

raise it next year. We're raising the child tax credit. We've got a new winter allowance addition for pensioners so that they can meet the fuel bills. And every area where the 10p rate has affected people, whether it be low-paid workers or pensioners or whether it be families with children, we have acted to see that we could do the best by people in our country.

Now, of course, a tax reform is a big thing, but when you're reducing the basic rate from 22 pence to 20 pence—the first time it's been achieved, the lowest tax rate, basic tax rate for 75 years—it is an important thing to do. And I'm satisfied that once people understand the scale of the good things that we have been able to do in reforming the tax system and making it better—and that we're tackling poverty, as they do in America, by introducing and increasing tax credits for the poorest people—then whatever questions people have about these changes can be answered.

Yes, they're important changes. They move the British economy forward. We have just seen this week that despite all the world difficulties, we have the highest employment rates at any time in our history. We have lower unemployment than at any time for 30 years. We have more vacancies in the economy, and that, combined with low inflation, a stable economy, lower interest rates—as we've managed to achieve over the last few weeks—means

that the British economy is well positioned to face the challenges of the future and will continue to be so.

And my answer to people who say what is happening domestically is, we are taking the right long-term decisions for the British economy, whether it's on nuclear power or on housing or on planning or infrastructure. And of course, at some times, people ask questions about whether you're doing the right thing. But we will see these long-term changes through, and these are the right long-term changes for Britain and for the British people.

President Bush. You guys want to sit out here for the afternoon or—[laughter]. Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Brown. Thank you very much.

President Bush. Yes. Thank you.

Prime Minister Brown. Thank you.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 2:43 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq. Prime Minister Brown referred to Executive Director Josette Sheeran of the World Food Programme; and former Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom. A reporter referred to Director General Mohamed ElBaradei of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Statement on the 25th Anniversary of the Terrorist Attack on the United States Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon *April 17, 2008*

On April 18, 1983, the Islamic Jihad organization, known today as the terrorist group Hizballah, detonated a massive car bomb at the American Embassy in Beirut killing 52 people: 17 Americans and 35 Lebanese citizens. The Beirut Embassy bombing was at the time the most deadly

terrorist attack against the United States in our history. On the 25th anniversary of that bombing, we mourn for those who perished, and we honor the sacrifice of their family and friends and of the many who were wounded. This occasion is a timely

reminder of the danger our diplomats, military personnel, and locally employed staff bear in their service to the United States.

Since the Beirut attack, we and citizens of many countries have suffered more attacks at the hands of Hizballah and other terrorists backed by the regimes in Tehran and Damascus, which use terror and violence against innocent civilians. All nations should condemn such brutal attacks and recognize that the purposeful targeting of civilians is immoral and unjustifiable.

The people of Lebanon have spent the better part of three decades living under the threat of violence, assassinations, and

other forms of intimidation. Despite this, they and their leaders continue to work for a peaceful and democratic future, even as Syria, Iran, and their Lebanese proxies seek to undermine Lebanese democracy and institutions. The United States will continue to stand with the Lebanese Government and the Lebanese people as they struggle to preserve their hard-won sovereignty and independence, endeavor to provide justice for victims of terrorism and political violence, and continue to seek the election of a president committed to these principles.

Message to the Congress on Extending Generalized System of Preferences Benefits to the Solomon Islands

April 17, 2008

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with section 502(f)(1)(B) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the “Act”), I am providing notification of my intent to add the Solomon Islands to the list of least-developed beneficiary developing countries under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program. In Executive Order 12302 of April 1, 1981, the Solomon Islands was designated as a beneficiary developing country for purposes of

the GSP program. After considering the criteria set forth in sections 501 and 502 of the Act, I have determined that it is appropriate to extend least-developed beneficiary developing country benefits to the Solomon Islands.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
April 17, 2008.

Remarks at the National Catholic Prayer Breakfast

April 18, 2008

Thank you very much. Good morning. Thank you. Please be seated. Thank you for the gracious welcome. Austin, thanks for your kind introduction. Thanks for giving me this unusual speaking opportunity. I understand that this program builds up to another speech. [Laughter] It’s not every day you get to be the warmup act to the

Holy Father. [Laughter] I am honored to be here. I do thank Austin for his leadership for the Catholic Prayer Breakfast. I thank the board of directors for having me. I thank Archbishop Gomez—*Tejano*—for being here. And I want to thank our—Bishop Finn, members of the clergy. Thank