

Time magazine came to his Pentagon office, and Don correctly suspected they were thinking of naming him “Person of the Year.” Without hesitation, Don Rumsfeld told them, “Don’t give it to me. Give it to our men and women in uniform.” And that’s exactly what Time magazine did.

Don Rumsfeld’s selfless leadership earned him the admiration of our soldiers and sailors and airmen and marines. And we saw how they feel about him this week when he paid a farewell visit to our troops in Iraq.

Don Rumsfeld’s strong leadership has earned him my admiration and deep respect. We stood together in hours of decision that would affect the course of our history. We walked amid the rubble of the broken Pentagon the day after September the 11th, 2001. He was with me when we planned the liberation of Afghanistan. We were in the Oval Office together the day I gave the order to remove Saddam Hussein from power.

In these and countless other moments, I have seen Don Rumsfeld’s character and his integrity. He was—always ensured I had the best possible advice, the opportunity to hear and weigh conflicting points of view. He spoke straight. It was easy to un-

derstand him. He has a sharp intellect, a steady demeanor, and boundless energy. He began every day at the Pentagon with a singular mission—to serve his country and the men and women who defend her.

Mr. Secretary, today your country thanks you for 6 outstanding years at the Department of Defense. And I thank you for your sacrifice and your service and your devotion to the men and women of our Armed Forces.

I want to thank Joyce for her poise and her grace and for the example she has set for our Nation’s military families. Laura and I will miss you both, and we wish you all the best in the years to come.

And now, ladies and gentlemen, I bring to this podium America’s 21st Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:50 p.m. at the Pentagon. In his remarks, he referred to Lynne Cheney, wife of Vice President Dick Cheney; Secretary of the Navy Donald C. Winter; and Secretary of the Air Force Michael W. Wynne. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld.

## **Message on the Observance of Hanukkah 2006** *December 15, 2006*

I send greetings to all those celebrating Hanukkah, the festival of lights.

During Hanukkah, Jewish people everywhere honor the liberation of Jerusalem and the great miracle witnessed in the Holy Temple more than 2,000 years ago. After Jerusalem was conquered by an oppressive king and the Jews lost their right to worship in freedom, Judah Maccabee and his followers courageously set out to reclaim Jerusalem from foreign rule. Though their numbers were small, the Maccabees’ dedication

to their faith was strong, and they emerged victorious. When they returned to their Holy Temple for its rededication, the Maccabees discovered enough oil to burn for only one day. Yet the oil lit the Holy Temple for eight days, and the light of hope still shines bright in Jewish homes and synagogues throughout the world.

Each year, the glow of the menorah is a reminder of the blessings of a just and loving God and the sacrifices made over the centuries for faith and freedom. Laura

and I pray that this holiday season will be a time of happiness in every home and a time of peace throughout the world.

Happy Hanukkah.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

## The President's Radio Address *December 16, 2006*

Good morning. Christmas is fast approaching, and I know many of you are busy trying to finish up your holiday shopping. This week, we received good news about the economy that should brighten the season and keep us optimistic about the year ahead.

First, the Commerce Department released figures showing that sales for America's retailers were up in November and that the increase is much larger than expected. These figures are important because for many American businesses November and December are their highest sales months for the year. So the healthy increase in retail sales is a good sign for American employers and workers.

America's working families also received another bit of holiday cheer this week: We learned that real hourly wages rose by 2.3 percent over the past year. That may not sound like a lot, but for the typical family of four with both parents working, it means an extra \$1,350 for this year. At the same time, our growing economy continues to create jobs and that has brought unemployment down to just 4.5 percent. These numbers give all Americans a reason to celebrate. More people are working than ever before, and paychecks are going further than they used to.

When you decide how to spend your paycheck, you have to set priorities and live within your means. Congress needs to do the same thing with the money you send to Washington. That was one of the clear messages American voters sent in the midterm elections. And one of the best

ways we can impose more discipline on Federal spending is by addressing the problem of earmarks.

Earmarks are spending provisions that are often slipped into bills at the last minute, so they never get debated or discussed. It is not surprising that this often leads to unnecessary Federal spending, such as a swimming pool or a teapot museum tucked into a big spending bill. And over the last decade, the Congressional Research Service reports that the number of earmarks has exploded, increasing from about 3,000 in 1996 to 13,000 in 2006. I respect Congress's authority over the public purse, but the time has come to reform the earmark process and dramatically reduce the number of earmarks.

Reforming earmarks is the responsibility of both political parties. Over the past year, the Republican Congress succeeded in eliminating virtually all earmarks for three major Cabinet Departments. And I'm pleased that Democratic leaders in Congress recently committed themselves to support reforms that would restore transparency and accountability to earmarks. For this year's budget, they pledged to maintain current levels of spending and not include any earmarks, and they agreed to a temporary moratorium on earmarks. This is a good start, but Congress needs to do much more. My administration will soon lay out a series of reforms that will help make earmarks more transparent, that will hold the Members who propose earmarks more accountable, and that will help reduce the