

enormous costs for future generations of Americans.

We'll work with the Congress, but the idea of a huge spending bill fueled by taxes—increases—*isn't* the right way to proceed. And the right way for Congress to proceed on taxes in general is to send a clear message that these tax relief we passed need to be made permanent.

Thank you for your interest. Thank you for your concern about our fellow citizens. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11 a.m. in Room 450 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Lawrence B. Lindsey, president and chief executive officer, the Lindsey Group; Robert Carroll, vice president for economic policy, the Tax Foundation; John Rutledge, chairman, Rutledge Capital; and Martin A. Regalia, vice president for economic and tax policy and chief economist, U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Statement on the Situation in Zimbabwe

June 2, 2008

The continued use of Government-sponsored violence in Zimbabwe, including unwarranted arrests and intimidation of opposition figures, to prevent the Movement for Democratic Change from campaigning freely ahead of the June 27 Presidential runoff election is deplorable. We call on the regime to immediately halt all attacks and to permit freedom of assembly, freedom of speech, and access to the media. We urge the Southern African Development Community, the African Union, the United Nations, and other international organizations to blanket the country with election and human rights monitors immediately.

We also are concerned by reports that misguided Government policies are projected to result in one of the worst crop harvests in Zimbabwean history. While Robert Mugabe makes political statements in Rome, his people continue to face empty markets at home. The United States currently feeds more than 1 million Zimbabweans and spent more than \$170 million on food assistance in Zimbabwe last year. We will continue these efforts to prevent Government-induced starvation in Zimbabwe.

NOTE: The statement referred to President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe.

Remarks Honoring the 2008 NCAA Men's Basketball Champion University of Kansas Jayhawks

June 3, 2008

The President. Please sit down. Welcome. It's an honor to welcome the 2008 NCAA men's basketball champs, the Kansas Jayhawks. So when Kansas fans come to the Rose Garden, they don't come to admire the flowers—[laughter]—they come to

“wave the wheat.” I just wish Big Jay and Baby Jay could have come with you. Barney was looking forward to meeting them. [Laughter]

I want to congratulate this team. You brought new glory to one of our Nation's

most storied basketball programs, and you gave your fans all across America one more reason to chant, “Rock Chalk Jayhawk!”

I appreciate Bob Hemenway, the chancellor, and his wife Leah. Thanks for coming. Head coach Bill Self, Cindy; daughter Lauren, and son Tyler: We’re sure glad you all are here.

I called Coach after the championship. I think I might have woke you up.

Bill Self. By a hair. [Laughter]

The President. Yes. I said, “Would you like to come to the White House?” He said, “When?” [Laughter] And I’m glad you’re here, Coach, and congratulations.

I want to thank all the folks who represent KU: the personnel, coaches, and players.

Proud to welcome the United States Senators from Kansas—Senator Pat Roberts, honored you’re here; KU Law School alum Senator Brownback—Sam Brownback—and Mary, who happened to be a KU undergrad and law school. KU undergrad and law school alum Jerry Moran; KU undergrad alums Dennis Moore and Stephene—thank you all for coming; Doug Lamborn from the great State of Colorado—KU undergrad and law school alum; Senator Bob Dole, one of the great KU citizens.

This team got off to an incredibly fast start. They won their first 20 games. They managed to beat Yale, my alma mater. I don’t—[laughter]—I’m not sure how you did it, but nevertheless—[laughter]—it was a great victory. You won the Big 12 title. You were the number-one seed in the Midwest region. God, blew through the competition early, and then you won a thriller against Davidson, which propelled you to the Final Four in San Antonio, Texas. By the way, to my fellow Texans on the team: Nice to see you. [Laughter]

The interesting thing about the tournament in San Antonio was that all number-one seeds made it to the Final Four. That’s never happened before. It meant the competition was pretty tough. And this

championship team gave America an unforgettable show, it really did.

In the semifinal matchup against North Carolina, you took a big lead, and you held on. It was a team effort, but you got to note that Brandon Rush did score 25 points in the game. [Laughter]

In the finals, you made a great comeback against Memphis. You overcame a 9-point deficit. Mario Chalmers, of course, hit the 3-pointer to send you into overtime. The guy is known as Super Mario. [Laughter] Then he became known as MVP. [Laughter]

I know you got to be excited about winning an incredibly tough tournament. And your fans are excited, and I’m excited to welcome you to the Rose Garden. It’s a big deal, as far as I’m concerned, to welcome KU to the Rose Garden.

Most of the players on this team have little or no memory of the last time Kansas won a national title, which would be 1988. As a matter of fact, I’m sure some of the players weren’t even born yet. It’s really hard to envision when you’re an old guy like me and Roberts. [Laughter] The 1988 team became known as Danny and the Miracles. And, Danny Manning, welcome back to the White House.

This 2008 team will be remembered a little differently. More than any one player, Americans will remember the way you played as a team. They’ll remember stifling defense. They’ll remember the way seven different players led your team in scoring during the course of the season. Teamwork is a testament to the leadership of six seniors. It’s a testament, as well, to a coach. Bill Self has proven himself to be one of the finest coaches in the land. And I’m sure—[applause]—and I am sure KU fans are delighted to know that he’s going to keep coming back for a while.

Good move, Chancellor, good move. [Laughter]

The greatest testament to this team is also the character it showed not only on the court, but off. It turns out—I often

say this when I welcome championship teams here to the White House, but character matters a lot in order to become a champion. This is a team that when teammates lost loved ones, they had players-only meetings to help to rally their friends through a difficult time.

It's a team that reached out to others in need. Coach Self set the example by launching a foundation to help children in Lawrence build healthier and more wholesome lives. During the holiday, players purchased gifts for needy families. You signed hundreds of balls for charity auctions. You ran free basketball clinics for children. And I'm very thankful that you went to Walter Reed to spend time with America's real heroes, our courageous wounded warriors.

I wish those of you going to pro ball all the very best. Some of us are going to be out of work soon. We may be looking for loans. [Laughter] I welcome you to the White House. Good luck next season. And may God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Cindy Self, wife of University of Kansas men's basketball head coach Bill Self; Mary Brownback, wife of Sen. Sam D. Brownback; Stephene Moore, wife of Rep. Dennis Moore; former Sen. Robert J. Dole; and Brandon Rush and Mario Chalmers, guards, and Danny Manning, assistant coach, University of Kansas men's basketball team.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel June 4, 2008

President Bush. Mr. Prime Minister, welcome back. First of all, I want to thank you and your good bride for being such gracious hosts to Laura and me. I loved my trip to Israel. It was really a meaningful trip, and a lot of it had to do with your gracious hospitality. So I welcome you back here to Washington. You come back as my friend; I'm glad to see my friend.

I'm looking forward to our discussions on the issues that we have spent a lot of time discussing up to now. We'll be, of course, talking about the Palestinian issue, the peace process. Now, we'll be talking about Lebanon. I'm looking forward to your wisdom about how you see the Syrian issue. And finally, we're going to spend a lot of time talking about Iran. Iran is an existential threat to peace, and it's very important for the world to take the Iranian threat seriously, which the United States does, as the Prime Minister will tell you. And we will continue our discussions about that subject as well.

So glad you're here. Good to see you.

Prime Minister Olmert. Thank you very much, President.

President Bush. Yes, sir.

Prime Minister Olmert. Thank you. Well, I am delighted to be again at the Oval Office as a guest of my friend President Bush. We enjoyed tremendously your visit in Israel. From a national point of view, people of Israel were absolutely excited and moved by your spectacular speech in the Knesset, which was the best expression of the United States commitment to the security and the well-being of the State of Israel, which was appreciated by everyone in the State of Israel.

And we had many discussions, that you have mentioned, on the main issues: the peace process with the Palestinians, situation in Lebanon, the contacts that, hopefully, may lead to pull out Syria from the axis of evil, which is very important; and also, naturally, about the main threat to