There are extreme elements that use religion to achieve objectives. And they want us to leave, and they want us to—and they want to topple government. They want to extend an ideological caliphate that is—has no concept of liberty inherent in their beliefs. They want to control oil resources, and they want to plot and plan and attack us again. That's their objectives. And so—and our strategic objective is to prevent them from doing that. And we're constantly changing tactics to achieve that objective.

And I appreciate Senator Warner going over there and taking a look. I want you to notice, what he did say is, if the plan is now not working—the plan that's in place isn't working, America needs to adjust. I completely agree. That's what I talk to General Casey about. I said, General, the Baghdad security plan is in its early implementation. I support you strongly, but if you come into this office and say we need to do something differently, I support you. If you need more troops, I support you. If you're going to devise a new strategy, we're with you, because I trust General Casey to make the judgments necessary to put the tactics in place to help us achieve an objective.

And I appreciate Jimmy Baker—willingness to—he and Lee Hamilton are putting this—have got a group they put together that I think was Congressman Wolf's suggestion—or passing the law. We supported the idea. I think it's good to have some of our elder statesmen—I hate to call Baker an elder statesmen—but to go over there and take a look and to come back and make recommendations. Somebody said he said, "Well, you know, cut-and-run isn't working." That's not our policy. Our policy is to help this country succeed, because I understand the stakes. And I'm going to repeat them one more time. As a matter of fact, I'm going to spend a lot of time repeating the stakes about what life is like in the Middle East.

It is conceivable that there will be a world in which radical forms, extreme forms of religion fight each other for influence in the Middle East, in which they've got the capacity to use oil as an economic weapon. And when you throw in the mix a nuclear weapon in the hands of a sworn enemy of the United States, you begin to see an environment that would cause some later on in history to look back and say, "How come they couldn't see the problem? What happened to them in the year 2006? Why weren't they able to see the problems now and deal with them before it came too late?" Steve.

And so Iraq is an important part of dealing with this problem. And my vow to the American people is, I understand the stakes, and I understand what it would mean for us to leave before the job is done. And I look forward to listening how—what Jimmy Baker and Lee Hamilton say about how to get the job done. I appreciate them working on this issue because I think they understand what I know, and the stakes are high.

And the stakes are high when it comes to developing a Palestinian state so that Israel can live at peace. And the stakes are high when it comes to making sure the young democracy of Lebanon is able to fend off the extremists and radicals that want to crater that democracy.

This is the real challenge of the 21st century. I like to tell people we're in an ideological struggle. And it's a struggle between extremists and radicals and people of moderation who want to simply live a peaceful life. And the calling of this country and in this century is whether or not we will help the forces of moderation prevail. That's the fundamental question facing the United States of America—beyond my Presidency. And you can tell I made my choice. And I made my choice because the most solemn duty of the American President and government is to protect this country from harm.

Martha [Martha Raddatz, ABC News]. Yes. I'm sure it was a profound followup. Okay.

Situation in North Korea/Six-Party Talks

Q. Can we go back to North Korea, Mr. President?

The President. Please.

Q. You talk about failures of the past administration with the policy towards North Korea. Again, how can you say your policy is more successful, given that North Korea has apparently tested a nuclear weapon? And also, if you wouldn't mind, what is the redline for North Korea, given what has happened over the past few months?

The President. My point was, bilateral negotiations didn't work. I appreciate the efforts of previous administrations. It just didn't work. And therefore, I thought it was important to change how we approached the problem so that we could solve it diplomatically. And I firmly believe that with North Korea and with Iran that it is best to deal with these regimes with more than one voice, because I understand how it works. What ends up happening is, is that we say to a country such as North Korea, "Here's a reasonable way forward." They try to extract more at the negotiating table, or they've got a different objective, and then they go and say, "Wait a minute; the United States is being unreasonable." They make a threat. They could—they say the world is about to fall apart because of the United States problem. And all of a sudden, we become the issue.

But the United States message to North Korea and Iran and the people in both countries is that we have—we want to solve issues peacefully. We said there's a better way forward for you. Here's a chance, for example, to help your country economically. And all you got to do is verifiably show that you—in Iran's case, that you suspended your weapons program; and in North Korea's case, that you've got international safeguards on your program—which they agreed to, by the way.

And so my point is, is that—to the American people I say, "Look, we want to solve this diplomatically." It's important for the President to say to the American people, diplomacy was what—is our first choice and that I've now outlined a strategy. And I think it is a hopeful sign that China is now a integral partner in helping North Korea understand that it's just not the United States speaking to them.

And it's an important sign to North Korea that South Korea, a country which obviously is deeply concerned about North Korean activities—South Korea is a partner, and that if North Korea decides that they don't like what's being said, they're not just stiffing the United States—I don't know if that's a diplomatic word or not—but they're sending a message to countries in the neighborhood that they really don't care what other countries think, which leads to further isolation. And when we get a U.N. Security Council resolution, it will help us deal with issues like proliferation and his ability—"he" being Kim Jong Il's ability—to attract money to continue to develop his programs.

Q. What about the redline, sir?

The President. Well, the world has made it clear that these tests caused us to come together and work in the United Nations to send a clear message to the North Korean regime. We're bound up together with a common strategy to solve this issue peacefully through diplomatic means.

Kevin [Kevin Corke, NBC News].

International Cooperation on Situation in North Korea

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. If I might say, that is a beautiful suit.

Q. Thank you, sir. My tailor appreciates that.

The President. And I can't see anybody else who even comes close. [*Laughter*]

Q. Thank you very much. I'll be happy to pass along my tailor's number if you'd like that, sir.

The President. I'll take that back. I will recognize that on this—please.

Q. On May 23, 2003, sir, you said—you effectively drew a line in the sand. You said, "We will not tolerate a nuclear North Korea." And yet now it appears that they have crossed that line. And I'm wondering what now, sir, do you say to both the American people and the international community vis-a-vis what has happened over the last 48 hours?

The President. No, I appreciate that, and I think it's very important for the American people and North Korea to understand that that statement still stands, and that one way to make sure that we're able to achieve our objective is to have other people join us in making it clear to North Korea that they share that objective. And that's what's changed. That's what's changed over a relatively quick period of time. It used to be that the United States would say that, and that would be kind of a stand-alone statement. Now, when that statement is said, there are other nations in the neighborhood saying it.

And so we'll give diplomacy a chance to work. It is very important for us to solve these problems diplomatically. And I thank the leaders of—listen, when I call them on the phone, we're strategizing. This isn't, "Oh, please stand up and say something." This is, "How can we continue to work together to solve this problem?" And that is a substantial change, Kevin, from the previous times.

Suzanne [Suzanne Malveaux, Cable News Network]. First best dressed person here. Sorry.

Report on Iraqi Civilian Casualties

Q. Kevin and I coordinated.

The President. Yes. No, he actually looks——

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Back on Iraq, a group of American and Iraqi health officials today released a report saying that 655,000 Iraqis have died since the Iraq war. That figure is 20 times the figure that you cited in December, at 30,000. Do you care to amend or update your figure, and do you consider this a credible report?

The President. No, I don't consider it a credible report; neither does General Casey and neither do Iraqi officials. I do know that a lot of innocent people have died, and that troubles me, and it grieves me. And I applaud the Iraqis for their courage in the face of violence. I am amazed that this is a society which so wants to be free that they're willing to—that there's a level of violence that they tolerate. And it's now time for the Iraqi Government to work hard to bring security in neighborhoods so people can feel at peace.

No question, it's violent, but this report is one—they put it out before; it was pretty well—the methodology was pretty well discredited. But I talk to people like General Casey and, of course, the Iraqi Government put out a statement talking about the report.

Q. ——the figure of 30,000, Mr. President? Do you stand by your figure, 30,000?

The President. You know, I stand by the figure. A lot of innocent people have lost their life—600,000, or whatever they guessed at, is just—it's not credible. Thank you.

Baier [Bret Baier, FOX News].

2006 Elections

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Since you last held a news conference here in the Rose Garden, about a month ago, Republicans across the country have seen races that were once safe, tighten, with the tide turning, according to several polls, towards the Democrats. Understanding that you don't lead by looking at polls——

The President. Thank you, sir. Thank you. Finally.

Q. ——as you've said many times, are you still confident Republicans will hold the House and the Senate?

The President. Yes, I am.

Q. If so, why? And do you believe that the biggest drag on the Republican Party is the situation in Iraq?

The President. I believe that the situation in Iraq is, no question, tough on the American psyche, like I said, I think, at this very spot last time I faced the press corps. And it's serious business. Look, the American people want to know, can we win—that's what they want to know—and do we have

a plan to win. There are some who say, "Get out; it's not worth it." And those are some of the voices, by the way, in the Democrat Party. Certainly not all Democrats, but some of the loud voices in the party say, "Get out."

And so, no question this is an issue, but so is the economy. And I believe there'll be—I still stand by my prediction, we'll have a Republican Speaker and a Republican leader of the Senate. And the reason I say that is because I believe the two biggest issues in this campaign are, one, the economy. And the economy is growing. The national unemployment rate is 4.6 percent. We've just discovered, as the result of analyzing new data, that we added 6.6 million new jobs since August of 2003. Gas prices are down. Tax cuts are working.

And there's a difference of opinion in the campaign about taxes, and we will keep them low. Matter of fact, I would like to keep the—make the tax cuts we pass permanent. And the Democrats will raise taxes. Now, I know they say only on rich people, but that's—in my judgment, having been around here long enough to know, it's just code word. They're going to raise them on whoever they can raise them on.

And then on security—the American people know that our biggest job is to protect this country from further attack, and—because they know there's an enemy that still plots and plans. And there is; there is. Recently we learned that when British intelligence and U.S. intelligence—with our help—broke up a plot to get on airplanes and blow them up, the planes that were going to fly from Great Britain to here. And they want to know—"they," the people—want to know what are we doing to protect them.

There have been some votes on the floor of the Senate and the House that make it abundantly clear, we just have a different view of the world. The vast majority of Democrats voted against a program that would enable us to interrogate high-value detainees. That was the vote. It's wide open for everybody to see: Should a CIA program go forward or not go forward? The vast majority of Democrats in the House voted against a program that would have institutionalized the capacity for this Government to listen to Al Qaida phone calls or Al Qaida affiliate phone calls coming from outside the country to inside the country.

It's very important for our fellow citizens to recognize that I don't question anybody's patriotism, but I do question a strategy that says, we can't give those on the frontline of fighting terror the tools necessary to fight terror. I believe that in order to defend America, we must take a threat seriously and defeat an enemy overseas so we don't have to face them here. I don't believe we can wait to respond after attack has occurred.

And so I think these are the two biggest issues, Bret. And Iraq is a part of the war on terror. Now, I recognize Democrats say that's not the case, and what I say to the American people when I am out there is, all you've got to do is listen to what Usama bin Laden says. Don't believe me that it's a part of the war on terror; listen to the enemy, or listen to Mr. Zawahiri, the number two of Al Qaida, both of whom made it clear that Iraq is central in their plans. And I firmly believe that American people understand that this is different from other war because in this war, if we were to leave early before the job is done, the enemy will follow us here.

And so I believe, Bret, that we'll maintain control because we're on the right side of the economic issue and the security issue.

Let's see. Yes, sir, Mr. NPR [Don Gonyea, National Public Radio]. Welcome to the front row. Yes, it's good.

Democratic Party/2006 Elections

Q. Thank you. It's good to be here. Appreciate it. Following up on that answer, one of the things Democrats complain about is the way you portray their position——

The President. Oh, really?

Q. ——in wanting to fight the war on terror. They would say you portray it as either they support exactly what you want to do, or they want to do nothing. We hear it in some of your speeches. Is it fair to portray it to the American people that way?

The President. Well, I think it's fair to use the words of the people in Congress or their votes. The vote was on the Hamdan legislation: Do you want to continue a program that enabled us to interrogate folks or not? And all I was doing was reciting the

votes. I would cite my opponent in the 2004 campaign when he said there needs to be a date certain from which to withdraw from Iraq. I characterize that as cut-and-run because I believe it is cut-and-run. In other words, I've been using either their votes or their words to characterize their positions.

Q. But they don't say "cut-and-run."

The President. Well, they may not use "cut-and-run," but they say "date certain is when to get out," before the job is done. That is cut-and-run. Nobody has accused me of having a real sophisticated vocabulary; I understand that. And maybe their words are more sophisticated than mine. But when you pull out before the job is done, that's cut-and-run as far as I'm concerned, and that's cut-and-run as far as most Americans are concerned. And so, yes, I'm going to continue reminding them of their words and their votes.

Jim [Jim Axelrod, CBS News].

Iraq Study Group/U.S. Armed Forces in Iraq

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. My best suit is in the cleaners.

The President. That's not even a suit.

Q. I know. [*Laughter*] You got to give me more time in the morning with a news conference.

The President. I know. You like to wake up about 8:30. [*Laughter*]

Q. I want to ask you——

The President. High-priced news guys.

Q. Yes, sure.

The President. Yes. [*Laughter*]

Q. I want to ask you a little bit about—I want to follow on the criticism that you've received for the suggestions from Senator Warner and from James Baker, now Olympia Snowe. This is not exactly the board of directors for moveon.org. Do you——

The President. That's true.

Q. Do you feel in some way that there is some shift going on in terms of the general support for the war in Iraq and your strategy specifically? And do you ever feel like the walls are closing in on you in terms of support for this?

The President. [*Laughter*] Jim, I understand how hard it is, and I also understand the stakes. And let me go back to Senator Warner. Senator Warner said, "If the plan isn't working, adjust." I agree completely. I haven't seen Baker's report yet, but one of the things I remind you of is that I don't hear those people saying, get out before the job is done. They're saying, be flexible. And we are.

I believe that you—you empower your generals to make the decisions, the recommendations on what we do to win. You can't fight a war from Washington. In other words, you can't make the tactical decisions necessary to win. It just won't work. And I trust General Casey. I find him to be one of the really competent, decent guys.

Q. But——

The President. Let me finish please for a second. Plus, I couldn't hear you, but I saw you talking. Anyway, I think it's—I value his judgment. I value his—I know he wants to succeed, and I value his objectivity. And he—what's important for the President is when I open up that door in there and General Casey walks in, he feels confident to tell me what's on his mind, Jim—"Here's what's going right, and here's what's going wrong, and here's what we're doing about it."

And so, for those folks saying, make sure there's flexibility, I couldn't agree more with you. And I think the characterization of, "Let's stay the course," is about a quarter right. "Stay the course" means keep doing what you're doing. My attitude is, don't do what you're doing if it's not working; change. "Stay the course" also means don't leave before the job is done. And that's—we're going to get the job done in Iraq. And it's important that we do get the job done in Iraq.

Defeat in Iraq will embolden an enemy. And I want to repeat to you the reality of the world in which we live. If we were to leave before the job is done, the enemy is coming after us. And most Americans—back to your question, Bret—understand we've got to defeat them there so we don't face them here. It's a different kind of war, but nevertheless, it is a war.

Go ahead.

Insurgency and Terrorist Attacks in Iraq

Q. I'm just wondering, 2 months ago, Prime Minister Maliki was here, and you talked about how we had to be nimble and

facile in our approach. And my question is, are we being nimble and facile in the right way? Is what General Casey telling you the most effective advice? Because it would seem in the 2 months since Prime Minister Maliki was here, things have only gotten more bloody in Iraq.

The President. No question, Ramadan is here; no question we're engaging the enemy more than we were before. And by the way, when you engage the enemy, it causes there to be more action and more kinetic action. And the fundamental question is, do I get good advice from Casey? And the answer is, I believe I do; I believe I do.

Please. Sanger [David Sanger, New York Times].

Diplomatic Efforts With North Korea

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You spoke very passionately before about acting before it was too late on major issues. You faced one of those moments in early 2003. This was when the North Koreans had thrown out the international inspectors, said they were going to go ahead and turn their fuel into weapons. And you had a moment to tell them that they would face serious consequences if they were going to do that. You also had what may have been the last moment for any American President to destroy their fuel supplies while they were all in one place.

The President. You mean, bombing them?

Q. Whatever action you might have needed to take, including military action, against the site—the one site at the time where they were getting ready——

The President. I just wanted to clarify. Sorry to interrupt you.

Q. Yes. And you chose not to. And I was wondering whether in retrospect you regret that decision at all; whether or not you think that, because of the long history of deception that you pointed out before, you should have acted differently?

The President. I used the moment to continue my desire to convince others to become equity partners in the Korean issue, North Korean issue, because, David, I, obviously, look at all options all the time, and I felt like the best way to solve this problem would be through a diplomacy effort that was renewed and reinvigorated by having China and South Korea and Japan and Russia joining us in convincing Kim Jong Il there's a better way forward.

And frankly, I was quite optimistic that we had succeeded last September when we had this joint statement, which you adequately covered. And yet he walked away from it. He decided, well, maybe his word doesn't mean anything.

And so we will continue to work diplomatically to solve the problem. That's what I owe the American people, to come up with a diplomatic solution. I also made it clear, and I will repeat, that we have security obligations in the region that I reconfirmed to our partners.

Sir. Washington Post man [Michael Fletcher, Washington Post].

Situations in Iran and North Korea

Q. Good morning, Mr. President.

The President. That would be Mike.

Q. Right. I'd like to follow up on an earlier question about your rhetoric on Iran and North Korea.

The President. Okay.

Q. You said yesterday in your statement that the North Korean nuclear test was unacceptable. Your chief negotiator for the six-party talks said last week that North Korea has a choice of either having weapons or having a future. When you spoke a month or so ago to the American Legion, you talked about Iran and said, "There must be consequences for Iran's defiance, and we must not allow Iran to develop a nuclear weapon." I am wondering, sir—your administration has issued these kinds of warnings pretty regularly over the last 5 years, and yet these countries have pursued their nuclear programs. I'm wondering if you—what is different about the current set of warnings, and do you think the administration and our Government runs a risk of looking feckless to the world by issuing these kinds of warnings regularly without response from the countries?

The President. That's a fair question. First of all, I am making it clear our policy hasn't changed. It's important for the folks to understand that we don't continually shift our goals based upon polls or—whatever.

See, I think clarity of purpose is very important to rally a diplomatic effort to solve the problem. And so I try to speak as clearly as I can and make sure there's no ambiguity in our position. I also found that's a pretty good way to help rally a diplomatic effort that I believe will more likely work.

I know this sounds—I'm just saying it over and over again, but it's—rhetoric and actions are all aimed at convincing others that they have an equal stake in whether or not these nations have a nuclear weapon, because I firmly believe, Mike, that that is the best strategy to solve the problem. One has a stronger hand when there's more people playing your same cards. It is much easier for a nation to hear what I believe are legitimate demands if there's more than one voice speaking. And that's why we're doing what we're doing.

And to answer your question as to whether or not the words will be empty, I would suggest that, quite the contrary, that we not only have spoken about the goals, but as a result of working together with our friends, Iran and North Korea are looking at a different—a different diplomatic scenario.

I thought you were going to ask the question, following up on Sanger, how come you don't use military action now? You kind of hinted it; you didn't say it. And some wonder that. As a matter of fact, I'm asked questions around the country—just go ahead and use the military. And my answer is, is that I believe the Commander in Chief must try all diplomatic measures before we commit our military. And I believe the diplomacy is—we're making progress when we've got others at the table.

I'll ask myself a followup. If that's the case, why did you use military action in Iraq? And the reason why is because we tried the diplomacy. Matter of fact, we tried resolution after resolution after resolution. All these situations are—each of them different and require a different response, a different effort to try to solve this peacefully. And we'll continue to do so.

The inability to convince people to move forward speaks volumes about them. It ought to say to all the world that we're dealing with people that maybe don't want peace—which in my judgment, in order for there to be peace, requires an international response. It says volumes about a person who signs an agreement with one administration and signs an agreement or speaks about an agreement with another administration and doesn't honor the agreement. It points up the fact that these are dangerous regimes and requires an international effort to work in concert.

Roger [Roger Runningen, Bloomberg News].

Six-Party Talks With North Korea

Q. Thank you. I'd like to turn back to North Korea for a bit. You've said that bilateral talks didn't work. Secretary Baker has said that maybe they should be considered, maybe at some point under certain conditions. Are you prepared now to just take the possibility of one-one-one talks with North Korea off the table?

The President. I'm saying as loud as I can and as clear as I can that there is a better way forward for North Korea and that we will work within the context of the six-party talks.

People say, "You don't talk to North Korea." We had a representative, a United States representative at the table in the six-party talks. The North Korean leader knows our position. It's easy to understand our position: There is a better way forward for his Government. And people need to review the September '05 document, the joint statement that talked about economics, and we won't attack North Korea. We agreed that we shouldn't have nuclear weapons on the peninsula. I mean, there is a way forward for the leader in North Korea to choose. We've made our choice, and so has China, South Korea, Japan, and Russia. And that's what's changed.

I also am deeply concerned about the lives of the citizens in that country. I mean there's—and that's why I named a envoy, Jay Lefkowitz, to talk about the human condition inside of North Korea. And the reason we did that is we care about how people live. We care about people starving. We care about the fact that there are large concentration camps.

You know, one of the most meaningful moments of my Presidency came when a Japanese mother came to the Oval Office to talk about what it was like to have her daughter kidnaped by North Korea. You can imagine what that was like. It broke my heart, and it should break everybody's heart. But it speaks to the nature of the regime. And therefore, we—I am convinced that to solve this diplomatically requires more than just America's voice.

Let's see here. Mark [Mark Silva, Chicago Tribune].

Former Representative Mark Foley/2006 Elections

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Yes.

Q. Mr. President, with growing numbers of House Members and staffers saying that they knew of and told others about a problem with Mark Foley some years ago, has House Speaker Hastert lost touch within his own ranks, and has the scandal damaged Hastert's credibility and effectiveness in maintaining party control in the midterm elections?

The President. No, I think the Speaker's strong statements have made it clear to not only the party members but to the country that he wants to find out the facts. All of us want to find out the facts. I mean, this is disgusting behavior when a Member of Congress betrays the trust of the Congress and a family that sent a young page up to serve in the Congress. And I appreciated Speaker Hastert's strong declaration of his desire to get to the bottom of it. And we want to make sure we understand what Republicans knew and what Democrats knew, in order to find the facts. And I hope that happens sooner rather than later.

Q. And his credibility, sir——

The President. Oh, Denny is very credible, as far as I'm concerned. And he's done a fine job as Speaker, and when he stands up and says, "I want to know the truth"—I believe yesterday he said that if somebody on his staff didn't tell him the truth, they're gone—I respect that and appreciate that and believe him. And—no, I think the elections will be decided by security and the economy. I really do, Mark. I know this is—this Foley issue bothered a lot of people, including me. But I think when they get in that booth, they're going to be thinking about how best to secure the country from attack and how best to keep the economy growing.

I think the last time I was out here with you, I reminded you that I understand that the economy is always a salient issue in campaigns. We've had some experience with that in my family, I think I said. I still believe the economy is an important issue, and I believe on this issue there is a huge difference of opinion.

The other day, by the way, Don, I did bring up the words of the leader of the House when she said, "I love tax cuts." And then I reminded everybody that if she loved them so much, how come she voted against a lot of tax cuts? In other words, again, back to your question about whether it's fair to use people's words—I think to say, I love tax cuts, and then vote against tax cuts it's just—it's worthy, it's just worthy of people's consideration in the political process—I believe taxes are a big issue in the campaign, Mark.

And I know how—I know that—how best to protect the country is a big issue, a really big issue. And there's a kind of law enforcement mentality that says, "Well, we'll respond after attack." It's not going to work. It's just not going to work. We've got to deal with these problems before they come to—before they come to our territory.

I understand that some are saying, "Well, he's just trying to scare us." My job is to look at the intelligence and to—and I'm going to tell you, there's an enemy out there that would like to do harm again to the United States, because we're in a war. And they have objectives. They want to drive us out of parts of the world to establish a caliphate. It's what they have told us, and it's essential that we listen to the words of the enemy if we want to protect the American people.

And in this debate about which party can handle it better, I will—it's very important that no one question the patriotism or the loyalty to the country. There is a different mindset, however, that is worth discussing in the course of a campaign. And I'm going to continue to do it. And I believe those two issues will be the issues that drive the election.

April [April Ryan, American Urban Radio Networks].

Diplomatic Efforts With North Korea/ Nuclear Weapons Development

Q. Thank you, sir. Mr. President, some in the national security community are wondering if, indeed, you're ready to live with a nuclear North Korea?

The President. No.

Q. Well, they're saying that that is a possibility.

The President. Well, they're wrong.

Q. Well, can I give you——

The President. Well, it was a short question and a short answer. [*Laughter*]

Q. One, China is not ready to put teeth behind sanctions—enough teeth to really threaten the regime. And also, economic sanctions have limited effect on North Korea.

The President. We got to try it diplomatically first, April. And this is back to old Michael's question about, am I serious about saying what I mean? It's why I say what I say, because some people are beginning to wonder whether or not it's the goal. The goal is no nuclear weapon. And again, I think I've shared with you my views of diplomacy. Diplomacy is—it's a difficult process because everybody's interests aren't exactly the same. We share the same goal, but sometimes the internal issues are different from ours. And therefore, it takes a while to get people on the same page, and it takes a while for people to get used to consequences.

And so I wouldn't necessarily characterize these countries' positions as locked-in positions. We're constantly dialoging with them to make sure that there is a common effort to send a clear message.

And the other part of your question was?

Q. And the followup, yes. Military options—there are a menu of options the White House is saying. Once diplomacy has run its course and you've run through your timetable, what about military options against North Korea?

The President. Well, diplomacy hasn't run its course. That's what I'm trying to explain to you a la the Sanger question. And we'll continue working to make sure that we give diplomacy a full opportunity to succeed.

Yes, David [David Gregory, NBC News].

Retrospective Analysis on Iraq

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You spoke of the troubles in Iraq. And as you know, we have Woodward [Bob Woodward, Washington Post] and we have a shelf full of books about Iraq, and many of them claim that administration policies contributed to the difficulties there. So I'm wondering, is there anything you wish you would have done differently with regard to Iraq?

The President. Speaking about books, somebody ought to add up the number of pages that have been written about my administration. There's a lot of books out there—a lot. I don't know if I've set the record or not, but I guess it means that I've made some hard decisions and will continue to make hard decisions.

And, David, this is the—this is about the fifth time I've been asked this type of question. And as you know, there are some things that I wish had happened differently—Abu Ghraib. I believe that really hurt us. It hurt us internationally. It kind of eased us off the moral high ground. In other words, we weren't a country that was capable of, on the one hand, promoting democracy, and then treating people decently. Now the world has seen that we've held those to account who are—who did this.

You know, there's just a lot of look-backs. Presidents don't get to look back, but I will tell you, the decision to remove Saddam was the right decision. And I would look forward to the debate where people debate whether or not Saddam should still be in power.

As you know, a leader in the Senate Intel Committee on—I think it was CBS News, Axelrod, I'm not sure—you follow your news closely, you can verify this—said that the world would be better if Saddam were in power. I strongly disagree. So when it comes to that decision, which is a decision to cause a lot of people to write books, it's the right decision.

And now the fundamental question is, will this country help this young democracy succeed? And the answer is, we will. We'll change tactics when we need to change tactics to help this young democracy succeed. But the stakes are high if we were to leave. It means that we would hand over a part of the region to extremists and radicals who

would glorify a victory over the United States and use it to become—use it to recruit. It would give these people a chance to plot and plan and attack. It would give them resources from which to continue their efforts to spread their caliphate. The stakes are really high.

Joe [Joseph Curl, Washington Times].

Immigration Reform

Q. Thank you. On a different topic. You've said you will sign the border fence bill to build 700 miles of fence along the U.S. border, but DHS has said it prefers a virtual fence of sensors and cameras rather than an actual wall. Are you committed to building the 700 miles of fence, actual fencing?

The President. Yes, we're going to do both, Joe. We're just going to make sure that we build it in a spot where it works. I don't—DHS said they want a virtual wall. I don't believe that's the only thing they've said. I think you might have truncated their statement, because we're actually building fence, and we're building double fence, in particular, in areas where there is a high vulnerability for people being able to sneak in.

You can't fence the entire border, but what you can do is you can use a combination of fencing and technology to make it easier for the Border Patrol to enforce our border. I happen to believe, however, that in order to make sure the border is fully secure, we need a guest-worker program, so people aren't sneaking in in the first place.

And so I look forward to not only implementing that which Congress has funded, in a way that says to folks, the American people, "We'll enforce our border," but I'm going to continue to campaign and work for a comprehensive bill so that whatever we do in terms of equipment and manpower works better. If somebody is not trying to sneak in to work, in other words, coming through in a way where they're showing a temporary-worker pass, where they're not using *coyotes* to smuggle across, where they're not going through tunnels, it's going to make it much easier for us to do our job, Joe, and that's enforce the border.

And so my judgment is, if the people want this country secure, we've got to do—have a smart border, which we're in the process of developing now. It's a combination of fencing and technologies—UAVs, sensors. I don't know if you've ever been down there, but it's a pretty vast part of country down there. It's hard to enforce that border. You've got some rugged country; you've got stretches of territory where you don't even know where the border is. You've got urban areas like El Paso or southern California where people have been able to sneak in by use of urban corridors. And so therefore, fencing makes sense there.

I went down to Arizona, the Arizona sector, and saw a place where there's literally neighborhoods abutting the border, and people come—100 of them would rush across the border into a little subdivision, and the Border Patrol would catch 2 or 3, and 97 would get in. And they're asking, what are you going to provide to help us do our job? And in this case, those who are in charge of coming up with the proper strategy to enforce the border said, "We need double fencing with space," so that the Border Patrol can use that fencing as leverage against people rushing into the country.

And my only point to you is, is that the strategy to develop this border requires different assets based on the conditions—based upon what the terrain looks like. And that's what we're doing.

But I repeat to you, when you've got a situation where people are sneaking in to do jobs Americans aren't doing, it's also going to keep a strain on the border. And so therefore, a temporary-worker plan, to me, makes sense, and it's a much more humane program—approach, by the way. It will certainly help stamp out all these illegal characters that are exploiting human beings. You know, these *coyotes* that stuff people in the back of 18-wheelers for money is just—that's not in character with how this Nation works. And I think we ought to—I think a good program that helps us enforce our border also will see to it that people are treated more humanely.

Thank you for your interest.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:01 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; Chairman Kim Jong Il of North Korea; President Hu Jintao of China;

President Roh Moo-hyun of South Korea; James A. Baker III, cochair, and Lee H. Hamilton, cochair, Iraq Study Group; and Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization.

Remarks on the National Economy and the Federal Budget

October 11, 2006

Thank you all. Please be seated. Good afternoon. Thanks for coming to the White House.

In 2004, I made a promise to the American people: we would cut the Federal budget deficit in half over 5 years. Today I'm pleased to report that we have achieved this goal, and we've done it 3 years ahead of schedule.

This morning my administration released the budget numbers for fiscal 2006. These budget numbers are not just estimates; these are the actual results for the fiscal year that ended February the 30th [September 30th]. * These numbers show that the budget deficit has been reduced to $248 billion and is down to just 1.9 percent of the economy. As a percentage of the economy, the deficit is now lower than it has been for 18 out of the last 25 years. These budget numbers are proof that progrowth economic policies work. By restraining spending in Washington and allowing Americans to keep more of what they earn, we're creating jobs, reducing the deficit, and making this Nation prosperous for all our citizens.

Today I'm going to talk about the progrowth economic policies that helped bring a dramatic reduction in the Federal deficit. I'm going to remind the American people that we cannot afford to be complacent. I'll discuss some of the issues that I intend to address over the next 2 years to help ensure that our dynamic economy continues to grow and provide jobs.

Before I do so, I do want to recognize members of my Cabinet who have joined us. I want to thank the Secretary of the Treasury, Hank Paulson, for being here today. Mr. Secretary, thank you for your service. And the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, affectionately known as OMB—Rob Portman. Thanks for coming, Rob. I thank Steve Preston, who is the Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration. Thanks for being here, Steve.

I see members of my staff who are here, who probably should be working—[*laughter*]—instead of taking time off. But I thank you for coming.

The reduction of the deficit I've announced today is no accident. It is the result of the hard work of the American people, and because of sound fiscal policies here in Washington. When I first came to office, I thought taxes were too high—and they were—and this economy of ours was headed into a recession. Some people said the answer was to centralize power in Washington and to let politicians decide what to do with the people's money. I had a different approach. I have a different view. And therefore, we chose a different course of action.

See, I believe that our economy prospers when we trust the people to make the decisions on how to save, spend, or invest. And so starting in 2001, we worked with Members of the United States Congress to pass the largest tax relief ever passed since Ronald Reagan was the President. We cut taxes on everybody who pays income taxes. I was concerned about this kind of selective tax cutting. I didn't think that was fair. Our attitude was if you pay income taxes, you ought to get relief.

We reduced the marriage penalty. We doubled the child tax credit, and we put the death tax on the road to extinction. We cut the tax rate paid by most small businesses. Most small businesses are a subchapter S corporation, for example, or a limited partnership, and therefore, pay tax at the individual income tax rate. And therefore, when you cut the rates on people who pay income taxes, you're cutting tax on small businesses.

And by the way, it was really the cornerstone in many ways of our economic recovery policy, because we understand that 70 percent of new jobs in America are created by small businesses, and therefore, when small businesses have more capital to spend, it is more likely they'll create jobs.

We increased the amount small businesses can expense, on the knowledge that providing incentive for people to buy plant and equipment will cause somebody to have to

* White House correction.

make the plant and equipment that the person purchases. We encouraged economic expansion by cutting taxes on dividends and capital gains, understanding that by cutting those types of taxes, we're reducing the cost of capital, which makes it easier for people to borrow so we can expand our economy. In other words, we had a comprehensive plan that when enacted, has left nearly $1.1 trillion in the hands of American workers, families, investors, and small-business owners. And they have used this money to help fuel economic expansion that's now in its 37th straight month of growth.

The theory was, was that if we can encourage entrepreneurship and investment and consumption by reducing taxes, it will cause the economy to recover from a recession and a terrorist attack, corporate scandals, war, hurricanes—and it has. The progrowth policies have worked. Since August of 2003, this economy of ours has added more than 6.6 million new jobs. And the national unemployment rate is down to 4.6 percent. People are working, and that's good for our country.

Behind these numbers are millions of individual workers who start each day with hope because they have a job that will enable them to do their duties to support their families, or to put food on the table. Behind these numbers are small-business owners that are being rewarded for taking risk. Government can't make anybody successful; we can make the environment such that people are willing to take risk. And when small businesses take risk, the economy flourishes and grows.

You know, last week I went to a FedEx facility here in DC. The Secretary and I went, and we met with a group of entrepreneurs who are helping to drive this economic growth. It was a fascinating meeting. It was really exciting, wasn't it, Hank? I mean, it was so wonderful to sit with dreamers and doers. We met a guy—I think he said he was an engineering graduate from Purdue—who on his way from upstate New York to Purdue to go to college, he and his brother would stop and dive for golf balls—[*laughter*]—and then they'd sell the golf balls to help pay for college. He has since—he and his brother have since started an Internet company that sells golf clubs. And he's successful, and he's employing people, and he's excited, and he appreciates the tax cuts. [*Laughter*]

We talked to the Under Armour man. I don't know if you ever heard of that product. I know I'm not supposed to advertise—[*laughter*]—so I won't. [*Laughter*] But here's a dreamer. The man had an idea. He didn't like the way the cotton shirts that he wore absorbed his bodily fluids when he exercised, so he came up with a better product. And it worked. And now he's built a huge business, and he's talking about how to continue to expand, and he's worried about our trade policy. Here's a small-business guy who came out of a garage, and he's talking to the Secretary of the Treasury and the President of the United States about making sure we have intellectual property rights protection in China.

My point to you is, is that America must remain entrepreneurial heaven if we want to be the leading economy in the world, and we will do so through good policy. And that's by keeping taxes low. As a matter of fact, the best policy would be for Congress to have certainty in the Tax Code by making the tax cuts we passed permanent.

Back to the budget. When we announced—when I announced the plan to cut the deficit in half by 2009, a lot of folks said it's just simply not going to be done. They said that we had to choose between cutting the deficit and keeping taxes low—or another way to put it, that in order to solve the deficit, we had to raise taxes. I strongly disagree with those choices. Those are false choices. Tax relief fuels economic growth, and growth—when the economy grows, more tax revenues come to Washington. And that's what's happened. It makes sense, doesn't it? As businesses expand, people pay more taxes, and when you pay more taxes, there's more revenues that come to our Treasury.

Tax revenues grew by $253 billion in 2006. That's an increase of 11.8 percent. Over the last 2 years, we've seen the largest back-to-back increases in tax revenues ever, and the largest percentage increase in 25 years. In other words, when you put policies in place that cause the economy to grow, tax revenues increase.

I know that sounds counterintuitive for some here in Washington. People say, "Well,

they're cutting taxes; that means less revenue." But that's not what happened over the past 2 years. As a matter of fact, I'm convinced that if we had raised taxes, it would cause there to be an economic decline, which would make it harder to balance the budget over the years.

In February this year, we projected the Federal budget deficit for 2006 would be $423 billion. That was the best guess. Today's report, as I mentioned to you, shows that the deficit came out at 248 billion—so, $175 billion less than anticipated. The difference is because we have a growing economy, and the difference is because we've been wise about spending your money.

Congress votes every year on day-to-day spending, and it's called discretionary spending. There's two types of spending in Washington: discretionary spending, over which Congress has got discretion—and we're involved; we submit a budget; and we've got the capacity to veto to help bring some discipline to the process—or mandatory spending. Mandatory spending helped—just happens. It's formula driven. It's—the Congress doesn't allocate money for it; it just comes to be, based upon the circumstances involved.

Every year since I took office, we have reduced the growth of discretionary spending that is not related to the military and the homeland. And the reason that's the case is, I believe it's important for the President to lead and to set budget priorities, and so long as we've got kids in combat, they're going to have what it takes to do their job. And so long as there's an enemy that wants to strike us, we'll spend money to protect the homeland. Those are the most important jobs we have.

The last two budgets have actually cut nondefense, nonhomeland discretionary spending. And I want to applaud the Congress for making hard choices. Every program sounds fantastic in Washington, until you actually determine whether or not they're working. And a lot of times, the nice-sounding programs are not delivering the results that the people expect. And so we worked with Congress to focus on those programs that work and do away with those that don't work. It's not easy, by the way, to get rid of somebody's pet project that's not working. But you've just got to know that Rob and his office are working hard to do just that.

I believe Congress can make the President's job more effective in dealing with bad spending habits if they gave me the line-item veto, and let me tell you why. The President is presented with a dilemma: On the one hand, we sit down and we negotiate the budget with the Congress. We say, "Here's the top line we can live with," and they'll pass appropriations that meet our top line. But the problem is, within the appropriations are oftentimes programs that may not have been properly debated, in other words, stuck in—earmarked. They may not be meeting national priorities. And therefore, the President is confronted with either vetoing a good budget bill because he doesn't like parts of the bill, or accepting the overall bill and the bad parts exist in it.

And so one way to remedy that is to give the President the capacity to analyze the appropriations process, to remove—approve spending that is necessary, redline spending that is not, and send back the wasteful and unnecessary spending to Congress for an up-or-down vote. That's how we define line-item veto.

It makes sure that the President is directly involved with the process in deciding the size of the slices of the pie, once the size of the pie has been delivered. But it also makes sure that Congress is involved with the process of approving, up or down, whether or not the spending is needed or not needed.

Governors have got this power; 43 Governors have got the authority, and they use it effectively. One of the advantages is this, that they know—if the chief executive has got the line-item veto, then legislators will understand that a program they may try to sneak into a bill will see the light of day, and therefore, make it less likely somebody will try to sneak something into the bill. It's kind of preventative maintenance.

The House has passed the bill. The Senate really needs to get the line-item veto to my desk. If Senators from both political parties are truly interested in helping maintain fiscal discipline in Washington, DC, and they want to see budgetary reform, one way to do so

is to work in concert with the executive branch and pass the line-item veto.

And for those of you who are here, who are helping us get that legislation out of the Senate, I want to thank you for your work. The reason I brought it up is, I am absolutely convinced it is necessary to make sure that we continue to maintain budget discipline here in Washington, DC.

We've made good progress, as I mentioned to you, in getting the fiscal house in order, but there's another problem with our budget, and that has to do with mandatory spending, particularly with Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. These are really important programs. They're called entitlement programs because when each of us retire, we're entitled to a benefit, in Social Security for example.

And yet the health of these programs—the health is in serious jeopardy. Why? Because there's a lot of people like me and Paulson who are fixing to retire. [*Laughter*] As a matter of fact, both of us reach retirement age at the same time, which is in 2008. That's quite convenient in my case. [*Laughter*]

But unlike the previous generation, there's a lot more of us, and we've been promised greater benefits than the previous generation. In other words, the Government has made promises with a future generation's money that we can't keep. And so the fundamental question facing the Government in Washington, DC, is, will we have the will necessary to deal with these entitlement programs to leave behind a better budget picture, to deal with the unfunded liabilities and the mandatory programs for future generations?

One reason Secretary Paulson came to work in this administration is because he wanted to understand whether or not we were committed to continue trying to bring Social Security reform, to modernize the system. Look, you don't have to cut benefits. You've just got to slow the rate at which benefits are growing in order to make sure a future generation is not strapped with a budgetary system that is unaffordable.

And I assured Hank that I was deeply committed to working to solve Social Security, because I believe the call for those of us who are blessed to be in public service is to confront problems now. It's so much easier to quit and just say, "Let's let another Congress deal with it." The problem is, is that the longer we wait, the more costly it becomes for future Congresses. And so now is the time. Now is the time. And Hank and I are going to—after these elections come and go, we're going to work with the leaders and—to say, "We're all responsible for getting something done." My hope is, in the last 2 years of this administration, we can set aside needless politics and focus on what's right for the United States of America and solve these entitlement programs once and for all.

I hope you're optimistic about this country's future, because I sure am. I am optimistic because I have great faith in American ingenuity, and I know how hard our people work. I am optimistic because we're an innovative society, and there's a lot of really capable, smart people continuing to make sure we remain innovative. I'm optimistic because the public sector and private sector encourages important research and development to make sure America is on the leading edge of change. I'm optimistic that we have put good policy in place that will encourage the entrepreneurial spirit. And I firmly believe, so long as this is an entrepreneurial-oriented country, America will remain the economic leader we want her to be.

I want to thank you all for coming to hear this proclamation of good news. [*Laughter*] God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:10 p.m. in Room 450 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to H.R. 4890, the "Legislative Line Item Veto Act of 2006."

Proclamation 8066—General Pulaski Memorial Day, 2006

October 11, 2006

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

On General Pulaski Memorial Day, we remember Casimir Pulaski, a Polish-born hero of the American Revolution who fought and

died for the freedom and independence our country enjoys today.

General Casimir Pulaski entered into a campaign against tyranny in Poland in 1768, bravely fighting for the freedom of his native land. This patriotic spirit and thirst for freedom remained with Pulaski throughout his life and influenced his success in the American Revolutionary War. After meeting Benjamin Franklin in Paris, Pulaski traveled to America to join forces with General George Washington and assist in the fight for American independence. He was quickly commissioned as a Brigadier General and demonstrated such skill on the battlefield that he became known as the "Father of the American Cavalry." In 1779, General Pulaski was mortally wounded at the siege of Savannah. By giving his life for our country, General Pulaski inspired many Americans and helped ensure a future of freedom for our citizens.

Through his service and dedication to liberty, General Pulaski demonstrated the strong will and patriotism that made our freedom possible, and the ties between the United States and Poland are strengthened by these common values. On General Pulaski Memorial Day, we honor the courage and sacrifice of this great hero of the American Revolution, recognize the many contributions of Polish Americans to our country, and celebrate the lasting friendship between our two great nations.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 11, 2006, as General Pulaski Memorial Day. I encourage Americans to commemorate this occasion with appropriate programs and activities honoring General Casimir Pulaski and all those who defend our freedom.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:46 a.m., October 12, 2006]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 13.

Proclamation 8067—To Modify Rules of Origin Under the North American Free Trade Agreement

October 11, 2006

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

1. Presidential Proclamation 6641 of December 15, 1993, implemented the North American Free Trade Agreement (the "NAFTA") with respect to the United States and, pursuant to the North American Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act (Public Law 103–182) (the "NAFTA Implementation Act"), incorporated in the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (the "HTS") the tariff modifications and rules of origin necessary or appropriate to carry out the NAFTA.

2. Section 202 of the NAFTA Implementation Act (19 U.S.C. 3332) provides rules for determining whether goods imported into the United States originate in the territory of a NAFTA party and thus are eligible for the tariff and other treatment contemplated under the NAFTA. Section 202(q) of the NAFTA Implementation Act (19 U.S.C. 3332(q)) authorizes the President to proclaim, as a part of the HTS, the rules of origin set out in the NAFTA and to proclaim modifications to such previously proclaimed rules of origin, subject to the consultation and layover requirements of section 103(a) of the NAFTA Implementation Act (19 U.S.C. 3313(a)).

3. The United States, Canada, and Mexico have agreed to modifications to certain NAFTA rules of origin. Modifications to the NAFTA rules of origin reflected in general note 12 to the HTS are therefore necessary.

4. Section 604 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the "1974 Act") (19 U.S.C. 2483), authorizes the President to embody in the HTS the substance of the relevant provisions of that Act, and of other acts affecting import treatment, and actions thereunder,

including the removal, modification, continuance, or imposition of any rate of duty or other import restriction.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, acting under the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 604 of the 1974 Act and section 202 of the NAFTA Implementation Act, do hereby proclaim:

(1) In order to reflect in the HTS modifications to the rules of origin under the NAFTA, general note 12 to the HTS is modified as provided in the Annex to this proclamation.

(2) The modifications made by this proclamation shall be effective with respect to goods of Canada or of Mexico, under the terms of general note 12 to the HTS, that are entered, or withdrawn from warehouse for consumption, on or after July 1, 2006.

(3) Any provisions of previous proclamations and Executive Orders that are inconsistent with the actions taken in this proclamation are superseded to the extent of such inconsistency.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:46 a.m., October 12, 2006]

NOTE: This proclamation and its annex were published in the *Federal Register* on October 13.

Presidential Determination on FY 2007 Refugee Admissions Numbers and Authorizations of In-Country Refugee Status

October 11, 2006

Presidential Determination No. 2007–01

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Presidential Determination on FY 2007 Refugee Admissions Numbers and Authorizations of In-Country Refugee Status Pursuant to Sections 207 and 101(a)(42), respectively, of the Immigration and Nationality Act, and Determination Pursuant to Section 2(b)(2) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act, as Amended

In accordance with section 207 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the "Act") (8 U.S.C. 1157), as amended, and after appropriate consultations with the Congress, I hereby make the following determinations and authorize the following actions:

The admission of up to 70,000 refugees to the United States during FY 2007 is justified by humanitarian concerns or is otherwise in the national interest; provided, however, that this number shall be understood as including persons admitted to the United States during FY 2007 with Federal refugee resettlement assistance under the Amerasian immigrant admissions program, as provided below. The ceiling shall be construed as a maximum not to be exceeded, and not a minimum to be achieved.

The 70,000 admissions shall be allocated among refugees of special humanitarian concern to the United States in accordance with the following regional allocations; provided, however, that the number of admissions allocated to the East Asia region shall include persons admitted to the United States during FY 2007 with Federal refugee resettlement assistance under section 584 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act of 1988, as contained in section 101(e) of Public Law 100–202 (Amerasian immigrants and their family members); provided further that the number of admissions allocated to the former Soviet Union shall include persons admitted who were nationals of the former Soviet Union,

or in the case of persons having no nationality, who were habitual residents of the former Soviet Union prior to September 2, 1991:

Africa	22,000
East Asia	11,000
Europe and Central Asia	6,500
Latin America/Caribbean	5,000
Near East/South Asia	5,500
Unallocated Reserve	20,000

The 20,000 unallocated refugee admissions shall be allocated to regional ceilings as needed. Upon providing notification to the Judiciary Committees of the Congress, you are hereby authorized to use unallocated admissions in regions where the need for additional admissions arises.

Additionally, upon notification to the Judiciary Committees of the Congress, you are further authorized to transfer unused admissions allocated to a particular region to one or more other regions, if there is a need for greater admissions for the region or regions to which the admissions are being transferred. Consistent with section 2(b)(2) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, as amended, I hereby determine that assistance to or on behalf of persons applying for admission to the United States as part of the overseas refugee admissions program will contribute to the foreign policy interests of the United States and designate such persons for this purpose.

Consistent with section 101(a)(42) of the Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(42)) and after appropriate consultation with the Congress, I also specify that, for FY 2007, the following persons may, if otherwise qualified, be considered refugees for the purpose of admission to the United States within their countries of nationality or habitual residence:

a. Persons in Vietnam
b. Persons in Cuba
c. Persons in the former Soviet Union
d. In exceptional circumstances, persons identified by a United States Embassy in any location

You are authorized and directed to report this determination to the Congress immediately and to publish it in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

Remarks at the National Renewable Energy Conference in St. Louis, Missouri

October 12, 2006

The President. Thanks for the warm welcome. I appreciate the chance to come and speak to the Renewable Energy Conference. I hope you're excited about being here, because I sure am. This is—it's exciting to be with—[*applause*]. I view this as kind of a meeting of pioneers, people who are on the leading edge of change, and people whose research, thought, and production will all help this country become stronger and better. And so I appreciate you giving me a chance to come by and visit with you.

This is a—energy is a subject dear to my heart—as it should be for any President—because you can't grow your economy without energy. And yet it is apparent, and should be for most Americans, we've got to change our habits if we want to remain the economic leader of the world.

Before I share some of my thoughts with you, I do want to recognize members of my Cabinet who have joined you: The Secretary of Agriculture, Mike Johanns; the Secretary of Energy, Sam Bodman; and the Administrator of the EPA, Steve Johnson.

I think it is interesting that when we—we got an energy conference going on here, that we have the Secretary of Energy, which makes sense—[*laughter*]—but the Secretary of Agriculture as well. And the man who runs the EPA, whose job it is to make sure our environment is clean, is with us. And the reason I find that interesting is because we've got an interesting confluence of national security concerns and environmental concerns that come together, probably unlike any other time in our history. And I want to share some thoughts with you about that in a minute.

I do want to thank the United States Senators from the State of Missouri—both men believe strongly in the future of renewable energy—and that would be Kit Bond and Jim Talent. Thank you for coming. I appreciate Congressman Todd Akin being here, and his wife, Lulli.

You know, I—gasoline prices are down, and that's good news. [*Applause*] Yes. I mean

everybody in America ought to be applauding. [*Laughter*] It's like—if you're driving a truck for a living, it helps you. If you're trying to put food on the table and you got to drive to work, it helps you. If you're a small-business owner, it means you've got more capital to invest when the price of gasoline goes down.

My worry is, however, that a low price of gasoline will make it complacent—make us complacent about our future when it comes to energy, because I fully understand that energy is going to help determine whether or not this Nation remains the economic leader in the world. We're doing fine now. We've got a really strong economy, and in order to make sure it's strong tomorrow, we need to make sure we work on how we use energy.

Energy is—look, let me just put it bluntly: We're too dependent on oil. [*Applause*] And see, low gasoline prices may mask that concern. So, first, I want to tell you that I welcome the low gasoline prices; however it's not going to dim my enthusiasm for making sure we diversify away from oil.

We need to diversify away from oil for economic reasons. We live in a global world. When the demand for oil goes up in China or in India, it causes the price of crude oil to rise, and since we import about 60 percent of the crude oil we use, it causes our price to go up as well, which means the economy becomes less competitive.

And then, of course, there's the national security concern for oil. Why? Well, we get oil from some countries who don't particularly care for us. They don't like what we stand for. They don't like it when we say, "For the sake of peace, let us work in a way that we don't develop nuclear weapons," for example.

I spend a lot of time on national security issues, which you expect your President to do. And a lot of times those national security issues are involved with countries that have oil. They have something we want, and so there's a national security issue when it comes to the status quo.

And then, of course, we have a great debate about the environment in America, and that's good. It's an important debate. We all want to be good stewards of our environment. We want to be good conservationists. And reliance upon oil and hydrocarbons has created some challenges when it comes to the environment.

And so this is one of the reasons why I believe so strongly that this country has got to use its talent and its wealth to get us off oil. And I believe we will do so, and I believe—I know the best way to do so is through technological breakthroughs.

And the Government has got a role to play. First, I understand there are some entrepreneurs here, some people that are investors, venture capitalists, and I welcome you here. I think it's a good sign for those of us who understand the need to diversify away from oil that private money is beginning to make investments into some of the technologies I'm going to be describing.

And we can help you in Washington, and one way we can help you is to reward people for investing in research and development. There's a research and development tax credit that's on the books. The problem is, it expires every year, on a year-by-year basis, which means you've got to come back to Congress on a year-to-year basis; which also means there's unpredictability in the Tax Code, and that's not wise, if you're trying to encourage people to invest dollars in the long term. And so in order to encourage private initiative and private investment in new energies, we ought to make the research and development tax credit a permanent part of the Tax Code.

And we need to continue what we're doing at the Federal level, which is spend your money on research. I think it's a legitimate use of taxpayers' money, to spend on grants, to find new ways to power our economy, new ways to conserve, new ways to protect the environment through new technologies.

Since I've been President, we've spent about $10 billion on research. A lot of it goes through Sam's shop. He's the Energy man. [*Laughter*] We will vigorously pursue new ways to power our automobiles. If you want to get off oil, the surest and quickest way to do so is to change how we power our automobiles. We consume a lot of oil through gasoline. And the more inefficient our cars are, the more we drive old clunkers, the more gasoline we use, which means we're more dependent on oil.

And so we've got some interesting initiatives at the Federal level to help change habits. One of them is, and it's probably the fastest way we can begin to change the consumer habits, is to promote hybrid vehicles. You all know what hybrids are, it's a combination of gas and—gasoline and electric battery that gets the driver a lot more miles per gallon.

And so one way to do this—one way to encourage people to buy hybrids, one way to stimulate demand so that the production will follow—is to provide tax credits. You can get up to, now, $3,400 tax credit when you buy your hybrid automobile. In other words, the Government is using the Tax Code to stimulate demand, which then should stimulate more automobile—more production on the auto lines of hybrids. And the more hybrids we get on the road, the less oil we're going to be using.

Secondly, we're spending money on new battery technologies. See, we envision a day in which light and powerful batteries will become available in the marketplace so that you can drive the first 40 miles on electricity, on batteries, and your car won't have to look like a golf cart. [*Laughter*] In other words, it will be a technology that will meet consumer demand and, at the same time, meet a national need, which is less consumption of gasoline. These are called plug-in hybrid vehicles.

And the battery technology is coming. In order to expedite it, Sam's shop, the Department of Energy, is putting out grants. In other words, we're using your money to expedite the arrival of a new technology that will enable folks to drive the first 40 miles on electricity.

That's not going to help rural Missouri or rural Texas, but it's certainly going to help those who live in the cities. Most folks in the cities don't drive more than 40 miles, so you can envision consumer habits beginning to change: You drive to work; you go home; you plug in your automobile. And you go—ride to work and go home the next day—and you're still on electricity. It's going to change the consumption patterns. This new technology will change the consumption patterns on gasoline, which in turn will make us less dependent on crude oil, which meets a national security concern, an economic security concern, and helps us deal with an environmental concern.

Now, there's another technology that will enable us to help change our driving habits, and that's ethanol. See, I like the idea of promoting a fuel that relies upon our farmers. I happen to believe a good farm economy is important to a good national economy, and I also know it makes sense to have our—[*applause*]. Sounds like we might have some farmers here. [*Laughter*]

But I also know it makes sense to have our farmers growing the feedstock for new energy. The way I like to tell our citizens is, Johanns is going to come in someday and say, "Mr. President, corn is up, which means we're less dependent on oil." And that's good news for the country and good news for our economy.

People are using ethanol. For those of you who are in the ethanol business, you're on the leading edge of change. It's coming, and Government can help. That's why we enhanced and extended the 10-cent-per-gallon tax credit. We did that to stimulate production. We've extended a 51-cent-per-gallon tax credit for ethanol blenders. We provided a 30-percent tax credit for the installation of alternative fuel stations, up to $30,000 a year.

In other words, I believe and Congress agrees that the proper use of tax credits will help stimulate a new industry that will help our economy and help us when it comes to national security. You know, we're up to now 5 billion gallons of ethanol sold this year. That's up from 1.6 billion gallons in 2000. Ethanol—there are now 100 ethanol refineries which are operating. There—it's anticipated there are going to be 40 more next year. In other words, we're just at the beginning stages of a new industry that is evolving. It's one of the reasons I'm excited to be here. For those of you on the cutting edge, I want to thank you and just let you know we want you to succeed. It's in our interests that you do succeed.

Today, there are 900 stations selling E–85. For those of you who don't know what that means, that's 85 percent ethanol. Look, a lot of Americans wonder whether or not this is feasible, what I'm talking about. A lot of folks aren't exposed to ethanol yet. In the Midwest you are; you've got a lot of corn. And it makes

a lot of sense to have these plants where the feedstocks are. But ethanol is coming, and it doesn't require much money to convert a regular gasoline-driven car to a flex-fuel automobile. See, the technology is available. It takes about a hundred and something dollars to change a gasoline-only automobile to one that can use E–85. And it works.

And in my judgment, the thing that's preventing ethanol from becoming more widespread across the country is the lack of other types of feedstocks that are required to make ethanol—sugar works; corn works—and it seems like it makes sense to spend money, your money, on researching cellulosic ethanol, so that we could use wood chips or switch grass or other natural materials.

And we've got an aggressive effort to research new raw materials to be used in ethanol. When I was down in Alabama—I'm going to tell you an interesting story when I was down there the other day. But I talked to a fellow from Auburn, he's a Ph.D.—just reminded me the difference between a Ph.D. and a C student; the C student is the President, and the Ph.D. is the adviser. [*Laughter*]

But he's telling me how optimistic he is that someday we're going to be able to take wood chips from those southern pine forests and convert that raw material into ethanol. He said it's right around the corner as far as he's concerned. It makes a lot of sense for the Federal Government to continue to invest taxpayers' money, because the more different raw materials that are practical in use, the more ethanol production facilities will spread around the country. And the more spread around—the more production there is, the more likely it is that the entire industry will evolve quicker.

So you've got a lot of plants here in the Midwest. The vision has got to be for these plants to be able to spread throughout the entire country. And when it does, ethanol will become a primary source for the fuel people use, which will help us meet our national security and economic concerns and objectives.

The Department of Energy announced $250 million in funding to establish and operate two new bioenergy research center, all aimed at accelerating basic research into cellulosic ethanol and other biofuels. I suspect we've got some soybean growers here. I know you've got some in Missouri. I have been to a biodiesel plant in Virginia. And it doesn't take much capital investment to refine biodiesel from soy, soybeans; it just doesn't. Biodiesel is coming. It makes a lot of sense for us to continue to invest in biodiesel technologies to make the production process even more efficient. I have seen biodiesel poured into a new truck and watched that truck crank right up, and realize it emitted no emissions. I know, because I put a handkerchief over the stack. [*Laughter*]

These are exciting times, and people are beginning to take advantage of them. I told you I was down in Alabama. I went to the Hoover Police Department. They're using E–85. Their people on the beat are filling up their cars with E–85. I asked a guy, one of the policemen—I said, "Why do you use it?" He said, "First of all, I like the fact that it keeps the environment clean"—that's a good reason. He said, "By the way, when you fill it up with the 85, it gives you better get-up-and-go." [*Laughter*] In other words, it works. That's a good sign when police departments begin to use E–85.

I was over at a FedEx place, and they've got what they call the OptiFleet E700—it's a new vehicle, all aimed at reducing emissions by 96 percent. In other words, people are thinking differently now. There's a whole new industry beginning to evolve. Users are beginning to understand the benefits of using ethanol or biodiesel. And these are exciting times.

And the Federal Government's job is to continue to research so that we provide our consumers, the American people, with more options. And one of the great options that's coming down the road is hydrogen. That's a longer term project. If you notice, I kind of talk about hybrids that are on the road today and how we stimulate demand, hybrids that are coming with new batteries, ethanol which is now evolving into a significant industry. Ultimately, in my judgment, one of the ways to make sure that we become fully less dependent on oil is through hydrogen. And we're spending $1.2 billion to encourage hydrogen fuel cells. It's coming; it's coming. It's an interesting industry evolution, to think about your automobiles being powered by

hydrogen, and the only emission is water vapor.

Oh, I'm sure there are some people out there saying, "Well, you know, he's just dreaming." Well, I'm just listening to the dreamers who happen to be good, smart, capable people who know what they're talking about——

Audience member. Out of Iraq now! Out of Iraq now! Soldiers are not renewables!

The President. Since 2003, my administration has made hydrogen and fuel-cell technology a priority——

[*At this point, there was a disruption in the audience.*]

The President. ——and we will continue to research to make sure America is less dependent on foreign sources of oil.

As you can tell, I'm excited about new technologies. But I think we've got to be realistic about the timing. And in order to become less dependent on foreign sources of oil, we've got to explore for oil and gas in our own hemisphere in environmentally friendly ways. And one of the interesting technological developments is the capacity to find oil in unique places. I don't know if you followed recently the exploration in the Gulf of Mexico, where there was a well that was drilled five miles in depth in thousands of feet of water.

In other words, these new technologies enable us to go to new places, and they enable us to be wise stewards of the environment. I understand there's a big debate about whether or not you can explore for oil and gas and protect the environment. I believe you can. And I understand that as we transition to the ethanol era, we must also—or the hydrogen area, we must also find oil and gas in our own hemisphere if the objective is to become less dependent on foreign oil.

They estimate that the new discovery in the deep Gulf of Mexico could increase our reserves from 10 to 50 percent. In other words, this is a big deal. And Congress is debating an energy bill. They passed a good energy bill, by the way, in the past, that encourages conservation and encourages a lot of the research that I was talking about, understands we've got to diversify away from our current structure. But there's another bill out there, and they need to get the work done. They need to come together between the House and the Senate version to encourage exploration in the Gulf of Mexico in new areas to make sure that we transition to a new day when it comes to energy.

And I believe that States ought to share in the royalties because I know, in the State of Louisiana, for example, they have committed their share of new royalties in this new exploration to help protect their coastline. And I believe Congress needs to get the bill to my desk as quick as possible. So when you finish the elections, get back and let me sign this bill so the American people know that we're serious about getting off foreign oil.

And that's going to be important because we can find a lot of natural gas offshore, for example, and we need natural gas in order to make sure we meet our second objective, and that's how we protect the environment and power our society.

I don't know if you know this or not, but electricity is generated from natural gas, about 18 percent; coal, 50 percent; nuclear power, 20 percent; and then solar and wind. And the fundamental question is, can the Federal Government help make sure that we have energy so we can power our economy, protect the environment, and grow? And the answer is, we can, and we can spend money to help you.

One thing we don't need to spend money on but need to do is permit more liquefied natural gas terminals. LNG is a new technology that is—it's not that new, but it's evolving technology. It means you can get—buy natural gas from overseas in liquefied form and deliquefy it. There's a lot of natural gas in the world, and it makes sense for us to be in a position to receive that natural gas in order to make sure you've got energy in your home.

A shortage of natural gas causes your electricity bills to go up. Supply of natural gas, increased supply, makes it more likely that you're going to have rational bills, more likely the economy will continue to grow. And natural gas protects the environment.

Secondly, on coal, we got a lot of coal. We got 250 years of coal. That's a lot, and yet

coal presents us with an environmental challenge. And so we're spending quite a bit of money here at the Federal level to come up with clean-coal technologies. If you want to be less dependent on foreign sources of energy, it seems like it makes sense to me that we use the energies we have here at home and do so in environmentally friendly ways.

We're spending $2 billion to promote technologies that will enable our coal-fired plants to protect the environment. As a matter of fact, we got what's called a FutureGen Initiative. By the year 2012, we'll build the first clean-coal powerplant that will remove virtually all pollutants and greenhouse gases from burning coal. In other words, there's a way coming that's going to enable us to use this plentiful resource.

A controversial subject is nuclear power. You might remember, we've had a time in our country where people liked nuclear power, thought it was a strong solution to energy independence, and then we just shut her down because of engineering concerns. I strongly believe that if we want to keep this country competitive, if we want to make sure we can compete globally, we must promote civilian nuclear power. We must have more energy coming from nuclear power.

Nuclear power is renewable, and there are no greenhouse gases associated with nuclear power. One of the problems we've had is that nobody wants to build any plants. They're afraid of the costs of regulation and the litigious nature that surrounds the construction of nuclear powerplants—litigious problems surrounding the construction of the nuclear powerplants.

And so, in the energy bill that I signed, the Congress wisely provided incentives and risk insurance for nuclear powerplant construction. Last year only three companies were seeking to build powerplants—nuclear powerplants. Today, 14 have expressed new interest in construction. In other words, there's a new industry beginning to come back.

I think it's very important for us to spend dollars on how to best deal with the waste, in other words, research new ways to be able to assure the American people that we'll be able to deal with the nuclear waste in a smart way. And that's why we're teaming up with France and Japan and Russia to spend money—$250 million from the United States' perspective, and they're matching it—on what's called the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership, all designed to research reprocessing and fast-burner reactors.

The idea is to take the nuclear industry, take the spent fuel, reprocess it, put it into a fast-burner reactor, which will yield about 90 percent less of the waste than under the current system. What I'm telling you is, is that the engineering is much safer today than it has been in the past, and we're spending money to make sure that we can deal with the waste in a sane way, so that we can with confidence say to the American people, now is the time to accelerate the expansion of nuclear power, for the sake of national and economic security.

I believe that with the proper amount of research, whether it be public or private, we will have solar roofs that will enable the American family to be able to generate their own electricity. And it's coming.

I believe wind power has got the opportunity to help. All we need is to put a couple of windmills right there in Washington, DC, and we'll be—[*laughter*]—less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

What I'm talking about is a comprehensive approach to solving a national issue, which is dependence on oil, and how best to protect this environment. You know, it's time to get rid of the old, stale debates on the environment and recognize new technologies are going to enable us to achieve a lot of objectives at the same time.

Technology will enable us to be able to say we can grow our economy and protect our environment at the same time. It's not a zero-sum game anymore. These technological breakthroughs are going to say to our farmers, "You're energy producers." And that's good for America. It's going to say to those entrepreneurs that are risk-takers, this is a good place to try to make a good return on capital.

There's a lot of smart money in the United States going into energy diversification and to research. And for those of you here, thanks. I hope you make a good return. I think you will. There is no question in my mind that we're on the verge of significant

breakthroughs, and so what I wanted to come and tell you is, one, thanks for your interest; thanks for showing up at a conference like this. You're the beginning of what's going to be a new environmental debate, an economy based upon new technologies, a new way to power our automobiles, and a way that says by making good decisions now and researching now, we'll leave behind a better world for our children.

Someday, some—the 56th President will be standing up here saying, I appreciate the fact that there was some pioneers back in America in those days; I can't spent too much time because I've got to go get my limousine filled up by hydrogen—[*laughter*]—but I appreciate the fact that the solar panels are working so you can see me. [*Laughter*] In other words, it's coming, and I'm excited to be a part of it. And I hope you're excited as well.

Thanks for letting me come by. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:29 p.m. at the St. Louis Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to David Bransby, professor of agronomy and soil, Auburn University.

Remarks at a Reception for Congressional Candidates Peter Roskam and David McSweeney and the Illinois Congressional Victory Committee in Chicago, Illinois

October 12, 2006

The President. Thank you very much. Thanks for coming. I'm proud you're here. Before I liberate the Speaker, so he doesn't have to stand up here for this long speech—[*laughter*]—I want to say this to you: I am proud to be standing with the current Speaker of the House who is going to be the future Speaker of the House.

Speaker Denny Hastert has a long record of accomplishment. You know, he's not one of these Washington politicians who spews a lot of hot air. He just gets the job done. I have worked with him up close. I know what it's like to work with a Speaker who is determined to protect the United States of America, and a Speaker who wants to make sure that everybody who wants a job in America can find one. He has delivered results for the people. This country is better off with Denny Hastert as the Speaker, and it will be better off when he's the Speaker, the next legislative session.

The Speaker has heard me give a lot of talks, so he wants to make sure if there's a chair nearby—[*laughter*]—but I want to thank you all for coming. Your support means a lot.

Audience member. We will win.

The President. Yes, sir. I am also proud to be with two fine candidates, Peter Roskam, David McSweeney. And I want to thank you for helping them. I have a sense of what it's like to run for office. [*Laughter*] I've done it before, and I know how important it is for two candidates who are out, day in and day out, campaigning to be able to look at an audience this size and realize they're getting fine support. Your support means a lot not only to their campaigns, in the sense that you're helping to fill the hat, but it means a lot to their spirits to realize there's a lot of people pulling for them.

And there's nobody better to pull for a candidate than his family—in this case, Peter's family, Elizabeth and his children, and in David's case, his wife, Margaret. And it's been my honor to be able to see both those families, and I want to thank the families for supporting these good men for running for office as well.

Speaking about wives—[*laughter*]—I was—I happened to have my picture taken a while ago with a group of citizens that came through, and one fellow—I guess I would define him as blunt—said, "You know, I was hoping to have my picture taken with Laura." [*Laughter*] I said, "It's not hurting my feelings, man; you got good taste." [*Laughter*] She sends her best to the Speaker and to the candidates; she sends her best to you all. I am a lucky man to have Laura Bush as my wife. And our country—in my nonobjective opinion—is lucky to have her as the First Lady.

I wish Kevin White all the very best in his run for the Fifth Congressional Delegation. Thanks for coming, Kevin—give Geraldine a hug for me.

Audience member. Right in front of you; right here. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. I'll do it for you.

The President. Yes, thank you. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. Give her a hug for me. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. Okay.

The President. That's your responsibility. [*Laughter*]

I am proud to be here with Congressman Don Manzullo from the great State of Illinois. My thanks to State Representative Tom Cross, who is the minority leader of the Illinois House. I want to thank all the State and local officials who've joined us. But most of all, thank you all for being here.

I thank my friend Pat Ryan. It's not easy to raise this much money, and I know how much organization it takes, and therefore, it takes a strong leader up top, and that's exactly what Pat Ryan is. He's a strong leader and a great American, and I'm proud to be with you, Pat.

I want to thank my friend Andy McKenna, who is the chairman of the Illinois Republican Party. The reason I mention grassroots activists is that you win campaigns by having candidates who can carry a strong message, and we have those candidates. You win a campaign because people are generous with their hard-earned money, and you have been so tonight. And you win campaigns when people get out and put up the signs and make the phone calls, go to the community centers and houses of worship and say, "Support these candidates." So I want to thank you for what you have done, and I encourage you to continue to work to turn out the vote come this November.

We've got a lot to do to make sure this country is prosperous and safe. I'm looking forward to working with these two new Congressmen as we work to diversify our energy supply. I'm going to tell you why we need to. I'm a little concerned at the price—the drop in gasoline prices, which I welcome, and I know you do too. [*Laughter*] However—masks the fact that it is not in our national interest to be dependent on foreign sources of oil. And so I look forward to working with these Congressmen to promote alternative energy sources, such as ethanol, and new research and development into new battery technologies that will enable you to drive the first 40 miles on electricity, and your car won't have to look like a golf cart. [*Laughter*]

We've got an aggressive agenda—aggressive agenda to diversify our energy sources so that we're not dependent on Middle Eastern oil. It's in our national security interests.

I'm looking forward to working with these Members to make sure health care is available and affordable. We don't need the Federal Government telling doctors how to practice and telling patients who they got to go see. But we do need the Federal Government to do something about these junk and frivolous lawsuits that are running good doctors out of practice.

A big issue always facing the Congress is how to make sure that the entrepreneurial spirit remains strong in the United States. And we got a strong record. This administration has got a strong record on the economy, and so does Speaker Denny Hastert.

You might remember the facts. This country has been through a recession, a stock market correction. We've been through a terrorist attack on our Nation. We've been at war to defend this country. We've had major hurricanes. For a while, we had high energy prices. And yet America is the envy of the industrialized world when it comes to economic growth.

Our national unemployment rate is 4.6 percent. People are working; we've added 6.6 million new jobs since August of 2003. Our farm economy is strong. Productivity is up. Small businesses are on the rise. This economy is in good shape, and we need to keep Denny Hastert and the Republicans in charge of the United States Congress to keep it that way.

And we're in good shape because we cut the taxes on everybody who paid income taxes. We have a philosophy of government that says, if you have more of your own money in your pocket to save, spend, or invest, this economy will do well. That stands in stark contrast to our opponents, who believe that they can spend your money better than you can spend your money. And so we cut the taxes—not once, but twice. We cut the taxes on families with children; we cut the taxes on people who were married; we put the death tax on the road to extinction; we cut the taxes on small-business people.

As a result of good fiscal policy in Washington, DC, this economy is strong. And the best way to keep it there is to make the tax cuts we passed permanent.

That's the opposite view of the Democrats. You might remember the debate about the deficit—they go around the country saying, "Well, we got to solve the deficit, and we need to raise taxes." That's not the way Washington works. If they were to get in charge of the House of Representatives, they would raise your taxes and figure out new ways to spend your money. The best way to balance this budget—by the way, a couple of years ago, I stood up and said, we can cut the deficit in half by 2009. It's amazing what happens when you cut taxes; the economy grows; you end up with more tax revenues. When you couple that with fiscal discipline in Washington, DC, which we have exhibited, the deficit gets cut. As a matter of fact, we cut the deficit in half not by 2009, but by 3 years prior to that.

The best way to keep this economy growing, the best way to make sure we've got a fiscal situation that makes sure the economic growth continues is to keep taxes low and prioritize how we spend your money. And the number-one priority has got to be to protect America and make sure those who wear the uniform have all the support they need to do their job.

Our record on taxes is clear. The Democrats in Washington have a clear record of their own. The trouble is, they don't want you to know about it. Recently the top Democrat leader in the House made an interesting declaration. Here's what she said: "We love tax cuts." Given her record, she must be a secret admirer. [*Laughter*]

It's not just the so-called tax cuts for the rich she opposes, when we cut taxes for everybody who pays income taxes, she voted against it. When we reduced the marriage penalty, she voted against it. When we cut taxes on small businesses, she voted against it. When we lowered the taxes for families with children, she voted against it. When we cut the taxes on dividends and capital gains to stimulate investment, she voted against it. When we put the death tax on the road to extinction, she voted against it. Time and again, when she had an opportunity to show her love for tax cuts, she voted, no. If this is the Democrats' idea of love—[*laughter*]—I don't want to see what hate looks like. [*Laughter*]

A big issue in this campaign across the United States and here in Illinois with these two Congressmen is, who is going to keep your taxes low? When we win, we will keep your taxes low. And make no mistake about it, the Democrats will raise your taxes. It's a fundamental difference in this campaign. And I'm looking forward to leading us to victory to make sure the taxes on the people of the United States remain low and reasonable.

No, there's a lot of big domestic issues—and I'm sure our candidates are out there telling people what's on their mind—but the biggest issue facing this country is, who best to protect you? We are a nation at war. You know, I wish I didn't have to say that. I wish I could say everything is fine, but that's not the reality of the world in which we live. The most fundamental job of those of us in government is to protect you and to do everything in our power to protect the American people.

There's an enemy that lurks and plots and plans because they cannot stand—they can't stand our values and what we believe. They don't believe in the freedoms that we believe in. They're bound by an ideology, and they're willing to use murder as a tool to achieve that ideology. It's a different kind of war, but it's real—as we learned on that fateful day of September the 11th, 2001.

On that day, I vowed that I would use all of my powers and national assets to protect the American people—and so did the Speaker. These are folks you can't negotiate with. These are ideologues who have stated clearly, their objective is to drive the United States out of the Middle East so they can establish a caliphate based upon their ideology of hate. They have made their plans clear, and it's essential that the President and the United States Congress listen carefully to the words of the enemy.

My view is, is that the best way to defeat this enemy is to stay on the offense and defeat them overseas so we do not have to face them here at home. And so we're keeping steady pressure on a group of people who

would want to do America harm. It's hard to plan and plot when you're on the run. It's hard to plan and plot when you're in a cave. You just got to know, there's some incredibly brave Americans, working with allies, that are keeping the pressure on this enemy to keep you safe.

One of the terrible lessons of September the 11th is that oceans can no longer protect us, and therefore, it is essential that the United States treat threats seriously before they come home to hurt us, before they fully materialize. I saw a threat. Members of both parties in the United States Congress saw a threat. The United Nations saw a threat in Iraq. Removing Saddam Hussein from power was the right decision, and the world is better off for it.

Iraq is a central front in this war on terror. Oh, I know the Democrats say it's a diversion from the war on terror—some of them say that. But I would ask them to listen to the words of Usama bin Laden or Zawahiri, who is the number two of Al Qaida, who have said clearly, their ambitions are to drive us out of Iraq so they can establish a safe haven from which to launch further attacks; to drive us out of Iraq so they can have resources to use to fund their ambitions; to drive us out of Iraq so they can topple moderate governments.

Imagine a world in which there are violent forms of extremists who've crushed the hopes of moderate, decent people because they have this ideology that is so foreign to us. Imagine a world in which they could use oil to blackmail the free world. Imagine that world, as well, with a group of people that don't care for America, with a nuclear weapon. If that were to happen, a generation of Americans would look and say, "What happened; what happened to the leaders; how come they couldn't see the threat?"

I see the threat. The Speaker sees the threat. We've got a plan for victory in this war on terror, and that includes helping those 12 million people who are desperate for freedom to achieve their dreams of democracy. We've got a goal, a clear goal, which is an Iraq that can defend itself and sustain itself, an Iraq that will be an ally in the war on terror.

We're constantly changing our tactics to meet those of the enemy. We're constantly adjusting. But make no mistake about it, our plan is victory. We will stay in Iraq; we will fight in Iraq; and we will win in Iraq for the security of the United States.

We have to be right 100 percent of the time to protect the country. The enemy has to be right one time. And therefore, it is incumbent upon those of us in government to make sure the professionals on the frontlines of protecting America have all the tools necessary to protect you. The Speaker understands that. These candidates running for office understand that.

And that is why I worked with the Congress to pass what's called the PATRIOT Act. It was an act that tore down walls that prevented the intelligence community and the criminal justice community from talking. I know that probably sounds strange that that happened, but it's the reality. You can't defend America unless all elements of government are capable of sharing information so that we can prevent the attack from happening in the first place. I also believed it was essential—and by the way, the Speaker led the charge in making sure the House passed the PATRIOT Act the first time and then reauthorized it.

Secondly, I believe strongly that if an Al Qaida or Al Qaida affiliate was making a phone call into the United States from outside the country, we need to know why. If the most important job of government is to protect you, we need to understand what the enemy is thinking and what they're planning. I thank the Congress for getting the House of Representatives to endorse the terrorist surveillance program. I thought it was very important that when we captured a leader of the enemy on the battlefield that we detain and question that enemy. I thought it was essential to protect you, that we gain information from the leadership of those who would do us harm.

One of the people we captured was Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, who our intelligence officers believe was the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks. I thought it was important for this country to gain information from this mastermind in order to be able to say we're doing everything we can to protect you. And

we learned a lot of information from those who we have captured, information that our intelligence service believes strongly has prevented attacks on the homeland. And yet we've had a debate on this issue, and the Speaker of the House led the House of Representatives to endorse this vision.

In other words, we've been giving people the tools necessary to protect the homeland, and our Democrat colleagues back in Washington have taken a very different approach to the war on terror. There is a difference of opinion. I'm not questioning anybody's patriotism or love for America, but I am questioning their view of how best to protect you. And this is an issue in this campaign. If the security of the United States is the most important issue, then part of this issue is which party has been willing to step up and give those charged with protecting you the tools necessary to do so.

In each vote, a clear pattern has emerged on which party can best protect the American people. More than 75 percent of the House Democrats voted to block the renewal of the PATRIOT Act. Almost 80 percent of the House Democrats voted against allowing the CIA to continue the interrogation program. Almost 90 percent of the House Democrats voted against continuing to monitor terrorist communications through the terrorist surveillance program. Rarely has a single series of votes summed up the difference between the two political parties so clearly. If the Democrats' Congress had their way, we wouldn't have had the PATRIOT Act or the interrogation program or the terrorist surveillance program. They can run from this record, but we're not going to let them hide.

You know, I was—recently read where the Democrat leader said this. She said, "The midterm elections should not be about national security." I strongly disagree. I want those discerning Democrats and independents and Republicans to hear loud and clear that the person who wants to be Speaker of the House has said that the midterm elections shouldn't be about national security.

I know this election ought to be about national security. I'm briefed every day on the threats this country faces. The United States of America cannot afford to wait and respond to an attack. The United States of America must be on the offense to make sure the attacks don't happen in the first place.

We've got one great asset at our disposal as well, and it's called liberty. I believe in the universality of liberty. I believe there is an Almighty, and I believe one of the great gifts of that Almighty is the desire for people to be free. I believe that. I believe that Muslim moms want to be free. I believe that people all across the globe have this great desire and yearning to live in freedom. And I believe that freedom will help us yield the peace we want for our children and grandchildren.

The way to defeat—the way I like to put it is, we're in an ideological struggle. It's a struggle between extremists, radicals, and reasonable people who simply want to have a better life. And I believe it's incumbent upon the United States of America to stand with those who are reasonable and moderate against the extremists and radicals.

I believe it's our call to do so, and I have great faith in the power of liberty to transform regions of hate to regions of hope and to transform enemies to allies. And the reason I say that to you—I've had some amazing experience as your President, and perhaps one of the most unusual is my relationship with the Prime Minister of Japan. I must have told this story hundreds of times because it is so ironic that my relationship is so close, and yet my dad, when he was a young man, volunteered to fight the Japanese as a sworn enemy.

You know, recently I invited my friend, the former Prime Minister—he just left office—to go to Elvis's place. [*Laughter*] I'd never been there. [*Laughter*] He wanted to go there. See, he's an Elvis fan. But I also wanted to tell a story to the American people about ideological struggles and the faith we should have in liberty—because on Air Force One, going down to Memphis, Tennessee, the Prime Minister and I talked about keeping the peace. Isn't that interesting? My dad fought the enemy, fought the Japanese as the enemy, and now his son is talking about the peace.

We're talking about North Korea and how it's important for there to be more than one voice at the table when it comes to convincing the leader of North Korea. By the

way, it's much better to have China at the table with the United States. It's much better to have Japan and South Korea—[*applause*].

We talked about the fact that Japan had deployed 1,000 troops in Iraq, because he understands what I know, the advent of democracy is a huge defeat to the extremists. That's why they're fighting so hard. That's why this is such a brutal battle. And I understand it affects the American people, because the enemy has got a weapon, and they use it, and that's the murder of innocent people. And it gets on our TV screens, and we're a nation of compassionate, decent people who care about human life in all its forms. And yet Prime Minister Koizumi knows what I know, that we will succeed as liberty progresses, and we will succeed by helping people who yearn for a better life, and we will succeed by marginalizing those extremists and radicals and, if need be, bring them to justice before they hurt us again.

Something happened between World War II and when I became the President, talking with this Japanese Prime Minister. And what happened was, Japan adopted a Japanese-style democracy. Liberty has got the capacity to transform an enemy into an ally. And someday, an American President will be sitting down with elected leaders in the Middle East talking about how to keep the peace, and a generation of Americans will be better off for it.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:25 p.m. at the Hilton Chicago. In his remarks, he referred to Patrick G. Ryan, executive chairman and founder, Aon Corp.; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and Chairman Kim Jong Il of North Korea.

Statement on the Sixth Anniversary of the Terrorist Attack on the USS *Cole*

October 12, 2006

Six years ago, on October 12, 2000, Al Qaida attacked the USS *Cole*, a U.S. Navy warship refueling in Aden harbor in Yemen. This terrorist attack killed 17 sailors and injured many others, leaving the victims' loved ones and our Nation to mourn our collective loss.

On the sixth anniversary of this attack, we pause to remember those brave service men and women whose lives were cut short by this act of terrorism and to give thanks to the brave crew whose heroic actions saved their ship and fellow shipmates.

With the men we believe to be the key architects of that attack now in custody, this anniversary should serve to renew America's dedication to bring terrorists to justice and our gratitude to those men and women of the U.S. Government serving abroad who take great risks in protecting America.

Six years ago, our Nation was tested by terrorism. Terrorists continue to be an active threat to our Nation, but we are responding resolutely and forcefully. On this solemn anniversary, we rededicate ourselves to the fight against the enemies of humanity, offer our prayers and condolences to the families of the *Cole* victims, and offer thanks to the men and women of our Navy who protect our country and promote peace and freedom around the world.

Proclamation 8068—National Energy Awareness Month, 2006

October 12, 2006

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Our Nation is moving toward remarkable technological advances that will make energy cleaner, more abundant, and more affordable for our citizens. During National Energy Awareness Month, we underscore our commitment to a more secure energy future.

My Administration is working to improve energy efficiency and conservation, increase our domestic supply of energy, and diversify our energy supply through advanced technologies. Since 2001, we have invested nearly $10 billion in the development of cleaner, less expensive, and more reliable energy sources. We developed a comprehensive National Energy Policy, and last year I signed into law the Energy Policy Act of 2005—the

first comprehensive energy bill in more than a decade.

My Administration's Advanced Energy Initiative seeks to diversify energy resources by substantially increasing funding for clean-energy research. To change how we power our homes and offices, we will invest more in zero-emission coal-fired plants, revolutionary solar and wind technologies, and clean, safe nuclear energy. We will focus on improving hybrid and hydrogen technologies for our automobiles and increasing the use of biofuels. By harnessing the power of technology, we can grow our economy, protect our environment, and enhance our energy security.

Technology is also helping develop new energy-saving products that give our consumers better performance at a lower cost. At home, energy-efficient windows reduce the loss of hot and cold air, and high efficiency light-bulbs last longer than traditional bulbs while requiring less electricity. The Federal Government's Energy Savers website, energysavers.gov, offers more information about how to use less energy in homes, offices, and vehicles, and how consumers can save money on energy costs.

Meeting our growing energy needs will require creativity, determination, and discipline. By working together, we can foster economic growth, improve our environment, and leave behind a safer, cleaner, more prosperous world for future generations.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 2006 as National Energy Awareness Month. I encourage Americans to take steps to conserve energy and develop responsible habits that will reduce energy consumption in their everyday lives.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:51 a.m., October 16, 2006]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on October 17.

Proclamation 8069—White Cane Safety Day, 2006

October 12, 2006

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Our Nation believes in the promise of all our citizens, and we must work to ensure that the opportunities of America are more accessible to every person. Many Americans who are blind or visually impaired use white canes to enable them to enjoy greater mobility, engage in productive work, and participate fully in all aspects of life. On White Cane Safety Day, we celebrate the many achievements of Americans who are blind or visually impaired, and we recognize the white cane as an important symbol of their determination and independence.

My Administration remains committed to removing barriers that confront Americans with disabilities. Since we launched the New Freedom Initiative 5 years ago, we have worked to improve access to community life, expand educational opportunities, strengthen training and employment services, and promote the development of technology for people with disabilities. We are building on the progress of the Americans with Disabilities Act and working to make America a place where all citizens have the opportunity to realize their full potential.

The Congress, by joint resolution (Public Law 88–628) approved on October 6, 1964, as amended, has designated October 15 of each year as "White Cane Safety Day."

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 15, 2006, as White Cane Safety Day. I call upon public officials, business leaders, educators, librarians, and all the people of the United States to join as we work to ensure that the benefits and privileges of life in our great Nation are available to Americans who are blind or visually impaired, and to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:51 a.m., October 16, 2006]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on October 17.

Statement on Signing the Rio Grande Natural Area Act

October 12, 2006

Today, I have signed into law S. 56, the "Rio Grande Natural Area Act." The Act establishes the Rio Grande Natural Area in Colorado to help protect natural resources on Federal and non-Federal lands.

The Act establishes a commission to perform specified functions relating to the Natural Area. The Commission consists of nine individuals appointed by the Secretary of the Interior, of whom one must represent the Colorado State Director of the Bureau of Land Management, one must be a specified Federal employee, three must be appointed on the recommendation of the Governor of Colorado to represent various Colorado governmental entities, and four must be knowledgeable, experienced local citizens to represent the general public. Thus, the Act limits the qualifications of the pool of persons from whom the Secretary may select appointees to the Commission in a manner that rules out a large portion of those persons best qualified by experience and knowledge to fill the positions, which the Appointments Clause of the Constitution does not permit if the appointees exercise significant governmental authority. To faithfully execute the Act to the maximum extent consistent with the Appointments Clause, the executive branch shall construe the provisions of the Act specifying functions for the Commission as specifying functions that are advisory only.

George W. Bush

The White House,
October 12, 2006.

NOTE: This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 13. S. 56, approved October 12, was assigned Public Law No. 109–337.

Statement on Signing the National Heritage Areas Act of 2006

October 12, 2006

Today, I have signed into law S. 203, the "National Heritage Areas Act of 2006." The Act establishes national heritage areas and reduces the royalty rate on certain minerals.

A number of provisions of the Act purport to give to management entities or local coordinating entities, composed of individuals who are not officers of the United States appointed in accordance with the Appointments Clause of the Constitution, significant governmental authority, such as authority to make grants from Federal appropriated funds to implement management plans for heritage areas. As is consistent with the Appointments Clause and with requirements in the Act concerning approval by the Secretary of the Interior of the management plans, the executive branch shall construe the provisions to require exercise by the Secretary of the Interior of the significant governmental authority given by the provisions, specifically including the exercise by the Secretary of final authority over any disbursement of Federal appropriated funds by a management entity or local coordinating entity.

George W. Bush

The White House,
October 12, 2006.

NOTE: This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 13. S. 203, approved October 12, was assigned Public Law No. 109–338.

Remarks on Signing the SAFE Port Act

October 13, 2006

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thank you, and welcome. I'm pleased to have you here as I sign a bill that will help protect the American people and our ports. The SAFE Port Act will make this Nation more

prepared, more prosperous, and more secure.

I want to thank the Congress for its good work. I'm pleased that key Members of the Senate and the House have joined me here today, and I want to thank you for being here. I first want to thank the Secretary of Homeland Security, Michael Chertoff, for his service to the country. I appreciate that Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist has joined us. I'm pleased that Senator Susan Collins, who is the chairman of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, has joined us. She is one of the sponsors of the bill, as is Peter King, who's the chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee. These two Members are strong, strong chairmen, and they're doing a fine job to help us protect this country. I appreciate very much Senator Bob Bennett and Senator Patty Murray and Senator Norm Coleman for joining us, as well as Congressman Dan Lungren.

The most solemn responsibility of the Federal Government is to protect the American people. And since September the 11th, the administration and the Congress have worked together, and we've led an unprecedented effort to safeguard our homeland. In other words, we learned the lessons of that attack. We've more than tripled spending on homeland security. We've created a Federal Department of Homeland Security with a single mission, to protect the American people. We've trained and equipped hundreds of thousands of State and local first-responders. We've worked with public agencies and private companies to improve security at airports and aboard commercial airliners. We've strengthened protections at bridges and tunnels and other critical infrastructure. We have a responsibility to protect the homeland, and we're meeting that responsibility.

Protecting our homeland requires protecting our borders. Since I took office, we more than doubled funding for border security, from $4.6 billion in 2001 to 9.5 billion in 2006. We've increased the number of Border Patrol agents from around 9,000 to a little more than 12,000. We've upgraded technology and infrastructure along the border. We've apprehended and sent home more than 6 million people entering America illegally. This is important progress, but we've got a lot of more work to do.

Last week in Arizona, I signed a bill that will allow us to hire 1,500 more Border Patrol agents, deploy advanced technology like ground-based radar and infrared cameras, add beds in our detention facilities so we can work to end catch-and-release. Congress also passed a bill that will authorize the construction of about 700 miles of double-layered fencing along our Southern border. I'm going to sign that bill into law. I'll continue to work with Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform that protects our country, enforces our laws, and upholds our values.

Protecting our homeland also requires protecting our seaports. Our seaports are a gateway to commerce, a source of opportunity, and a provider of jobs. Our ports could also be a target of a terrorist attack, and we're determined to protect them.

Since September the 11th, we've launched a series of new efforts to improve port security. We worked with Congress to pass the Maritime Transportation Security Act, which required American ports and vessels to adopt strict new security measures. We made wider use of intelligence to screen cargo and target suspicious containers for inspection. We've worked with foreign partners to improve their security procedures. And with the bill I sign today, we renew a clear commitment: We will work tirelessly to keep our Nation safe and our ports open for business.

The SAFE Port Act will build on progress and help us protect our ports in three key ways. First, the SAFE Port Act will strengthen physical security measures at our ports by helping us harness the power of technology. The bill authorizes the development of 21st century inspection equipment, so that Customs agents can check inside cargo containers for dangerous materials without having to open them. The bill also requires radiation detection technology at our 22 busiest ports by the end of next year. America has the best technology in the world, and with this bill, we will apply that technology to make our ports the safest in the world.

Second, the SAFE Port Act provides legislative authority for key elements of our port security strategy. The bill codifies into law the Container Security Initiative, which we

launched in 2002. Through this initiative, we have deployed American inspectors to dozens of foreign ports on five continents where they are screening cargo before it leaves for our country.

The bill also codifies into law the Customs Trade Partnership Against Terrorism, a joint effort between the public and private sectors to improve cargo security. Under this partnership, private shippers agree to improve their own security measures, and in return, they can receive benefits, including expedited clearance through our ports.

And the bill provides additional authority for the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office, which we established to guard against the threat of terrorists smuggling a nuclear device into our country.

All these efforts are smart. They're working. And with this bill, they're here to stay.

Finally, the SAFE Port Act requires the Department of Homeland Security to establish a plan to speed the resumption of trade in the event of a terrorist attack on our ports or waterways. This bill makes clear that the Federal Government has the authority to clear waterways, identify cleanup equipment, and reestablish the flow of commerce following a terrorist attack. We'll do everything we can to prevent an attack, but if the terrorists succeed in launching an attack, we'll be ready to respond.

We take these steps to improve our port security, and as we do so, we thank the hardworking Americans who protect our people day in and day out. We're grateful to the Coast Guard's men and women, the Customs and Border Protection officers, our port workers and managers, State and local law enforcement officers, and all those in the private sector who do their part to keep America safe. We're going to protect our ports. We're going to defend this homeland. And we're going to win the war on terror.

With that, I'm now pleased to sign the SAFE Port Act into law.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 a.m. in Room 350 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. At the time of publication, H.R. 4954, approved October 13, had not been received by the Office of the Federal Register in time for assignment of a Public Law number.

Statement on Signing the SAFE Port Act

October 13, 2006

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 4954, the "Security and Accountability For Every Port Act of 2006," or the "SAFE Port Act" (the "Act"). The Act strengthens the Government's ability to protect the Nation's seaports and maritime commerce from attack by terrorists.

The executive branch shall construe provisions of the Act that purport to require executive branch officials to submit recommendations for legislation to the Congress, including section 201, in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to recommend for the consideration of the Congress such measures as the President judges necessary and expedient and to supervise the unitary executive branch.

The executive branch shall construe provisions of the Act, including subsection 401(c) and subsection 2(d) of the Act of March 3, 1927, as amended by section 402 of the Act, that purport to make consultation with congressional committees a precondition to execution of the law, to call for but not mandate such consultation, as is consistent with the Constitution's provisions concerning the separate powers of the Congress to legislate and the President to execute the laws.

The executive branch shall construe subsection 301(h)(2) of the Customs Procedural Reform and Simplification Act of 1978, as amended by section 403 of the Act, which purports to give a subordinate official within the executive branch authority to prevent an action by the superior official to whom the subordinate official reports, in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to supervise the unitary executive branch.

The executive branch shall construe section 709 of the Act, which purports to direct the President to perform the President's duties "acting through" a particular officer, in a manner consistent with the constitutional authority of the President to supervise the unitary executive branch.

The executive branch shall construe as advisory provisions of the Act that purport to direct or burden the conduct of negotiations

by the executive branch with foreign governments, international organizations, or other entities abroad, that purport to direct executive branch officials to negotiate with foreign governments or in international organizations to achieve specified foreign policy objectives, or that purport to require the executive branch to disclose deliberations between the United States and foreign countries. Such provisions include subsections 205(d) and (i) and 803(b) of the Act; subsection 431(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, as amended by section 301 of the Act; and subsection 629(h) of the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended by section 404 of the Act. Such provisions, if construed as mandatory rather than advisory, would impermissibly interfere with the President's constitutional authorities to conduct the Nation's foreign affairs, participate in international negotiations, and supervise the unitary executive branch.

George W. Bush

The White House,
October 13, 2006.

NOTE: At the time of publication, H.R. 4954, approved October 13, had not been received by the Office of the Federal Register in time for assignment of a Public Law number.

Remarks Following a Meeting With the President's Management Council

October 13, 2006

It's been my pleasure to meet with members of my administration on a very important topic, and that is, how do we make sure that the taxpayers' money we're spending is getting the results we want. And I appreciate Clay Johnson of the OMB staff. And I appreciate the Director for spearheading this project, which says to our agencies, it's important to set clear goals and to set priorities for the dollars we spend. And once a goal is set, a goal that everybody can understand, it's important to make sure we measure to determine whether or not we're achieving the results.

See, the people expect, when they send their money up there, expect us to achieve certain results. And so we've been through a rigorous process in this administration of judging agencies' ability to get results, and I will tell you our agencies are responding well. It's important to measure results so that we know we're doing our job. It's also important to measure results to determine whether or not the taxpayers' money is being spent wisely.

We've all dedicated ourselves to rallying around this model. We are results-oriented people, and we work on behalf of the taxpayers. And when we find wasteful spending, we work to eliminate it. When we find a program that is making a significant difference, we work to enhance it. And we are getting results for the people. And I want to thank everybody around this table for being public servants, people who are willing to serve the public and bring dignity to the process.

I want you to go back to your agencies and thank those who are working hard on behalf of the American people as well. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2 p.m. in Room 350 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building.

Presidential Determination on Waiver and Certification of Statutory Provisions Regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Office

October 13, 2006

Presidential Determination No. 2007–02

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Presidential Determination on Waiver and Certification of Statutory Provisions Regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Office

Pursuant to the authority and conditions contained in section 534(d) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2006, Public Law 109–102, I hereby determine and certify that it is important to the national security interests of the United States to waive the provisions of section 1003 of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1987, Public Law 100–204.

This waiver shall be effective for a period of 6 months from the date hereof. You are hereby authorized and directed to transmit

this determination to the Congress and to publish it in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

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.

October 7

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he and Mrs. Bush traveled to Langely Air Force Base, VA, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Leah Hunkins. They then traveled to Newport News, VA.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush returned to Washington, DC.

October 9

In the morning, the President had separate telephone conversations with President Hu Jintao of China, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan, President Vladimir Putin of Russia, and President Roh Moo-hyun of South Korea to discuss the situation in North Korea. Later, he had an intelligence briefing.

October 10

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Chevy Chase, MD. Later, he traveled to Robins Air Force Base, GA, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Melissa Rosa. He then traveled to Macon, GA.

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

October 11

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs Gordon H. Mansfield, and Gary Kurpius, commander-in-chief, and Robert E. Wallace, executive director of the Washington office, Veterans of Foreign Wars. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer, Southern Baptist Convention, and Frank Page, SBC Executive Committee president, and his wife, Dayle.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Leonel Fernandez Reyna of the Dominican Republic to the White House on October 25.

October 12

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister John Howard of Australia. He then had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan of China.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to St. Louis, MO, where, upon arrival in the afternoon, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Tom Bailey, Jr.

Later in the afternoon, the President traveled to Chicago, IL.

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

The President announced that he has named David Broome as Special Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs.

The President announced that he has named Gordon Johndroe as Special Assistant to the President and National Security Council Press Secretary.

The President announced that he has named Richard Klingler as Senior Associate Counsel to the President and National Security Council Legal Advisor and General Counsel.

The President announced that he has named Bobby Pittman, Jr., as Special Assistant to the President for African Affairs of the National Security Council.

October 13

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, on the South Portico, he participated in a photo opportunity with World War II veterans of the U.S. Air Forces' 57th Bomb Wing.

In the afternoon, at the historic Evermay house, the President attended a Republican

National Committee luncheon. Later, in the Oval Office, he participated in a photo opportunity with members of the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds. He then traveled to Camp David, MD.

The White House announced that the President and Mrs. Bush will welcome King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia of Sweden to the White House on October 23.

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.

Released October 8

Statement by the Press Secretary on the death of Russian journalist Anna Politkovoskaya

Released October 10

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Tony Snow

Fact sheet: Conference on School Safety

Excerpts of the President's remarks at a reception for congressional candidate Mac Collins

Released October 11

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit by President Leonel Fernandez Reyna of the Dominican Republic

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that on October 10 the President signed H.R. 5664 and H.R. 6159

Fact sheet: Economic Strength and Spending Restraint Drive Down Budget Deficit

Released October 12

Transcript of a press gaggle by Deputy Press Secretary Dana Perino, Chairman of the White House Council on Environmental Quality James Connaughton, and Deputy National Security Adviser Jack D. Crouch II

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that on October 11 the President signed H.R. 318, H.R. 326, H.R. 1728, H.R. 2720, H.R. 3443, H.R. 5539, H.R. 6106, S. 213, S. 2146, and S. 2430

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 4109, H.R. 4674, H.R. 5224, H.R. 5504, H.R. 5546, H.R. 5606, H.R. 5929, H.R. 6033, H.R. 6051, and H.R. 6075

Released October 13

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Tony Snow

Statement by the Press Secretary: The President and Mrs. Bush To Welcome the King and Queen of Sweden to the White House

Statement by the Press Secretary: Appointment of the New Secretary-General of the United Nations Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 315, H.R. 562, H.R. 1463, H.R. 1556, H.R. 2322, H.R. 4768, H.R. 4805, H.R. 5026, H.R. 5428, H.R. 5434, S. 2856, S. 3661, and S. 3728

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 3127

Fact sheet: The President's Management Agenda: Making Government More Effective

Acts Approved by the President

Approved October 6 *

H.R. 3858 / Public Law 109–308
Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2006

H.R. 4841 / Public Law 109–309
To amend the Ojito Wilderness Act to make a technical correction

S. 3187 / Public Law 109–310
To designate the Post Office located at 5755 Post Road, East Greenwich, Rhode Island, as the "Richard L. Cevoli Post Office"

S. 3613 / Public Law 109–311
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2951 New York Highway 43 in Averill Park, New York, as the "Major George Quamo Post Office Building"

H.R. 683 / Public Law 109–312
Trademark Dilution Revision Act of 2006

H.R. 2066 / Public Law 109–313
General Services Administration Modernization Act

H.R. 2107 / Public Law 109–314
National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Maintenance Fund Act of 2005

Approved October 10

H.R. 5664 / Public Law 109–315
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 110 Cooper Street in Babylon, New York, as the "Jacob Samuel Fletcher Post Office Building"

H.R. 6159 / Public Law 109–316
To extend temporarily certain authorities of the Small Business Administration

Approved October 11

H.R. 318 / Public Law 109–317
To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating Castle Nugent Farms located on St. Croix, Virgin Islands, as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes

H.R. 326 / Public Law 109–318
To amend the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area Act of 2000 to adjust the boundary of the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area, and for other purposes

H.R. 1728 / Public Law 109–319
Ste. Genevieve County National Historic Site Study Act of 2005

H.R. 2720 / Public Law 109–320
Salt Cedar and Russian Olive Control Demonstration Act

H.R. 3443 / Public Law 109–321
To direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain water distribution facilities to the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District

H.R. 5539 / Public Law 109–322
North American Wetlands Conservation Reauthorization Act of 2006

H.R. 6106 / Public Law 109–323
To extend the waiver authority for the Secretary of Education under title IV, section 105, of Public Law 109–148

S. 213 / Public Law 109–324
Rio Arriba County Land Conveyance Act

S. 2146 / Public Law 109–325
To extend relocation expenses test programs for Federal employees

S. 2430 / Public Law 109–326
Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act of 2006

Approved October 12

H.R. 4109 / Public Law 109–327
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 6101 Liberty Road in Baltimore, Maryland, as the "United States Representative Parren J. Mitchell Post Office"

H.R. 4674 / Public Law 109–328
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 110 North Chestnut Street in Olathe, Kansas, as the "Governor John Anderson, Jr. Post Office Building"

* These Public Laws were not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

H.R. 5224 / Public Law 109–329
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 350 Uinta Drive in Green River, Wyoming, as the "Curt Gowdy Post Office Building"

H.R. 5504 / Public Law 109–330
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 6029 Broadmoor Street in Mission, Kansas, as the "Larry Winn, Jr. Post Office Building"

H.R. 5546 / Public Law 109–331
To designate the United States courthouse to be constructed in Greenville, South Carolina, as the "Carroll A. Campbell, Jr. United States Courthouse"

H.R. 5606 / Public Law 109–332
To designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 221 and 211 West Ferguson Street in Tyler, Texas, as the "William M. Steger Federal Building and United States Courthouse"

H.R. 5929 / Public Law 109–333
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 950 Missouri Avenue in East St. Louis, Illinois, as the "Katherine Dunham Post Office Building"

H.R. 6033 / Public Law 109–334
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 39–25 61st Street in Woodside, New York, as the "Thomas J. Manton Post Office Building"

H.R. 6051 / Public Law 109–335
To designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 2 South Main Street in Akron, Ohio, as the "John F. Seiberling Federal Building and United States Courthouse"

H.R. 6075 / Public Law 109–336
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 101 East Gay Street in West Chester, Pennsylvania, as the "Robert J. Thompson Post Office Building"

S. 56 / Public Law 109–337
Rio Grande Natural Area Act

S. 203 / Public Law 109–338
National Heritage Areas Act of 2006

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