

May 17 / Administration of George W. Bush, 2001

from the southern part of the State to the north, where the blackouts have been worse. Highways connect Miami with Seattle; phone lines link Los Angeles and New York. It is time to match your interstate highway and phone systems with an interstate electrical grid.

And here, too, technology will make a big difference. Electricity markets used to be localized because wires could not carry electrical current over long distances. More and better wires can efficiently ship power across the country, reducing the threat of local blackouts or outages.

And it's just not our electricity delivery system that has fallen behind. The energy report projects that natural gas consumption will rise rapidly, as electric utilities make greater and greater use of this environmentally friendly fuel. We will need newer, cleaner, and safer pipes to move these larger quantities of natural gas—up to 38,000 new miles of pipe and 263,000 miles of distribution lines.

We'll also need to recognize the energy potential of our neighbors, Canada and Mexico, and make it easier for buyers and sellers of energy to do business across our national borders.

And finally, we must work to build a new harmony between our energy needs and our environmental concerns. Too often Americans are asked to take sides between energy production and environmental protection, as if people who revere the Alaska wilderness do not also care about America's energy future; as if the people who produce America's energy do not care about the planet their children will inherit. The truth

is, energy production and environmental protection are not competing priorities. They are dual aspects of a single purpose: to live well and wisely upon the Earth.

Just as we need a new tone in Washington, we also need a new tone in discussing energy and the environment, one that is less suspicious, less punitive, less rancorous. We've yelled at each other enough. Now it's time to listen to each other and to act.

And it's time to act. The energy plan I lay out for the Nation harnesses the power of modern markets and the potential of new technology. It looks at today's energy problem and sees tomorrow's energy opportunity. It addresses today's energy shortages and shows the way to tomorrow's energy abundance.

I have great faith in our country's ability to solve the energy problem, and our energy plan shows the way. But most of all, I have great faith in the American people. Our land's ingenuity, our innovation, our entrepreneurial spirits is this country's greatest of all resources. And thank God, they are never in short supply.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 a.m. at the RiverCentre Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Norm Coleman of St. Paul; John Labosky, president, Capital City Partnership; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The President also referred to ANWR, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The related Executive orders of May 18 are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the Iowa Energy Center in Nevada, Iowa *May 17, 2001*

The President. Please be seated. Senator, thank you very much. It's great to see you again, and thank you so much for intro-

ducing me. It's nice to be here in Nevada. [Laughter] Mr. Mayor, I bet you were a little nervous about how I was going to

pronounce that, weren't you? [*Laughter*] But thank you so much, Andy, for being here. And I thank you for being here, as well, Ms. Murphy. It's an honor to see you.

I'm pleased to be here with the Governor. Mr. Governor, thank you for taking time. I am impressed that your State has got the imagination and the foresight to be on the cutting edge of research and development necessary to help our Nation become energy-independent.

I'm so honored the two fabulous State senators are here. How are you all doing? I hope you're behaving—[*laughter*]—better than you were the last time I saw you. [*Laughter*] Thanks for coming. And finally, Ganske, Congressman Ganske, thank you for being here, friend. It's good to see you.

I'm thrilled to be traveling today with two members of my Cabinet, who the Senator just introduced. I'm going to ask them to say a few remarks about our vision for America. I want to thank Floyd for his hospitality. I want to thank the president of Iowa State for being here. I told him I didn't appreciate how the Iowa State people treated those Texas basketball teams this year. [*Laughter*] He said he didn't really care what I thought about how—[*laughter*].

I'm really glad to be back in Iowa. This is not a time to talk politics, but I do want to tell the citizens of Iowa I appreciated so very much the hospitality of this great State. I told people that this is a unique State, because every time I came, people treated me with respect and were very kind. I think it may be one of the kindest States in the United States, which is a great tribute to the people of this State.

Frankly, we need a little more kindness in America, and we definitely need a new tone in Washington, DC. We need to be able to have a discussion of public policy that's important for the country without name-calling and finger-pointing, without the attitude of zero-sum politics. If the President proposed it, it's got to automatically be bad, because he said so. And if

an opponent said it, it's automatically got to be bad, because he or she said it. That's not right for America. And it's particularly not right when it comes to addressing huge issues and important issues, like energy security and energy independence.

Today I had the honor of talking—laying out a comprehensive energy plan for the country. I had asked the Vice President and members of my Cabinet to take a look at the situation, analyze the problem, and to come up with solutions. And today I outlined over 100 solutions—proposals as a solution to the problems we face.

We face a shortage of energy. I was reading in the newspaper today where there is a shortage of energy in one of the major cities in Iowa. It is real. It is not an imagination of anybody in my administration. It's not out of our imagination. It's a real problem. And we believe that this administration was elected to address those problems—forget politics—to put policies out for the Nation to debate, and then to act on those policies.

So today I've laid out an initiative that said, first and foremost, we better be better conservationists in the country. We need to conserve. We need to be wise about how we use energy. We need to figure out how to drive new kinds of cars that don't overconsume hydrocarbons. We need to figure out how to have smart technologies in our homes. Citizens need to figure out how to be more conservation oriented. We need to be mindful of turning off lights. And we've got regulations that Christie Todd may talk about that talks about more fuel-efficient appliances. And we're making progress in America. We're better conservationists than we've been in the past, but there's still more work to do.

And secondly, no matter how well we conserve, we're still going to need more energy. As I noted today, the State of California is the second best State in the Union for conservation measures, and yet they've got a problem. They have run out of energy at times. That's called rolling blackouts. It

just goes to show that we can conserve, but we also need to come up with additional supplies.

And I talked about those supplies. And one of the keys to energy security in America, and national security, is to have a diversified energy base. That means oil; that means gas; that means safe nuclear energy; that means clean coal technologies to make sure the abundance of coal that we use is done in a friendly—environmentally friendly way.

But it also means interesting new opportunities such as biomass, and that's why we've come here. I can't think of anything better for national security than to replace barrels of oil that come into the country from nations that can't stand America—some of them don't—with products that we grow here in America. I can't think of—I would much rather replace oil from Iraq with corn products from Iowa, and it's getting within our reach.

I was talking to Floyd about how real are the products that are being looked at here; how close are we to reality. And he said, "Pretty darn close." Biodiesel is what he talked about. We're pretty darn close, and we're more than close when it comes to ethanol. It's real. And I said during the campaign here that I support ethanol. You've just got to know, I supported it not only as a candidate, but I support it as the President. It makes sense for America.

You know, much of the debate on energy seems to polarize the country. It doesn't have to be that way: You're either for exploration and therefore against the environment, or for the environment and therefore against exploration. And that's not the way the discourse ought to go.

The discourse ought to go: How can we explore without hurting the environment? And I strongly believe, and I know that technologies have developed over the last 30 years, so that I can say with certainty to the American people, we can explore for precious fuels like natural gas in a way that does not harm our environment. It

doesn't harm our—we can go to the Arctic, for example, and build ice roads and bring the equipment on an ice road and build a pad made out of ice and then for those few periods of time when the ice melts, withdraw the equipment. And then when the ice comes back, come back, so we don't damage the tundra. We can drill from one location to a reservoir miles away. The technology has changed.

So instead of having a debate that says, well, we can't drill because of the environment, or we can't—and we're not for energy independence if you're for the environment, we need to have a discourse that says, let's work together in America. Let's make sure we can have both. Otherwise, our folks are going to hurt.

We don't want the blackouts of California, which affects a lot of hard-working people's lives in a negative way, to extend its reach across the country. We don't want that to happen. Nobody likes it when gas prices are high. I know there are farmers out there working to make a living on a thin margin, and when the price of refined product goes up, it affects the livelihood of hard-working people in Iowa. Nobody likes that.

So instead of polarizing, we need to come together with solutions. We need more refining capacity in America, folks. We need to make sure we protect the environment, but have incentives and regulations that encourage the development of additional supply.

And finally, in my speech today, I'm going—I talked about conservation, and I talked about additional supplies in a diversified supply base. I also talked about making sure that we get the product from point A to the consumers. And our infrastructure is aging. It's old. Our electricity grid needs to be modernized, so we can move product from point A to point B. There are places in southern California where there's ample energy, but they can't get it to northern California, where there's been blackouts,

because the transmission system is not modern.

Natural gas is clean. It burns clean. It's—a lot of plants now that are coming on line to meet the electricity needs of America are going to be fueled by natural gas. And that's good news. But we need pipelines to get the gas from reservoir to user. And we need to understand that. We need to understand we need to move more product expeditiously around America.

So this is an energy plan that says to America, let's work together to get after this problem. Let's work together to bring commonsense solutions. And let's think about how best to deploy and employ our resources here in America, starting with what's happening here. We're really—I am very excited about what I heard. It's such a vast potential, and it's a great opportunity. And that's why we support research and development of such activities that take place here.

You know, I've got such great faith in America. I do, because one thing we're not in short supply of is an entrepreneurial spirit and brains and problem-solvers. That's really the greatness of America. And it's such an honor to be the President of such a great land.

And it is also my honor—and it's my honor to welcome to the podium the Secretary of Energy, former United States Senator Spencer Abraham.

[At this point, Energy Secretary Abraham made brief remarks.]

The President. Again, Governor, thank you very much for taking time—and Mr. Mayor.

Ganske, are you on the airplane with me? Oh, you're not on the airplane with me. Well, great to see you. [Laughter]

I must say something about your—about Senator Grassley. First of all, I got a kick out of campaigning with him throughout Iowa. He's got a remarkable sense of humor and a great love for Iowa. But he is making a good deal of progress on get-

ting a tax relief package out of the United States Congress. Iowans need to be proud of his leadership.

I saw a lot of folks during the campaign here, and they talked a lot about me getting rid of the death tax, and we're making good progress. And Senator Grassley is really one of the leaders. He has assumed an incredibly important position in the Senate, and he is bringing a lot of honor to your State.

He's heard the call, and that is this: We need to get tax relief done as quickly as possible. I need to be signing a bill before Memorial Day so we can get money. We need to start getting some of that surplus in the hands of the hard-working American people, to help provide a second wind to our economy, and to help with some of the high energy bills that people are now facing.

And you need to be proud of your Senator. He's working hard, and I'm sure proud to call him friend. And I want to thank you all for coming and giving us a chance to talk—to close an important day in my administration here in a State that has got an incredible potential and can play a major role in value-added processing that will help this great Nation of ours realize its vast potential as we head into the 21st century.

Thanks for coming, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:55 p.m. at the Biomass Energy Conversion Facility. In his remarks, he referred to Senator Charles E. Grassley, who introduced the President; Mayor Andrew Murphy of Nevada and his wife, Shelly; Gov. Thomas J. Vilsack of Iowa; Floyd Barwig, director, Iowa Energy Center; Richard Seagrave, interim president, Iowa State University; and Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Christine Todd Whitman. The related Executive orders of May 18 are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.