

Last week, the Department of Energy announced that in 2006, our carbon emissions decreased by 1.3 percent while our economy grew by 3.3 percent. This experience shows that a strong and growing economy can deliver both a better life for its people and a cleaner environment at the same time.

At the G-8 summit, I'm going to encourage world leaders to increase their own investments in research and development. I'm looking forward to working with them. I'm looking forward to discussing ways to encourage more investment in developing nations by making low-cost financing options for clean energy a priority of the international development banks.

We're also going to work to conclude talks with other nations on eliminating tariffs and other barriers to clean energy technologies and services by the end of year. If you are truly committed to helping the environment, nations need to get rid of their tariffs, need to get rid of those barriers that prevent new technologies from coming into their countries. We'll help the world's poorest nations reduce emissions by giving them government-developed technologies at low cost or, in some case, no cost at all.

We have an historic opportunity in the world to extend prosperity to regions that have only known poverty and despair. The

United States is in the lead, and we're going to stay in the lead.

The initiatives I've discussed today are making a difference in the lives of millions; our fellow citizens have got to understand that. We're talking about improving lives in a real, tangible way that ought to make our country proud. That's why we've asked these folks to come. It's one thing for the President to be talking about stories, it's another thing for the people to see first-hand what our help has done.

I'm so proud of the United States of America. This initiative shows the good character and the decency of the American people. We are a decent people. We feel responsible for helping those who are less fortunate. And I am proud to be the President of such a good nation.

Thanks for coming, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:07 a.m. at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center. In his remarks, he referred to Manyongo "Kunene" Mosima Tantoh, member, Mothers to Mothers-To-Be, and her son, Baron; Jean W. Pape, director, Haitian Study Group on Kaposi's Sarcoma and Opportunistic Infections; and His Grace Bishop Paul, director, Coptic Hope Center. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady, who introduced the President.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Jalal Talabani of Iraq *May 31, 2007*

President Bush. It is my honor to welcome the President of a free Iraq back to the Oval Office. President Talabani, thank you for coming. I admire your courage. I admire your dedication to a united Iraq. I admire the leadership you have shown, and I welcome you.

We had a good conversation today about a variety of subjects. I told the President that I'm fully committed to helping the Iraqi Government achieve important objectives—we call them benchmarks—political law necessary to show the Iraqi citizens that there is a unified government willing to work on the interest of all people.

The President fully understands the need for the Iraqi Government to meet certain benchmarks, and he is dedicated to achieving those benchmarks. We're working very hard, for example, on getting an oil law with an oil revenue sharing code that will help unite the country. Working very hard on de-Ba'athification law and on reform, as well as Provincial elections.

We talked about a lot of issues. And I want to thank you very much for your vision, Mr. President, and your willingness to take the hard steps necessary to get the job done.

I told the President the decision I have made: I've asked one of my top aides, Meghan O'Sullivan, to return to Baghdad. Meghan has been an integral part of our team here at the White House. She has been in Iraq before. She's going back to serve with Ambassador Crocker, to help the Iraqis and to help the Embassy help the Iraqis meet the benchmarks that the Congress and the President expect to get passed. And I want to thank Meghan for her dedicated service to a free Iraq.

Mr. President, it is important that you succeed. Failure in Iraq would endanger the American citizens because failure in Iraq would embolden the enemies of a free Iraq. David Petraeus said: Public enemy number one in Iraq is Al Qaida. Al Qaida happens to be public enemy number one in America too. And that should say loud and clear to citizens who still remember the lessons of September the 11th that it's in our interest to help the Iraqis defeat Al Qaida.

We must not let Al Qaida have a safe haven in Iraq. We must not retreat in the face of the unspeakable violence that they perpetuate on your citizens. We must help you prevail. And if all Iraqis showed the same courage you showed, we will prevail. And there's a lot of a—courageous Iraqis there.

I'm confident we can succeed, Mr. President. And I want to thank you for coming here to the White House to join me.

President Talabani. I'm pleased and honored to meeting our great friend, whom we consider the hero of liberating Iraq, President George Bush, who was always with Iraqi people. And also, I must tell you that I'm committed, as the President of Iraq, to benchmarks and to do our best to achieve some progress forward for national reconciliation, for passing the law: oil law, de-Ba'athification, and investment and other laws which are now under discussion. And I think we are due to finish all of it and send it to Parliament to be achieved.

At the same time, we are committed to do our best to train our army and armed forces to replace, gradually, the American forces in taking responsibility of the security of our country. Of course, we are very grateful to the American people. And I present my condolences to the sacrifice which these glorious people America has always presented for liberating peoples all over the history and for Iraqi people and—[inaudible]—people and others.

We are always repeating our desire to strengthen the unity of Iraq and the unity of the National Government and to have the collective leadership in Iraq for dealing the oil problems. And I briefed His Excellency, Mr. President, about what we have done and what we have achieved for this purpose.

I'm glad to have the support of President Bush and the Congress. I'm grateful to Congress. I told President Bush that I'm grateful for the Congress for the last decision and for the—[inaudible]—decision, which was the resolution that was taken by Congress, the resolution of liberating Iraq at the time of President Bill Clinton.

So we are determined to success. Of course, you have problems. I don't think that everything is okay, everything is good, we have no problems; no, we have problems. We have serious problems with terrorism. The main enemy of Iraqi people is Al Qaida and terrorists cooperating with them. But there are groups who are now

raising arms against us. Now we are negotiating with them to give them back to the political process of the Iraqi people. And you have good achievements also. We hope that this will lead to more big steps forwards to national reconciliation in Iraq.

We are also determined to improve our political and economic life in Iraq. We achieved—unfortunately, media only concentrating on negative sides of Iraq. They are not concentrating on big achievements in Iraq: economic achievements, raising the salaries of the millions of Iraqis, improving the social life and the—that all universities, schools, hospitals are working well in Iraq. Besides the problems which we have—we don't deny it—we are trying to overcome these difficulties. But we have some achievements. Thanks to the United States of America and our great friend President Bush, we achieved some good, important success.

Besides some failure in the security, we have also successes in bringing democracy for the first time to Iraq. All kinds of democratic rights are now available for Iraqi people. We have free election. We have now Parliament elected by people. We have authorities—Presidency, Prime Minister—chosen by the people. This is happening for the first time in the history of Iraqi people.

Also, we have some kind of success in rebuilding our country. Not all parts of Iraq are terrible areas. You have in the north of Iraq, Kurdistan. [*Inaudible*]*—in Iraq is living in peace, security, and prosperity. And also, in the south, you have about nine Provinces now secure and gradually—days ago, the American forces delivered the responsibility of security to the authorities in the Iraqi Kurdistan. So we are going forward, with difficulties; I don't deny difficulties; I don't deny short—[inaudible]—I don't deny that still we are suffering from some problems. But we are determined to benchmarks, and we are determined to go*

forward and to achieve, as Mr. President mentioned.

Now we are due to end the oil law, which will be revolutionary for all Iraqis, due to review the de-Ba'athification. We have our new draft for this. We have another proper draft for investment. We are encouraging investment from outside to Iraq. And we are going to renew the local elections—shall in new—in near future for this country.

And again, I am grateful to American people, to the President of the American people, for what they have done for my people, for Iraq. We are now living in much better situation than we had in the past. And we are facing common enemy, which is still a reason; Al Qaida is the enemy not only of Iraq and America, but all people of the world. Look to the Arab countries, everywhere. Al Qaida—in Lebanon, in Niger, in Morocco, in Saudi Arabia, in Egypt—Al Qaida is starting to work against all peoples of Middle East. So we are fighting this enemy. And as President Bush said, there must be no place for Al Qaida in Iraq or in other places, because if they can have such a kind of bases, they will threaten Europe and the United States of America.

Again, Mr. President, thank you very much for your kind visit and for your important words you say.

President Bush. Thank you, Mr. President.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Ryan C. Crocker; and Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq. President Talabani referred to Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq.

Interview With Foreign Print Journalists May 31, 2007

The President. First, I'm really looking forward to the trip. It's a chance for me to see old friends, make new friends, and talk about an agenda that is based upon freedom and the obligation, for those of us who benefit from our free societies, to help less fortunate people.

Obviously, the G-8 is going to be the center point of the visit; it will be where the most focus is. But I take my bilateral visits very seriously. We're starting in the Czech Republic. I'm looking forward to seeing the President and the Prime Minister. That's my third trip? Second trip? Second trip. It's a beautiful city.

Besides my bilateral meetings with the leadership, I am looking forward to my democracy speech. Vaclav Havel has asked me to come and speak to a democracy forum. I feel very strongly that the United States must take the lead in promoting democracy around the world—even in places where it may not look like it could—that it's very hospitable because I believe, ultimately, it is hospitable. And so it's going to be an important speech, and I'm working on it.

And then, of course, I go to Germany for the G-8. I've been in that beautiful part of your country before. I'm looking forward to the seaside resort. Of course, I'm anxious to see the Chancellor. She and I have got a very strong relationship. I don't know if you know this or not, but we do visit via secure video on a fairly regular basis. I've had some—you know, a lot of meaningful conversations with her, other than by phone.

And then the G-8, it's going to be an important meeting, just like all G-8s are. And this year I'll be talking about the need for all of us to work together to deal with HIV/AIDS and malaria and education. And, of course, global climate change will be an issue as well.

And then we'll go on to Poland. I'm looking forward to going back—for my third time; twice in Czech Republic, third time in Poland. Of course, part of the discussions with both countries will be on missile defense. I'll be glad to answer any questions you have on that. It's just an important issue for us to discuss, and it's an important for me to allay people's fears.

My friend Vladimir Putin is making this to be a case where somehow this is going to jeopardize relations in Europe, and it's going to make the world a more dangerous place—quite the opposite. The reason one advocates and works for a missile defense system is to protect free peoples from the launch of a missile from a hostile regime. Russia is not hostile; Russia is a friend. We don't agree with Russia all the time, but nevertheless, I view them as a friendly nation, not a hostile nation. And I will work with Vladimir Putin not only at the G-8 but when he comes to visit up east here. But I know that's going to be part of our conversation.

By the way, in the case of the Czech Republic, Poland, Italy, and, to a certain extent, Bulgaria, and definitely Germany, there's a lot of obviously, you know, Americans who are very interested in this trip. Polish Americans are—there's a lot of them, and they really love their country of origin, their grandfathers' country of origin. And this is an important trip symbolically, as well, to see their American President in Poland—or in Italy, a lot of Italian Americans are very proud of their heritage as well.

So the trip obviously is the chance to visit on important issues, whether it be Afghanistan or Iraq, where these countries are supportive, as well as their common interests in bilateral issues.

I'm looking forward to two things in Italy, obviously seeing His Holy Father.