

found themselves stranded in Lebanon following Hizballah's unprovoked terrorist attacks on Israel. We called for your help, and you delivered, and we appreciate that a lot. That's what friends do.

In January, the Greek Government responded quickly following a grenade attack on our Embassy in Athens. And we appreciate the determination of Greek authorities to bring those responsible for this attack to justice. We're grateful for the many messages of sympathy and support we've received after those attacks.

We also share with Greece important ties of faith, Your Eminence. The Greek Orthodox Church counts more than 1 million members in the United States, and it plays a vital role in the spiritual life of our Nation. Your Eminence, I thank you and congratulate you on 40 years of ministry as a bishop. You're providing necessary and important leadership here in the United States. You are a man of wisdom. You're a man of prayer. I appreciated your thoughtful response to me and Laura after the September the 11th attacks. These were tough times for our Nation, and your comforting call meant a lot to me.

I thank you for your determination to rebuild what was lost on that terrible day. On 9/11, the terrorists who struck Manhattan brought down not only magnificent skyscrapers but a humble house of worship. Before those attacks, St. Nicholas Church

stood just south of the second tower of the World Trade Center. Your vision is for a new St. Nicholas to rise just a few steps from its original site. And with your help, St. Nicholas will once again be a sanctuary of faith in New York's financial district and a new center of reconciliation for visitors from all over the world.

I thank you very much, Your Eminence, for gracing this house. This is the people's house. This belongs to everybody who's an American. I thank you for your vision of peace. I thank you for your spirituality. And I thank you for joining me as we celebrate Greek Independence Day.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:10 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Archbishop Demetrios, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in America; Minister of Foreign Affairs Dora Bakoyannis of Greece; Greece's Ambassador to the U.S. Alexandros P. Mallias; Cyprus's Ambassador to the U.S. Andreas S. Kakouris; Reverend Father Alex Karloutsos, assistant to the Archbishop for public affairs; and Prime Minister Fuad Siniora of Lebanon. The proclamation of March 21 on Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy, 2007, is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

## **The President's Radio Address** *March 24, 2007*

Good morning. The position of U.S. attorney is one of the most important jobs in the Justice Department. U.S. attorneys are appointed by the President, and they play a leading role in prosecuting crime and protecting the public.

In recent months, the Justice Department determined that new leadership in

several of these positions would better serve the country. I strongly support the Attorney General in this decision. I also appreciate the hard work and service of the U.S. attorneys who resigned, and I regret that their resignations have turned into a public spectacle.

Earlier this week, my administration presented to Congress a reasonable way forward that balances the constitutional prerogatives of the Presidency with Congress's interest in learning more facts behind the decision to replace 8 of the 93 U.S. attorneys. Members of Congress now face a choice, whether they will waste time and provoke an unnecessary confrontation or whether they will join us in working to do the people's business. We have many important issues before us, so we need to put partisan politics aside and come together to enact important legislation for the American people.

One of the most urgent legislative priorities is to fund our troops fighting the war on terror. I've asked Congress to pass an emergency war spending bill that gives our troops what they need, without strings and without delay. Instead, a narrow majority in the House of Representatives decided yesterday to make a political statement. The emergency war spending bill they voted for would cut the number of troops below the level our military commanders say they need to accomplish the mission. It would set an artificial timetable for withdrawal that would allow the enemy to wait us out. And it would require an army of lawyers to meet the conditions imposed by politicians in Washington who are substituting their own judgment for that of our generals in Iraq. I have made it clear that I will veto any such bill, and it is clear that my veto would be sustained.

To get the votes they needed to pass the bill, the Democrats who control the House also included billions of dollars in domestic and porkbarrel spending for local congressional districts. This spending includes things like \$74 million for peanut storage, \$25 million for spinach growers, and a host of other spending items that have nothing to do with the war. Even with all this extra spending tacked on, the vote in the House was very close. This means

that the Democrats do not have enough votes to override my veto.

By choosing to make a political statement and passing a bill they know will never become law, the Democrats in Congress have only delayed the delivery of the vital funds and resources our troops need. The clock is running. The Secretary of Defense has warned that if Congress does not approve the emergency funding for our troops by April 15th, our men and women in uniform will face significant disruptions, and so will their families. April 15th is also about the same time that Congress returns from its Easter vacation. Members of Congress need to put our troops first, not politics. They need to send me a clean bill, without conditions, without restrictions, and without pork.

This is an important moment for our Nation, and it is an important moment for the new Congress. My administration has presented a reasonable way forward on the matter of U.S. attorneys and on ensuring that our men and women in uniform have the funds and the flexibility they need to win in Iraq. It is not too late for us to work together. For the good of our Nation, I ask the Democratic leaders in Congress to seize the opportunity before us and move beyond political statements to bipartisan action.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 1 p.m. on March 23 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on March 24. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 23, but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In the address, the President referred to Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

## Remarks Following a Meeting With United States Automobile Makers March 26, 2007

*The President.* I've just spent quite a while talking to our CEOs of American automobile companies. And I was interested in their take on my goal of reducing gasoline consumption by 20 percent over the next 10 years.

I found it very interesting that by 2012, 50 percent of the automobiles in America will be flex-fuel vehicles. That means that the American consumer will be able to either use gasoline or ethanol, depending upon, obviously, price and convenience. That's a major technological breakthrough for the country. If you want to reduce gasoline usage, like I believe we need to do so for national security reasons as well as for environmental concerns, the consumer has got to be in a position to make a rational choice. And so I appreciate very much the fact that American automobile manufacturers recognize the reality of the world in which we live and are using new technologies to give the consumers different options.

Right now most of our ethanol is made from corn. But the Federal Government is spending a lot of money to try to develop new technologies that will mean that ethanol could be made from wood chips or switchgrass. Part of that request is embedded in a request to the Congress, and I would hope that Congress would move expeditiously on our plan to reduce gasoline usage by 20 percent over the next 10 years. It's in our national security interest that we do this, it's in economic security interest we do it, and, all at the same time, it will help us be better stewards of the environment.

And now I'd like to ask these gentlemen to make a few comments. Go ahead, Rick.

*G. Richard Wagoner, Jr.* Yes, I'd just—from General Motors' perspective, we very much share the President's vision, and we definitely see a path through to both lower

oil consumption, lower amounts of imported oil, and fewer carbon emissions. And obviously, near-term opportunity that we are moving on right now, as the President cited, is flex-fuel vehicles that are powered by E-85 ethanol. There are millions on the road today. As a group, we've agreed to double our production by the year 2010 and then have 50 percent of our production E-85 capable by the year 2012. This makes a big difference, and there's nothing that can be done which can reduce the curve of growth in imported oil and actually turn it down like using E-85, taking advantage of what's there today.

So we look forward to the opportunity to work closely with the administration, the Congress to increase the production of ethanol and to improve the distribution. And on the manufacturer's side, we look very, very much forward to playing our role in that process as well.

*The President.* Thank you. Alan.

*Alan Mulally.* Well, I might add to what Rick said, that we at Ford absolutely are supportive of the President's goal, both for energy efficiency and independence and to be good stewards of our environment.

One of the neat things about the conversation, again, today, on the continuing dialog that we've had, is being able to—for the United States system to have options and have flexibility. And the fact that we have ethanol solutions today, hybrids coming along, and plus hydrogen and fuel cells and new battery technology, gives some great options to satisfy our need for flexibility, as well as being good stewards of the environment.

So, Mr. President, we appreciate the leadership, and we look forward to working with you going forward.

*Thomas W. LaSorda.* Well, DaimlerChrysler, which includes the Mercedes Car Group, the Freightliner, and