

none of them will be solved at all. The American people must conduct this debate with dignity. They must remember that we're a nation of immigrants. They must understand—they must remember that throughout our history, people have come to America because this is a place where they can pursue their dreams no matter who they are or where they're from.

Mexican Americans have brought with them a culture based upon faith in God, a deep love for family, and a belief that hard work leads to a better life. Every immigrant who lives by these values makes the United States a better country, makes our future brighter as one nation under God.

Across America tomorrow, there will be many celebrations of Cinco de Mayo. The performances we're going to see today represent some of the very fine talent. It reminds us that we're a nation that is strong because of our diversity. There's going to be a lot of traditional music, a lot of pretty

good Mexican food too, I bet you. [Laughter] Kind of reminds us of Texas, doesn't it, Ambassador?

May God continue to bless all of us who are fortunate enough to live in this land, and may God continue to bless our country and the many sons and daughters of Mexico who call our Nation home. Happy Cinco de Mayo. And now it is my pleasure to introduce one of Mexico's great talents, Graciela Beltran.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:57 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Robin Barreto, wife of Small Business Administration Administrator Hector V. Barreto, Jr.; Victor G. Cabral, husband of Treasurer of the United States Anna Escobedo Cabral; Mexico's Ambassador to the U.S. Carlos Alberto de Icaza Gonzalez; and entertainer Graciela Beltran of Mexico. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on House of Representatives Passage of Port Security

Legislation

May 4, 2006

I am pleased that the House of Representatives today passed a bill to enhance the security of our Nation's ports. I look

forward to working with Congress on passage of legislation that will make our people safer and facilitate trade.

Remarks at the American Jewish Committee's Centennial Dinner

May 4, 2006

[The President's remarks are joined in progress.]

—I want to thank the Members of Congress who are here. I appreciate the members of the diplomatic corps who have joined us today. I want to pay a special tribute to a friend of mine from Texas who

has done a superb job as the Chairman of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, and that's Fred Zeidman.

My administration shares a strong commitment with the AJC to make sure relations between Israel and America remain strong. We have so much in common.

We're both young countries born of struggle and sacrifice. We're both founded by immigrants escaping religious persecution. We have both established vibrant democracies built on the rule of law and open markets. We're both founded on certain basic beliefs: that God watches over the affairs of men and that freedom is the Almighty God's gift to every man and woman on the face of this Earth. These ties have made us natural allies, and these ties will never be broken. America's commitment to Israel's security is strong, enduring, and unshakable.

I'm looking forward to my meeting with Prime Minister Olmert in a couple of weeks. And as he comes to America, I cannot help but think about my friend Ariel Sharon. Ariel Sharon is a friend who remains in our thoughts and prayers. He is a man of courage and a man of peace. And so tonight we pray for his recovery; we rededicate ourselves to the cause to which he devoted his life, the peace and the security of Israel.

As you know, I'm a strong believer in democracy and free elections, but that does not mean we have to support elected officials who are not committed to peace. Hamas has made it clear that they do not acknowledge the right of Israel to exist, and I've made it clear that so long as that's their policy, we will have no contact with the leaders of Hamas. Democratically—leaders cannot have one foot in the camp of democracy and one foot in the camp of terror. Hamas must accept the demands of the international community to recognize Israel, disarm and reject terrorism, and stop blocking the path to peace.

Many of the AJC leaders who have come to know me understand how my thinking was profoundly affected by the attacks on our country on September the 11th, 2001. The security of our Nation is foremost in my mind. I vowed that day and I vow to you today that the United States of America will stay on the hunt and bring the killers to justice.

And one of the lessons of September the 11th is that this Nation must take threats seriously before they fully materialize. And I saw a threat in Saddam Hussein. He had invaded a neighbor; he had used weapons of mass destruction against his own people; he had the capability of making weapons of mass destruction; he harbored terrorists; he was shooting at U.S. aircraft. He was a threat, and the world is better off without Saddam Hussein in power.

Our goal in Iraq is to have an ally in the war on terror and to help that young country establish an Iraqi-style democracy. Last December, 12 million people defied the car bombers and the killers and the terrorists and said that "We want to live in liberty." Recently a unity government has formed in Iraq. They reached an agreement on their top leadership posts. This new Government represents a turning point in Iraq, a new chapter in our engagement there, and an opportunity for progress. We will form a new partnership with these leaders. We will adjust our methods to support their priorities. We will strengthen our mutual efforts to achieve victory.

But I want you to understand that the new Government is yet another blow to those who hate liberty. First, it will deny the terrorists their immediate aim of turning Iraq into a safe haven from which they can plot and plan attacks against the United States and our allies. And secondly, a democratic Iraq will be a major blow to the terrorists' hateful ideology, sending a powerful message across the region that the future of the Middle East belongs to freedom. The only way we can lose in Iraq is if we lose our nerve, and I am not going to lose my nerve.

The AJC, the American Government, and most of the nations of the world are concerned about Iran. We're concerned because the Iranian regime is repressing its people, sponsoring terrorists, destabilizing the region, threatening Israel, and defying the world with its ambitions for nuclear

weapons. America will continue to rally the world to confront these threats.

We're making progress. The first goal is to reach a common objective, and the objective amongst America, our European allies, Russia, and China is to deny Iran a nuclear weapon. I spent time with Chancellor Merkel yesterday talking about this important issue. I can assure you we have a strong ally in Chancellor Merkel when it comes to uniting the world to speak with one clear voice.

We will continue to press the Iranian Government to comply with IAEA as well as U.N. Security Council resolutions. America respects and admires the people of Iran. We respect their history and culture. We respect their right to choose their own future and win their own freedom. And America looks forward to the day when our Nation can be closest of friends with a free and democratic Iran.

Before I introduce the Chancellor, I do want to talk about another subject that I know is important to you, and it's important to me, and that's Darfur. Last weekend, thousands rallied on our National Mall to call for justice in Darfur. And among the speakers was a man who understands the meaning of evil. You know him well. Elie Wiesel put it this way: "We refuse to be silent because silent helps the killer, never his victims."

America is not silent. The United States is the only country to have called the crimes taking place in Sudan what they are—genocide. To end these atrocities, we've developed a clear standard. First, there must be a political course. Right now as we speak, we're negotiating to bring a political settlement so that all sides will lay down their arms, a settlement between the

Government and the rebels. These conversations are taking place in Abuja.

But, as well, we must understand that the rape and the murder and the suffering must be stopped. And that's why I believe strongly that we must augment AU forces with a blue-helmeted U.N. force, with a NATO overlay, so that we can send a clear message to the leaders of Sudan: We will not tolerate the genocide taking place in that country.

My remaining time in office, I look forward to working with AJC leaders. I appreciate your steadfast strength when it comes to dealing with terror. I appreciate your strong belief in the power of liberty to transform the world we have. I look forward to working with you to continue to lay the foundations of peace so that generations after our time will look at all of us and say, job well done.

And now it's my pleasure to introduce a leader who understands the importance of freedom. Angela Merkel grew up in East Germany during the dark days of the cold war. She understands what it means to live in a free society. She understands the power of liberty. She's a straightforward person; she tells me what's on her mind. She's a woman of good judgment. She's a strong leader. It's my privilege to welcome her here and to our friends at the AJC.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:57 p.m. at the National Building Museum. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany; and Nobel prize winner and author Elie Wiesel.

Remarks on the National Economy May 5, 2006

The President. Listen, I thank you for your hospitality. I'm here to talk about our economy. Today we've got some good news: 138,000 additional Americans found jobs over the last month, which is good. The national unemployment rate is 4.7 percent. This economy is strong.

And one of the hopeful things about our economy is, small businesses are doing well. Small businesses provide most of the job growth in our country. The small-business sector is doing well; so is the American economy.

One thing we've got to make sure is that we keep the people's taxes low to keep this economy growing. Raising taxes will hurt small businesses; raising taxes will hurt consumers; raising taxes will particularly affect working people, now that the price of gasoline has gone up. So one of the things Congress has got to do is be mindful that the economic growth we're seeing, the strong economic growth, is dependent upon good tax policy.

At the same time, Congress should be wise about how they spend the people's money. They've got to make sure the supplemental comes to me at a rate that I'll accept—\$92.2 billion—plus money for the pandemic flu.

We've got a plan to make sure this economy keeps growing, but today's news is good news for the American people.

And I want to thank you—let me thank you for coming by here to say hito you.

John Weintraub. All right, I thank you.

The President. It's a good place to shop, by the way. I just spent some of my hard-earned money on Barney. I bought him a couple of toys to chew on—but don't let him know until I get over there; it's a surprise. [*Laughter*] Thanks for letting me come by.

Mr. Weintraub. Okay. Thank you, Mr. President.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:08 a.m. Participating in the visit was John Weintraub, coowner, Frager's Hardware.

Remarks Announcing the Resignation of Porter J. Goss as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency May 5, 2006

The President. This morning Director Porter Goss offered his resignation as the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. I've accepted it.

During the course of his tenure, I've established a very close personal relationship with Porter, which is very important for the Director of the CIA. He's spent a lot of time here in the Oval Office. He's told me—he's given me his candid advice. I appreciate his integrity. I appreciate the

honor in which—that he brought to the job.

Porter's tenure at the CIA was one of transition. He's helped this Agency become integrated into the intelligence community, and that was a tough job. And he's led ably. He's got a 5-year plan to increase the number of analysts and operatives, which is going to help make this country a safer place and help us win the war on terror. He's instilled a sense of professionalism. He honors the proud history of