

The President. You're not going to believe this. It was one of the first topics he brought up during our conversation—seriously. [Laughter]

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:15 p.m. en route from Norfolk, VA, to Andrews Air Force Base, MD. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori of Japan;

President Vicente Fox of Mexico; Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada; and Mayor Anthony A. Williams of the District of Columbia. The President also referred to LIHEAP, the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks on the Situation in the Middle East *February 14, 2001*

Good morning. I strongly condemn the terrible act of violence in Israel this morning. I have called Prime Minister Barak to express my condolences to the families of the people killed and to all the Israeli people.

As I told the Prime Minister, the tragic cycle of violent action and reaction between Israel and the Palestinians, particularly the escalation this week, needs to stop. I'm urg-

ing all parties to do their utmost to end the violence.

We will continue to work with all parties to try to restore calm to the region.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:55 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, prior to his departure for Charleston, WV. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel.

Remarks in a Discussion With Employers of National Guard Personnel and Reservists in Charleston, West Virginia *February 14, 2001*

The President. The Secretary and I are thankful you all are here; very thankful that the good Senator from this great State has traveled with us. It's an honor to be in his presence. He is an eloquent spokesman on what's right about America, and a pretty darn good spokesman about what's needed in West Virginia, I might add. [Laughter]

I appreciate the newly elected Congresswoman as well, Shelley Moore, for being here. I want to thank the other members of the delegation.

I'm so pleased to come and talk about the Guard and reservists. I used to be in the Guard, and one of the best things about

being the Governor, Governor, is to be the commander in chief of the Guard in Texas, and in your case, West Virginia. It's an honor, and I know you're going to take it and do a good job. You've got a pretty darn good start with a general leading the troops here in West Virginia.

I want you to know, Colonel Raney, I would have come back whether I won or lost. [Laughter] I fell in love with West Virginia during my time here. But now is not the time for politics. This is a visit about public policy, and that's the defense of our Nation. I'm going to give a more formal speech later on, but the purpose