

White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 14. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 13 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary

also released a Spanish language transcript of this address. The Flag Day and National Flag Week proclamation of June 6 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Exchange With Reporters in Kennebunkport, Maine June 15, 2003

The President. Good morning.

Q. How are you?

The President. Good.

Q. Do you want to visit a bit?

The President. Sure.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. What's your assessment of things in the Middle East?

The President. My assessment is, is that there are people that want peace to go forward, and there are people that don't. And for those of us who want peace to go forward, we must combine our efforts to prevent people like Hamas from sabotaging peace.

I'm confident we can achieve peace. It's going to be a tough road, but I am determined to continue to lend the weight of this Government to advance peace.

Q. Sir, why haven't you called Prime Minister Sharon and Abbas?

The President. We're in touch with the Governments. We're in contact with the Israeli Government as well as the Palestinian Authority. The message is clear: Prime Minister Abbas wants peace; Prime Minister Sharon wants peace; America wants peace; the European Union wants peace. But there are clearly killers who don't. And for those of us who are interested in moving the process forward, we must combine our efforts to cut off all money, support for anybody who tries to sabotage the peace process.

Q. Will you send Dr. Rice to the region?

The President. I'll let you know if we decide to. Of course, we just got out—Ambassador Wolf* is there now, and he's working the process.

Q. Are you willing to give money or arms to the Palestinian Authority to help them out with Hamas—

The President. We would like for the Palestinian Authority to set up a security force under Mr. Dahlan that will do the job that Prime Minister Abbas assured me that they're interested in doing, which is to defeat those terrorists who will do everything they can to deny the establishment of a peaceful Palestinian state. And a peaceful Palestinian state is in the interests of the Palestinian people.

Q. [Inaudible]—have enough arms, enough money?

The President. We are in the process of helping them implement a strategy which is—was described to us in Aqaba as to how the Palestinian Authority want to reconstitute a security force in order to make sure the terrorists, the haters of peace, those who can't stand freedom, do not have their way in the Middle East.

I believe peace is possible, and I believe we've got a lot of work to do to get there.

Q. Do see a break in the violence right not, in the last several days?

The President. It seems like it, but you know—but until these people are brought to justice, those who are killing people in

* White House correction.

order to deny the establishment of a Palestinian state, there will be violence. And so the mission of the free world, those who care for peace, is to deny the people like Hamas the ability to destroy and to kill. And I believe that the agents of peace, the people who love, those who care about a decent future for the suffering Palestinian people, and those who live in Israel, will prevail. But it's going to take a lot of work.

Listen, have a wonderful Father's Day.

Iran

Q. —think of the unrest in Iran?

The President. I think that freedom is a powerful incentive. And I am—I believe that someday freedom will prevail everywhere, because freedom is a powerful drive for people to—and it's the beginnings of people expressing themselves toward a free Iran, which I think is positive.

Hamas

Q. Sir, have the Israelis been justified in going after Hamas—

The President. Wait for us to succeed peace. Wait for us to have two states, side by side—is for everybody coming together to deny the killers the opportunity to destroy. And that's what they want to do. There are people in the Middle East who hate the thought of a peaceful Palestinian

state. That's what they can't stand. And the objective of this Government and my objective as the President is to move the process forward so a state is established. It will be a peaceful state, a free state, a prosperous state, so people have hope. And in the meantime, before that state is established, it is clear that the free world, those who love freedom and peace, must deal harshly with Hamas and the killers. And that's just the way it is in the Middle East.

But we've laid out the way forward, and I intend to keep the process moving. And I believe we can have a peaceful Palestinian state living side by side with the Israelis.

Have a great Father's Day. We'll be out there catching fish.

NOTE: The exchange began at 9:50 a.m. outside Cape Arundel Church. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel; Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) and Minister of State for Security Affairs Mohammed Dahlan of the Palestinian Authority; and Assistant Secretary of State for Nonproliferation John S. Wolf. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange. The Father's Day proclamation of June 13 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks to the Business Community in Elizabeth, New Jersey
June 16, 2003

Thanks for the warm New Jersey welcome. Thanks for giving me a chance to come by and share some thoughts with you about the challenges that this country faces.

First, I'll tell you it was good to be with my dad over Father's Day. I hope you all had a good Father's Day as well. Spent a lot of time fishing together and caught a few fish. [*Laughter*] But thanks for letting me come by.

I just came from Orange, New Jersey, and—went by the Andrea Foods pasta factory. That's you. The Savignanos and the Wilkinsons were there, Rose Marie and Michael. They're the sons and daughters of Andrea and Dora, who started the business. It's so refreshing to see the American Dream alive and well, just like it is at Andrea Foods.