

for loving that child with all your heart and all your soul, and if you're a good citizen, you're responsible for loving a neighbor. And that's what's happening in America.

This is a great country. I can't tell you how optimistic I am about the future of our land. I'm optimistic that we'll achieve peace. I'm optimistic that we will stand squarely in the face of evil, with acts of kindness and decency. And I'm optimistic that this country will remain the most hopeful place on the face of the Earth.

It is an honor, a high honor, to be the President of the greatest land on the face of the Earth. Thank you for giving me that privilege. May God bless you all. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:33 p.m. at the Sioux Falls Arena. In his remarks, he referred to senatorial candidate John Thune; Gov. William J. Janklow of South Dakota and his wife, Mary Dean Janklow; and Joel Rosenthal, chairman, Ron Schmidt, national committeeman, and Mary Jean Jensen, national committeewoman, South Dakota Republican Party.

Remarks Following Discussions With Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia and an Exchange With Reporters in Crawford, Texas *April 25, 2002*

The President. Good afternoon. I was honored to welcome Crown Prince Abdullah to my ranch, a place that is very special for me and a place where I welcome special guests to our country. The Crown Prince and I had a very cordial meeting that confirmed the strong relationship between Saudi Arabia and the United States of America.

Our partnership is important to both our nations. And it is important to the cause of peace and stability in the Middle East and the world. We discussed the critical importance of the war on terror. Much of our discussion centered on the Middle East and how to defuse the current situation so we can get back on the path to peace.

Our two nations share a vision of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. I reiterated that all parties have responsibilities to help achieve that vision. The Palestinian Authority must do more to stop terror. Israel must finish its withdrawal, including resolution of standoff—standoffs in Ramallah and Bethlehem, in a nonviolent way.

We discussed the need for Arab states to condemn terror, to stop incitement of violence, and as part of a long-term peace, to accept Israel as a nation and a neighbor. We also agreed the world must join in offering humanitarian aid to the many innocent Palestinians who are suffering.

I told the Crown Prince how much I appreciate his vision for a peaceful and integrated Middle East and how I appreciated his leadership in helping rally the Arab world toward that vision. I also appreciated the Crown Prince's assurance that Saudi Arabia condemns terror.

The Crown Prince is going to be in America for several more days, and officials from both our Governments will be continuing our discussions with the hope that our efforts can help return us to the path of peace—a lasting peace.

I'll answer a couple of questions. Sandra [Sandra Sobieraj, Associated Press].

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Mr. President, Saudi officials have taken strong issue with your characterization of Prime Minister Sharon as a man

of peace and say that your tolerance of what he's doing risks damage to U.S.-Arab relations. Were you and the Crown Prince able to bridge differences over that issue and find ways to fix the fragile Arab support?

The President. Well, first of all, one of the really positive things out of this meeting was the fact that the Crown Prince and I established a strong personal bond. We spent a lot of time alone discussing our respective visions, talking about our families. I was most interested in learning about how he thought about things. I'm convinced that the stronger our personal bond is, the more likely it is relations between our country will be strong.

I made it clear to him that I expected Israel to withdraw, just like I've made it clear to Israel. And we expect them to be finished. He knows my position. He also knows that I will work for peace; I will bring parties along. But I think he recognizes that America can't do it alone, that it's going to require a unified effort, and one of the main things about this visit was to solidify that effort.

He's a man with enormous influence in the Middle East. I respect that a lot, and I'm confident we can work together to achieve a peace.

Patsy [Patricia Wilson, Reuters].

Oil

Q. Mr. President, the Crown Prince raised the prospect of Saudi support for Iraq's oil embargo, and are you concerned that Arab nations might use oil as a—try to use oil as a bargaining chip in the Middle East crisis?

The President. Well, Saudi Arabia made it clear and has made it clear publicly that they will not use oil as a weapon. And I appreciate that, respect that, and expect that to be the case.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Mr. President, to follow on what Sandra asked you, do you feel like you made

some personal headway in meeting with the Prince today, in reassuring him of the United States belief that all parties in the region must work harder to—

The President. I—

Q. —do you feel like—do you feel like you need to convey this message, perhaps in a stronger way, by sending somebody to the region to meet with other Arab leaders who are raising concerns along these lines?

The President. Well, Stretch [Richard Keil, Bloomberg News], we just sent somebody to the region. And that somebody has just returned from the region, and his name is Colin Powell. And we're exploring all options. A lot of our discussion with the Saudi delegation was how to get back on the path to peace. Clearly, there's some things that must be done in the short run—finish the withdrawal by Israel, for the Palestinian Authority to clamp down on terror. We discussed that in very plain and straightforward terms.

As to where we head from now, one of the things that I think is important for the Crown Prince to have heard is we're interested in his advice; we're interested in his counsel. We share a vision, and I reminded him how much I appreciated his statement toward Israel. I thought that was a breakthrough moment. And it—and then he went and sold that in Beirut, and I appreciated that as well.

So there's a shared vision. And as to how to achieve that vision is something we must consult with our friends. And that's what this meeting was about. It went on quite a while because there was a lot to discuss, plus, I want you to know, I had the honor of showing him my ranch. He's a man who's got a farm, and he understands the land, and I really took great delight in being able to drive him around in a pickup truck and showing him the trees and my favorite spots. And we saw a wild turkey, which was good. But we had a very good discussion, and I'm honored he came to visit.

Last question.

Saudi Arabia and Terrorism

Q. Mr. President, do you believe—you said that the Crown Prince is against terror. Do you think he will speak out? Did he make any promises about speaking out? Should he speak out? And secondarily, in Saudi Arabia, do you believe the leadership is doing enough to deal with their own problems with terrorism that comes out of their own country? Fifteen of the 19 hijackers—

The President. Yes, I—the Crown Prince has been very strong in condemning the murder of U.S. citizens. He's been very strong about condemning those who committed those murders. And I appreciate that a lot. Right after 9/11, he was one of the strongest voices of condemnation. He understands how devious Usama bin Laden has been. He knows that—that anybody who—you know, that a strategy by some would be to split the United States and Saudi Arabia. It's a strong and impor-

tant friendship, and he knows that, and I know that, and we're not going to let that happen. So he's been very strong in the condemnation of terror, for which I'm grateful.

And we're constantly working with him and his Government on intelligence-sharing and cutting off money. And we're reminding him, on occasion, where we find money flows, and the Government has been acting, and I appreciate that very much. He's got a—right now we're working on an issue in the border region with Yemen to make sure that Yemen doesn't become a haven for Al Qaida killers. And I appreciate his cooperation on that matter as well. It's in his interest that we rout out terror.

Listen, thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:06 p.m. at the Bush Ranch. In his remarks, he referred to Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization. A reporter referred to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel.

Statement on Senate Action on National Energy Policy Legislation
April 25, 2002

The Senate today passed legislation that includes many of the provisions called for in my administration's national energy policy. Together, the House and Senate energy bills include the major conservation and environmentally responsible production measures needed to reduce our reliance on foreign sources of energy.

I am pleased that the House-Senate conference committee will have before it the elements of a comprehensive energy policy. The two bills reflect my administration's call to provide tax incentives for alternative and renewable fuels and technology; mod-

ernize our electricity laws; open a small portion of ANWR to responsible exploration; increase automotive fuel efficiency while protecting American lives and jobs; and ensure continued safe operation of our nuclear facilities.

It is imperative that America increase its energy independence, and I look forward to working with the conferees to ensure that we enact a balanced and comprehensive energy policy this year.

NOTE: The statement referred to ANWR, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.