

Interview With Members of the White House Press Pool *June 4, 2003*

The President. First of all, it's progress. Great success happens when there's two states, living side by side in peace. And this is progress. I thought I would—since this is an historic trip, I thought I would just have you up and share thoughts and answer questions. We'll go around for a while.

First, I'm pleased with what happened yesterday and today. The first signs of peace happen when people make up their mind to work toward peace. And that's what you saw. You heard some pretty firm statements yesterday. The statements yesterday by the Arab leaders were very strong in public, and they were strong in private. One of the things that we have made clear to all parties is that there are terrorists who have to blow up the process—you all know that; it's been an historic fact—and that these countries in the neighborhood have the capacity to work to cut off money to the terrorist groups and access and arms deals. And they committed themselves to do that, which was a positive sign.

It was also important for Prime Minister Abbas to hear that. This is a man who is a newly elected Prime Minister, new to office. He gets sworn in, and the roadmap gets released. All of a sudden now he finds himself in a serious effort, the creation of a Palestinian state, which puts enormous responsibilities on him.

And one of the things we're saying is, you're now responsible. But it helped a lot to have the Arab leaders support him, and not only support him but to support him through pledges of activity and action. The Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia was particularly strong yesterday in private about the need to chase down terrorists. They've had some recent experience with terrorism. And I was really pleased with the strong commitment and the strong desire to not only deal with terrorists inside his country but

to work to prevent arms being smuggled from—out of Iraq and into the territories.

We also spent a lot of time talking about Syria and the mutual concern about Syria and the desire to convince Syria to shut down terrorist offices inside—in Damascus. So there was a very helpful discussion. I think it was very helpful for Prime Minister Abbas to hear that.

Then we come to today. The way the day worked is that I met with the King of Jordan. He is a wonderful man. He is obviously desirous of Palestinian statehood, which would be very helpful to him. We talked about bilateral relations, economic—matters of economic development, and it was a good conversation.

And then I sat down with Prime Minister Sharon. I assured him that security was at the top of our agenda, like security is at the top of his agenda. One, we're in a war against terror, or a war against terror on the homefront; we're chasing down these people around. But we also recognize that there are some who would like to blow up the process and that we want to work to create the conditions for a Palestinian state to emerge, which means jointly working with all parties to work on the security issue.

I also told him, though, he's got responsibilities. The fact that he showed up meant that he believes Prime Minister Abbas can deliver. And therefore, we've got to work together to help the Prime Minister achieve his stated objectives, which, one, he had a very clear statement on terror. The other thing that was very interesting was his statement on incitement. And it was a fact statement, for those who follow the process. He needs time to get his security forces set up. And I reminded the Prime Minister—I also reminded him that I wasn't caught by surprise by his statement on the outposts, the issue of the outposts. He said

he would dismantle them; we expect him now to dismantle them.

People say, "Well, what's the first step?" Well, you just heard the first step today in the speeches. And the—you also heard me say that we would help the Palestinian Authority develop a security force. Minister Dahlan will be in charge of that security force. We intend to work with them. We assured the Israelis we intend to work with them. We want this man to be successful. The Prime Minister absolutely rejected terror. In order for him to be effective in rejecting terror, he's got to have an effective security force. And so that's what we discussed.

And then we met, all of us together, our delegations. It was good. We had a—the discussion was very interesting is the Prime Minister asked members of his Knesset to speak, Minister of Defense, the Deputy Prime Minister, the equivalent of the Attorney General, Minister of Justice. And then Prime Minister Abbas spoke; I spoke.

And then I suggested that the three of us just go outside and visit, rather than having the formal settings of the old round-table discussion. And so we went out and sat on the lawn there for about 30 minutes and discussed a lot of matters. What I wanted to do is to observe the interplay between the two; did they have the capacity to relax in each other's presence, for starters? And I felt they did. In other words, it was—the body language was positive. There wasn't a lot of hostility or suspicion.

There was a—it seemed like to me, from the conversation, that there was a mutual desire to work toward the vision. And obviously I'm not going to betray confidences, but it was a very interesting and positive conversation, is the best way to say it. I didn't need, for example, to be Mr. Chaty—you know, kind of, "Hey, fellows." [Laughter] There was a natural tendency to want to talk about common matters and common desires.

And then after that, we gave our speeches, and here we sit. I will tell you that I'm pleased with the last 2 days. We have made a good beginning. And I emphasize beginning, because there's a lot of work to do. Let me just review some of the work that must take place. Obviously, there needs—there needs to be a focused, complete, 100-percent effort to fight off the terrorists. I believe the Palestinian—I know the Palestinian leadership wants that, has got that desire. And so, he must help them put the institutions in place to do that.

On the Palestinian side, there needs to be an emergence of a state, the institutions of which are larger than the participants. And that is essential. I assured the Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority—and this was when we were sitting out on the lawn—that there is plenty of help coming. At the G-8 meeting in Evian, there was a lot of discussion about how we can help, "What can we do?" I said, "Well, when the time is right, there's going to be need for money and commercial development and enhancement of the entrepreneurial spirit."

There's just a lot of things to be done—better education systems. Israel has got to recognize that Prime Minister Abbas is desirous for peace and, without compromising security, must make decisions necessary to help the Palestinian people. And they're doing that. Money is—more money is now in circulation. They collect revenues, Israel does, and now they're—they've got great trust in the Finance Minister of the Palestinian Authority, a guy who went to the University of Texas, by the way, for a while.

He came to Washington as an intermediary on behalf of Prime Minister Abbas, and Condi and I met with him in the Oval Office. I spent a lot of the time on Palestinian finances, cashflow matters, making sure that aid and money actually end up helping the people and not either bank accounts of individuals that—where it doesn't belong. I'm absolutely convinced he's an honest and upright man who believes in

the future of the Palestinian people, believes that a democratic Palestinian state is possible.

It's important for Prime Minister Sharon to recognize that. I think he does. I'm confident he recognizes that. The \$100 million that had been held in arrears was released, and the process of talking about more money going through, which—25,000 workers now that were not allowed in Israel now allowed in Israel. In other words, what I'm telling you is, is that it's important for the life of the Palestinians to improve in measurable ways.

And as confidence is built, as institutions are in place, I assured Prime Minister Abbas—and this was important for Prime Minister Sharon to hear as well—that there is going to be a lot of help, financial help, from around the world. People want this effort to succeed.

And so it's—it's a bit of—2 good days, but there's a lot to happen.

Let me just go around the table.

President's Cautious Optimism

Q. You sound cautious still.

The President. I am cautious, because—and I'm cautious because history tells you to be cautious. I don't know where you were in 2000. I guess it was—they were close. There are killers lurking in the neighborhood. There are people who have declared their—openly declared their hostility to Israel and their desire to destroy Israeli citizens. There are people that, you know, would rather have chaos than a state. And so long as you know they're there, you've got to be cautious.

And on the other hand, we've now got a partner in peace, Prime Minister Abbas, who is—wants the tools necessary to chase them down. It's going to be one of the accountability measures, by the way. That's one of reasons why we put Wolf.

The news today, of course, from our side was, besides having the meeting, was Ambassador John Wolf and his team. It's not just Wolf. It is not Wolf and one adminis-

trative assistant. It's Wolf and a team of people that the Secretary will be glad to explain to you. We have a security team there to help the Dahlan. Their job is to find out what's needed and to also hold people to account, both sides to account, reminding people of promises made in meetings and insisting them that in order for progress to be made, people have got to deliver it.

And so, yes, I've cautious, but optimistic. Perhaps we should say, cautiously optimistic. [*Laughter*]

Prospects for Peace/War on Terror

Q. Mr. President, previous efforts at making peace in the Middle East did not succeed. You believe you now have a chance. Did you—and you also mentioned that it's historic—this was an historic meeting. Could you try to put this in history? What do you think has changed since you took office, and how did we get to this point?

The President. I think a couple of things have changed. One, I think there is—I think Prime Minister Abbas is willing to make the necessary decisions and take the necessary steps to fight terror and to develop institutions necessary for a state to emerge, a genuine effort. I believe he is, and that's a change.

Secondly, there is a universal recognition that the war on terror is just that, a war on terror and not empty words, that September the 11th or bombings in Riyadh or the terror that has plagued Israel, these are terrorist acts that must be defeated, and they must be defeated at its source as well. So there's a different—frankly, a different attitude toward terrorism. It's no longer isolated terrorism, it is terrorism that is beginning to affect a lot of people and can affect a lot of people. So in other words, the meeting yesterday, for example, with the Arab nations, it seemed like to me the new reality was reflected in their statements, which will make it easier for a Palestinian state to emerge. There's a

vested interest to fight terror. It's people's self-interest now. And so I think that's been one of the changes.

I'm sure this is—other Presidents have said this; other leaders have—but there is now battle fatigue. People are sick and tired of it. People are sick and tired of the death, suffering, of the humiliation. In other words, there's—hopefully history will show whether or not I'm right, but hopefully we have reached the point where a lot of good people have begun to realize that the immediate past will lead to nothing but more suffering and humiliation and death. And people are beginning to change their attitudes on the ground.

Q. Do you think September 11th had an impact in the region, as well, in helping—did it just galvanize American views about terrorism, or did it also carry through into—

The President. I think it—the terror attacks shocked the world. And it frightened a lot of people, because they realized that if America can be hit, they could be hit. And then terror began to—I just said, the attacks in Riyadh or the attacks in Indonesia, Bali, a nice secure resort community. The next thing is, people wake up the next day and realize—around the world realize that there's no such thing as a nice, secure resort when we have terrorists willing to kill innocent lives in the numbers they did.

So not just September the 11th. September the 11th made the world aware of the new war. And then the other acts of terror that have taken place since made the issue come even closer to home for many countries. And then the combination of that plus the terrorist activities in the Palestinian territories and in Israel made people realize the effects of terror. It kind of brought it all home, I think. So, yes, I think September the 11th mattered, but it wasn't the only event that was—helped galvanize thought. People are frightened about terror in the Middle East, not just in Israel. And they've got to get after it.

And we're going to help them get after it. It's a part of this war. One of the hardest things I knew that I would have to do as the President is to remind the American people, and for that matter, people around the world, the nature of the war in which we find ourselves. And it's different. There's a couple battlefronts that are noticeable, Afghanistan and Iraq, but this war goes on. I mean, today, as we speak, we've got intelligence sharing going on, we've got people on the hunt trying to find them, one at a time. It's that same effort that will take place in the Palestinian territories, but it requires the desire by all leaders to want to fight it. I think that's changed some. I think it's changed a lot mentality.

President's Personal Diplomacy

Q. Mr. President, you seem to value and even enjoy the spontaneity and informality that you brought in your meetings with these leaders. Could you dwell for a moment on your personal style of diplomacy and how you see it working?

The President. I try to tell the truth, put it right out there on the table for everybody to understand what's expected. I do; I like people.

You know, I remember, I think it was—Ron Fournier [Associated Press] asked me the question, "Do you trust Vladimir Putin?" It was one of the really interesting questions, to fire up the President standing next to Vladimir Putin. Well, the answer is yes, I didn't hesitate, because during my meeting with him, I had developed an interesting rapport. My instincts were such that, this is a guy I can trust. History will prove me right. It doesn't necessarily mean he has to agree with everything that I say, but trust his word.

I've spent enough time with Ariel Sharon to know he's the kind of guy when he says something, he means it. I'm getting the same sense about Prime Minister Abbas.

And therefore much of the conversations, particularly as I get to know somebody, is to figure out whether or not you can—

whether or not, when they say something, they mean it. You can tell that, pretty much, during a conversation, which means trying to get people off their script, and as you discuss things, make it as informal as possible, because I think people in an informal setting tend to show their heart and/or their conscience in a lot better way.

I'm not a very formal guy to begin with. Condi and the Secretary of State, Colin, can give you a better sense of what my style is like. I'm also not very analytical. You know I don't spend a lot of time thinking about myself, about why I do things. The meetings are informal; they're kind of relaxed. I think one of my styles is trying to relax people.

National Security Adviser Rice. Direct, I would say.

The President. Yes, I am a direct person. I mean, there's no—we don't have a lot of time, and therefore I like to get to the point. I like to ask people—I can challenge people. I believe I can do so in a way that's not offensive to them. It's about as encouraging as it was discouraging. And I hope they sense my sense of optimism. I mean, I'm an enthusiastic person when I believe that something is possible.

I believe peace is possible. I know it's going to be hard, but I think the fact that I'm representing a great country and am willing to sit down with these leaders and give them a sense, "We're all in this together," is helpful. The best way to do that is in a more informal type setting where there's not a lot of prepared notes. I've been in meetings where people read speeches. It's not as productive as a meeting in which people can sit down and actually—one of my jobs is to try to help relax people in a setting. I hope I'm pretty good at that. How do you feel? Do you feel relaxed right now?

Q. More relaxed than I should.

The President. It worked.

Meeting With Arab Leaders

Q. Is that what happened when you were in the the anteroom with the Arab leaders, you just decided that it was a more relaxed setting and that you prefer to keep talking—

The President. Exactly, yes.

Q. Could you tell us a little bit about that meeting and what went on in that meeting?

The President. Sure, I'd love to. First of all, I understand that there was a little bit of hard feelings. I was told last night about certain press wasn't in. We had no idea. I'm available for any photo op. [Laughter] But it was not an intention, if that's—that's the meeting I think you're talking about, the informal meeting.

Q. Multilateral. But we'd like to know what happened in the private meeting that you had with the heads of state before you came out.

The President. Before we came out, the thing that was not supposed to be on TV, that one. It was just a roundtable discussion about—let me make sure I get it right here. I told them, I said, look—all four of those leaders, except for Prime Minister Abbas, were—Prime Minister Abbas was there. The other four leaders are leaders who I obviously talked to during the Iraq war. Before the Iraq war and after the Iraq war, I assured them that I was going to be involved in moving the Middle East peace process forward, particularly after the emergence of the Prime Minister, Abbas.

This was my chance to go around the table and look him in the eye and say, "I'm here to make it happen, but I need your help." The first thing was to—is to let them know about the intent of this administration. I shared with them—well, you know Colin's involvement and Condi's involvement. I didn't share with them the Wolf—I knew they would read about it today. There wasn't any great secret. On the other hand, you occasionally try to hold

back some news—you've probably learned it before I did, anyway.

And then we listened to them, and Crown Prince Abdullah. And they had a lot of interesting thoughts about different issues. Oh, and by the way, it wasn't just—the discussion wasn't just on the Middle East peace process. The other thing I told them, I asked them, was to help Prime Minister Abbas. I directly said, "We need your help on this fellow. If he is to succeed, if peace is to succeed, he needs your help." And they were willing; they expressed their desire to help. And I went to Iraq and talked about what was happening there.

Then I encouraged them to continue on their paths to reform and about how that would make a significant difference in the lives of their citizens. So it was more than—and they commented on all that, different aspects. I'm not going to tell you what they told me. If they want to tell you what—if they want to say what is theirs, they'll put it in their own press. It was a long discussion. It took a lot longer than we thought.

And part of it had to do because a lot of it needed to be translated. Therefore, a normal conversation—all of it had to be translated. The Crown Prince does not speak English very well, so therefore every word that was spoken had to volleyed. And so that's—we had a good conversation, again, not structured. People said what they felt like, and there was no—it wasn't just, "Okay, you speak; you speak; you speak, and then we're through." There was a lot of interchange. That's positive.

And I met bilaterally with them as well. I met with—Colin and Condi and I went over to President Mubarak's house that night. We had a bilateral with him in the morning, and afterwards we ate. I had a bilateral with the Crown Prince at the hotel after the sauna bath.

It was very hot outside when I spoke. [Laughter] Thank you for clarification. It was hot. I'm sweating. I was really hot.

Q. I know, I know there was one place where you were talking about it, figuratively—

The President. Figuratively, that's right. Just to see if you were paying attention. And it's very useful to have those kind of conversations.

Palestinian Authority Leadership

Q. Mr. President, a big part of why you were here, and you made clear, is because Mahmoud Abbas is the person who is Palestinian Prime Minister, and Yasser Arafat is not the person who you chose to negotiate. But Palestinian leaders, some of their senior officials, made clear that they still think Yasser Arafat—they made clear that they still think Yasser Arafat is somebody who needs to be dealt with, who needs to negotiate. I'm wondering what kinds of conversations you had with the Arab leaders and maybe with Mahmoud Abbas about Arafat's role?

The President. Well, it's clear that I'm going to deal with Prime Minister Abbas, so there wasn't much conversation.

Q. Do you think it will come up?

The President. Not really. The Secretary of State is—

Secretary Powell. It didn't come up in any of the conversations with the President that I'm aware of. And they know our views on this.

Q. Do you have any concern that he might be a hindrance to the process at all?

The President. Not if he has the Palestinian people's interests at heart. We'll see. I certainly hope not.

Secretary Powell. Can I just—

The President. Yes, please.

Secretary Powell. In conversations with the Arab leaders, particularly the Foreign Ministers, we made it clear to them that one of the things we expected them to help with was to make sure that Mr. Arafat does not become an obstacle to the execution of the roadmap.

Q. Did they seem to say that they were willing to do that?

Secretary Powell. They understood. They will help.

The President. I think they understand.

Secretary Powell's Role

Q. [Inaudible]

The President. It really didn't—I mean, he's handled most of that. It did not come up during my conversations with the Arab leaders. What came up was, how do we help Prime Minister Abbas? Now, Colin may have had different—with the Foreign Ministers, since they have some frank discussions. A lot of times you'll find out that the underbrush has been cleared by the—and by the time the President arrives, everybody kind of understands. And one of his jobs is to clear out underbrush. That's an old ranch term. [Laughter] In other words—I don't know what he told the Foreign Ministers, but I just heard what he told the Foreign Ministers.

Q. He's watching the calluses on his hands.

The President. Yes, that's it. [Laughter]

Q. Can I ask you, just a followup?

The President. Sure.

Red Sea Summit

Q. What do you consider sort of the importance of the role of the President in this kind of process? For example, this is the first time—it's been 2½ years since you've been President. It's the first time you've had this kind of summit, where some of your predecessors had multiple summits by this time.

The President. Well, you know, first of all, we've had a lot of meetings but not summits. I've had a lot of discussions with every one of the parties that have been around the table, with the exception of Prime Minister Abbas, and he's just showed up. He just emerged as a leader. I called him immediately upon—I think immediately or soon after he became Prime Minister.

I mean, so—let me—just because we haven't had the summit doesn't mean this administration hasn't been working toward achieving the conditions necessary to move forward. And that's really an important—there has to be—I can remember saying this to the press corps early on in my administration. People want to have to—peace, want peace. In order to move the process forward requires a—there's no need to spend capital and energy and time if there is not a commitment to peace. And the conditions are such now that there is a commitment to peace by a lot of people that are ready to see if we can't make it happen. That's what's changed.

And therefore the timing of this summit was really based upon the attitudes of the decisionmakers. We're not the decisionmaker. Oh, the American President or the American Secretary of State is—I wish we were the decisionmakers. You know, "Okay, this is it." That's not the way it works. There's terrorists to deal with. If we could, we'd say, "All the terrorists, put down your arms and become useful citizens, peaceful citizens." But that's not, unfortunately, reality.

Banding together, though, we can deal with the ticket—you know, build up the will necessary to deal with the terrorists. And so what the role of the United States is, is to lay out the vision, encourage people to accept the vision, and then help implement the vision. In this case, we call it a roadmap to achieve the vision. And that's exactly what we're going to do. We can be stewards of accountability. And we can say to somebody, "You said you'd do this. You haven't done it. You say you want to do this, and what do you need to get it done?"

So today we asked Dahlan, "What is it you need? How can we help you? This is a security matter. What exactly can we do to help?"

Secretary Powell. Mr. President, can I give four data points to show the President's involvement? Just a couple of quick

data points to show you how we got here and how the President caused us to be here. Twenty-four June speech you're very familiar with. On the 18th of July, the President had Arab Foreign Ministers in the Oval Office—Muasher of Jordan, Saud of Saudi Arabia, Maher of Egypt. And at that meeting, the President said to them, we will now structure a way to go from my vision to reality. And that was the beginning of the work on the roadmap.

Work went on all summer, all fall. And then on the 20th of December, the European—the Quartet came together to finalize it. The President met with the Quartet, finalized it, and then we waited for the Israeli elections to be over, which were just about finished at that time, and then we said, with the appointment of new leadership in the Palestinian Authority, the President is ready to act, and he did.

Q. Mr. President, in the events of the last 2 days, have they exceeded what you expected coming over here?

The President. That's a good question. I'm supposed to say—that's an interesting question. [Laughter]

Q. You're supposed to say what you think.

The President. I'm the master of low expectations. I think they—we did what we wanted to—I think we—we accomplished what I hoped we would accomplish, but I don't think we necessarily exceeded expectations. I think "met expectations" is a better way to put it.

I was hoping to have honest dialogs. The statements that came out—I think when you analyze the statements, you'll find them to be historic, I guess is the right word to use. Amazing things were said. The Palestinian—the Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority talked about the suffering of Jewish people. It's a strong statement. The Prime Minister of Israel talked about a Palestinian state which was free. The statements were strong.

It's hard to answer, exceeded expectations. I had a little bit of an understanding

of what might take place, because we worked hard. These trips, obviously, don't just happen. The statement just doesn't show up out of the blue. It requires— [laughter]—

National Security Adviser Rice. Oh, no, they just appeared magically.

The President. I'm a great delegator; I'm a great delegator. And so they met expectations. However, the cordial atmosphere—I'll tell you what else was interesting, that I would say met expectations or was pleasing to see, was the interface between the Palestinian Cabinet and the Israeli Cabinet. When we went out to sit on the grounds—and I witnessed some of it but not all of it since I was actually on the grounds—Colin and Condi told me that there was very interesting discussions and dialog going on. There was—people were frank with each other. They were able to joke with each other. They were able to kind of bring up a little history with each other.

But the main thing that came out of it, at least to our delegation, appeared to be the desire to work together. You two witnesses, maybe you want to—

National Security Adviser Rice. That's absolutely the case.

Preparations for the Red Sea Summit

Q. If I could follow up, Mr. President, were there any time going into this that you were hearing things, that you were thinking to yourself, uh-oh—

The President. Look, I wasn't going if we weren't going to make progress. I mean, there's no need to go and stand up there by myself and say, "Let's work for peace," and look around, and nobody would be there with you. So I was—I think there were some times where—we've had some—in the runup to the process, there was some—there was a lot of work, let me put it to you that way, and a lot of frank discussion and a lot of convincing of parties that we need to get on this path, and we need to work hard, and we need to make commitments. The speeches that—

there were some commitments made in those speeches which now put people on the record, not only on the record, all across the world. I mean, a lot of people were watching this today. And I guess it was live in America. So you had these leaders stand up and say, "I commit"—not just commit to—I mean, the Prime Minister of Israel saying, "I commit to knock down or get rid of illegal outposts." That is a strong commitment.

So the process was really to work hard to get people to make commitments toward peace. And Condi's staff and Colin's staff worked very closely together. And Colin went out to the region, as you may remember. Part of what you saw today was his hard work. They always look at the President, but the truth of the matter is that there have been a lot of people working hard to work with all parties to get to where we got today. I just happen to attract more cameras than most of them. So I stand up there, and everybody watches.

National Security Adviser Rice. We actually had a team in the region for almost a week, Bill Burns and Elliot Abrams for almost a week.

The President. Elliot Abrams is her staff. Bill, of course, is an Under Secretary.

Secretary Powell. Assistant Secretary.

The President. Runs the NEA, is very capable. And then of course we—we had to make the decision on the man who is going to run the deal on the ground and how his team was going to be formed. Again, the Secretary had to move him in his Department and had to come up with the right structure and the right people so that when the Palestinians and Israelis see who was sitting out there and what they represent, they realize that it's serious business. All that took a while to get to where we are.

To answer your question, I'm pleased with the start, is the best way to put it. I mean, this—we are going to go through a tough process, because we're dealing with a lot of history. And you're right, a lot

of Presidents have tried. Every President should try. We ought to use the prestige of America to try for peace. I fault no President of the United States for trying to achieve peace. Maybe history is such that now we can achieve it. I'm optimistic.

Israeli Security/War on Terror

Q. You were pretty blunt yesterday that Israel must deal with the settlements.

The President. Yes.

Q. Sharon made—I don't think we were supposed to hear that. Sharon made his pledge today. If there's a suicide bombing, does he reserve the right to move back into those settlements?

The President. Look, I think the operative statement from the Israeli Prime Minister, not necessarily in this speech but recently, was he wants to see a complete effort to fight off terror. In other words, he wants an equal partner. He wants a partner in the battle on terror, not somebody who will say they're going to fight terror and then turn a blind eye to terror, somebody who wants to join him. And that's one of the things that came clear. It should have been clear in my speech, too, that we will fight terror.

And security is—we'll never compromise on Israel's security. That's one of the reasons why I believe the Israeli Knesset members over there, the Prime Minister, wants to follow us, work with us, because they know I will never compromise Israel's security. And I've made that clear. As Condi said, one of the things about our discussions, they're frank. There's no question in the Palestinian Authority's mind, either, I can assure you.

Now having—so therefore—what the Prime Minister of Israel has said is, he expects to see a complete effort by the Palestinian Authority to fight off terror. Prime Minister Abbas said today in his statement, there is no place for terror. And he is going to put together a security forces necessary fight off the terrorists, because he knows that there will be no state if

terror prevails. And he knows his people will suffer. The terrorists think they're hurting Israel, and they are when they kill Israelis. But they're also hurting their own people, and Prime Minister Abbas understands that.

Plus the people in the region know what terror now means. They've lived with terror in the region, but they've now begun to put it in context. And that's—I'm trying to put it as clearly as I can. The context of terror now has changed. The death hasn't changed, but it's now—it's easier for everybody to see how it fits into a larger scheme of things. And the larger scheme of things is the war on terror, because it's beginning to strike in lethal ways in unexpected places, which therefore means that your place could be next, I guess is one way to put it.

President's Role in the Peace Process

Q. What's your role? What do you do? You talked about giving the Secretary and Dr. Rice specific obligations. What's your obligation?

The President. I show up when they need me to call people to account, to praise, or to say, "Wait a minute. You told me in Jordan that you would do this. You haven't done it, why? How come? What is it?" It's to keep the thing moving, keep the processes moving. They've got the man on the ground that is going to—he's just going to—I used the expression "ride herd." I don't know if anybody understood the meaning. It's a little informal in diplomatic terms. I said, "We're going to put a guy on the ground to ride herd on the process." See them all scratching their heads.

Q. Meanwhile, in Arabic and Hebrew, exactly how does that translate?

The President. Listen, I've got to make a phone call, but I want to thank you all for your interest. It's been a great trip. Have a good day tomorrow, and then we'll get to go home. I'm looking forward to

it, looking forward to getting to see my family.

Summit Photograph

Q. What happened when you—the three of you walked out for the photograph, and did you hear the Israeli photographer screaming, "Are you going to shake hands?" Did you hear that?

The President. No. Where was it?

Q. It was the photographer screaming—

The President. Oh, yes. How do you shake hands with three people? I couldn't understand—first of all, I had a little trouble hearing. My hearing is not as good as it used to be, and then sometimes I don't want to hear anything to begin with, like the questions you yell. [*Laughter*]

Q. Well, it was a pleasure to talk to you.

The President. Yes, thanks for coming over.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:40 p.m. aboard Air Force One en route to Doha, Qatar. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), Minister of State for Security Affairs Mohammed Dahlan, and Finance Minister Salam Fayyad of the Palestinian Authority; Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz, Deputy Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, and Justice Minister Tommy Lapid of Israel; Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia; King Abdullah II of Jordan; Assistant Secretary of State for Nonproliferation John S. Wolf; and President Vladimir Putin of Russia. Secretary of State Colin L. Powell referred to Foreign Minister Marwan Muasher of Jordan; Foreign Minister Saud al-Faysal al Saud of Saudi Arabia; and Foreign Minister Ahmed Maher of Egypt. National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice referred to William J. Burns, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs; and Elliot Abrams, National Security Council Senior Director for Near East, Southwest Asian, and North African Affairs. A reporter

referred to Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Legislation To Ban Partial-Birth Abortion *June 4, 2003*

I applaud the House for passing legislation banning partial-birth abortions. Passage of this important legislation is a shared priority that will help build a culture of life

in America. I urge Congress to quickly resolve any differences and send me the final bill as soon as possible so that I can sign it into law.

Memorandum on the Spectrum Policy for the 21st Century *May 29, 2003*

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Spectrum Policy for the 21st Century

The radio frequency spectrum is a vital and limited national resource. Spectrum contributes to significant technological innovation, job creation, and economic growth, and it enables military operations, communications among first responders to natural disasters and terrorist attacks, and scientific discovery.

Recent years have witnessed an explosion of spectrum-based technologies and uses of wireless voice and data communications systems by businesses, consumers, and Government. Today there are over 140 million wireless phone customers and, increasingly, businesses and consumers are installing systems that use unlicensed spectrum to allow wireless data, called Wireless Fidelity (WiFi), on their premises. The Federal Government makes extensive use of spectrum for radars, communications, geolocation/navigation, space operations, and other national and homeland security needs. We must unlock the economic value and entrepreneurial potential of U.S. spec-

trum assets while ensuring that sufficient spectrum is available to support critical Government functions.

The existing legal and policy framework for spectrum management has not kept pace with the dramatic changes in technology and spectrum use. Under the existing framework, the Government generally reviews every change in spectrum use, a process that is often slow and inflexible, and can discourage the introduction of new technology. Some spectrum users, including Government agencies, maintain that the existing spectrum process is insufficiently responsive to the need to protect current critical uses.

My Administration is committed to promoting the development and implementation of a U.S. spectrum policy for the 21st century that will: (a) foster economic growth; (b) ensure our national and homeland security; (c) maintain U.S. global leadership in communications technology development and services; and (d) satisfy other vital U.S. needs in areas such as public safety, scientific research, Federal transportation infrastructure, and law enforcement. My Administration has already proposed