

Ariel Sharon of Israel; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zargawi; and Prime Minister Ayad Allawi, President Ghazi al-Ujayl

al-Yawr, and Deputy Presidents Ibrahim al-Jafari and Rowsch Shaways of the Iraqi interim government.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister John Howard of Australia

June 3, 2004

President Bush. Good morning. Thanks for coming. A couple of opening statements and then we'll answer two questions from each side.

It is my honor to welcome back to the White House my friend and our ally, Prime Minister John Howard. He is a close friend of mine. I appreciate the frequent discussions we have. I value his advice. I appreciate his clear vision.

Our two nations were allies in every major conflict of the last century. We've each lost citizens in the first war of the new century. I will never forget standing with the Prime Minister on September the 10th, 2001, the day before the world changed forever.

Americans will never forget the vicious attack in Bali which claimed the lives of dozens of innocent Australians. Today, Australians and Americans are standing together on the frontlines of freedom. As members of the common coalition, our two nations helped to free the people of Afghanistan and Iraq from the grip of tyranny. Today, we're working together to help the Afghan and Iraqi people build free societies and prevent tyranny's return.

Today the Prime Minister and I discussed our coalition's progress in Iraq. That country took a major step 2 days ago when the new interim government was named. That government will assume full sovereignty later this month. Our coalition will remain in Iraq to help them along the path of freedom. The new Iraqi government's foremost task will be to prepare Iraq for

a national election no later than January of next year and to work with our coalition to provide the security that will make that election possible. A sovereign Iraq deserves the full support of the international community as it works to establish a representative and freely elected system of government in the months ahead.

We're working toward a new Security Council resolution that will express international support for Iraq's interim government, reaffirm the world's security commitment to the Iraqi people, and encourage other U.N. members to join in the effort of building a free Iraq. I appreciate the Prime Minister's advice and support for the ongoing process. Today I'll leave for Europe, and then we'll host the G-8 summit.

I will discuss—continue to discuss with world leaders our common responsibility to help the new government of Iraq and our common opportunity to help the—advance the momentum of freedom in the broader Middle East. Freedom must succeed in Iraq. In the long run, the defeat of terror requires the triumph of hope. A free Iraq rising in the heart of the Middle East will show the people of that region a clear alternative to the bitterness that feeds terror. Freedom is the true foundation of stability, prosperity, and peace. By working for freedom in the Middle East, we make America, Australia, and the world safer.

The United States and Australia are committed to the principles of human dignity. Today I assured the Prime Minister that my Nation will conduct a full accounting

of the cruel and disgraceful abuse of Iraqi detainees. He strongly reflected his Government's and the Australian people's desires to make sure that the Australians being held in Guantanamo are not only treated fairly but their cases are brought to finality. And I appreciated your candid discussion, Mr. Prime Minister.

We also, of course, discussed issues that affect our economies. Just last month, our two nations signed an important free trade agreement that would eliminate nearly all tariffs on manufactured goods, open international markets, and deepen our strong economic ties. This agreement is good for both countries. And our Congress and the Australian Parliament should ratify the free trade agreement as soon as possible. I assured the Prime Minister that I'll work with leadership in the Congress—in our Congress to move this agreement forward.

Australia and the United States have never been closer. Our closeness is based on a shared belief in the power of freedom and democracy to change lives. As the Prime Minister has said, "The war on terror is not a contest of civilization. It is a contest of convictions." Our victory hinges on the free world's willingness to protect and encourage democratic values. I look forward to seeing the Prime Minister in France later this week as we commemorate the Normandy landings. It will be a fitting time to remember our partnerships in past wars of freedom as well as the sacrifices we have made together in our current struggle.

Mr. Prime Minister, welcome.

Prime Minister Howard. Thank you, Mr. President. May I express to you personally and to your wife, Laura, and to the members of your administration my gratitude for the very warm welcome that you've extended to me and my wife and the other members of my party. You reminded me, Mr. President, that the first occasion on which we met in our respective positions was, indeed, the 10th of September, 2001, at the naval dockyard not far from here,

and then we later continued our discussions at the White House.

Since then, we have worked together not only as leaders of two countries that share the values of democracy, share the values of aspirational people who believe in economic achievements and individual liberty, but we've also worked together very closely in the war against terror. We continue to work closely with you and share your aspirations for a free and democratic Iraq.

The establishment of the Iraqi interim government is a major step forward. It is a light to the future, so far as Iraq is concerned. It is a visible demonstration of the willingness of Iraqi leaders to stand before their people and to show leadership.

The Western World, the countries of the free world have a lot at stake in relation to Iraq. If the democratic future of Iraq can be achieved, that will have beneficial consequences not only in Iraq, but it will also be a wonderful demonstration in the Middle East and around the world that democracy is not something which is confined to countries that have historically enjoyed it. I regard that as something of an arrogant attitude on behalf of those who think that in some way democracy cannot be extended to countries that haven't regularly enjoyed it over past decades.

In recent weeks, the news out of Iraq has not been as positive as we would have liked, and the reasons for that are understood. But that has not altered Australia's view. We will keep a presence in Iraq. We will maintain a presence in Iraq until the job assigned to the individual force elements of the ADF have been completed. This is not a time—it is the worst time imaginable—for allies to be showing any weakness in relation of the pursuit of our goals in Iraq. And I express my strong support for the leadership that the President has continued to display, particularly through some of the more difficult aspects of recent weeks.

We did take the opportunity of canvassing the free trade agreement, and I

share very much the President's hope that the legislative processes in both of our countries can be disposed of as soon as possible. From Australia's point of view, this is a great opportunity to link our strong economy with the strongest economy the world has ever seen.

The economic relationship between Australia and the United States can only get better in so many areas, and I had the opportunity in California of discussing growing energy links between our two countries.

I've welcomed the assurances the President has given me regarding the proper treatment of the two Australian detainees in Guantanamo Bay.

I also want to take this opportunity of emphasizing that the relationship between our two countries, which goes back a long way, to which the President referred, is very much a relationship which is built on shared values. We are both countries that treasure the democratic tradition. We are both countries that treasure individual freedom. We are both countries that believe in individual effort and reward for that effort.

Ours is a society, as is the United States, that encourages people to work hard and to seek reward for that hard work and, providing they pay their fair share of tax, to keep what they earn and to build on it and to invest for the future. Unless you have an aspirational society built on those principles, economic progress cannot be achieved.

We have been through, as nations, many struggles together. As the President said, we've been engaged together in every major conflict, beginning in World War I. But the thing that binds us together more than anything else is a common belief in certain fundamental values. And for me, the greatest opportunity that an occasion such as this presents is to reaffirm that common commitment.

We will differ. We will have changed emphasis. We will not agree on everything,

but at the end of the day, if you share values in common, the relationship between two nations will always be sure, will always be predictable, and above all, will be enduring.

President Bush. Thanks, John.

Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

CIA Employee Identity Disclosure Investigation

Q. Mr. President, why have you consulted an attorney in the CIA leak investigation? Have you received any indication from prosecutors that they want to question you? And what could you tell them that might shed some light on this case?

President Bush. I've told our administration that we'll fully cooperate with their investigation. I want to know the truth, and I'm willing to cooperate myself. And you need to refer your questions to them.

In terms of whether or not I need advice from my counsel, this is a criminal matter. It's a serious matter. I have met with an attorney to determine whether or not I need his advice, and if I deem I need his advice, I'll probably hire him.

Q. Mr. President——

President Bush. Yes.

Australian Detainees at Guantanamo Bay

Q. The Prime Minister said he got an assurance from you that the two Australians in Guantanamo Bay will get fair treatment. Can you give a guarantee they haven't been mistreated to this point, and when will you make a decision, or when will there be a decision made on whether they face trial?

President Bush. Yes. It is my understanding that Hicks—the Hicks case will be referred to the military shortly and that the other case is proceeding as well. And we are—the military is fully investigating any allegations as to whether or not they have been mistreated.

Let's see here. Morgan—David Morgan [Reuters]. Is that you?

Q. That's me.

President Bush. Okay.

Coalition Security Arrangement With Iraqi Interim Government

Q. Mr. President, Secretary Powell has made it clear that Iraq would have no veto power over U.S.-led forces after the formal handover on June 30th. Why do you believe that countries like France and Russia would back a U.N. Security Council resolution if the understanding is that it would leave the Iraqi government powerless to stop an unwelcome military offensive within its borders?

President Bush. Let me tell you this: The government of Iraq will be fully sovereign. And that means that our coalition will be there with the consent of the fully sovereign government, and that's what the U.N. resolution is going to say.

Now, Prime Minister Allawi has made it clear that he wants help from the coalition to deal with the security issues so that the country can have free elections. That's what he has said. He is the Prime Minister, and that's what he had said. We've had these arrangements before, these security arrangements, with other countries. We're good about forging relationships on the ground, respecting the sovereignty of the country, and at the same time being able to do our jobs that the host government expects to be done. And I am confident we'll work out a mutually acceptable security arrangement with the fully sovereign Iraqi government.

No other questions? This is unbelievable. You better hurry—no, no, no—Australian—sorry, Elisabeth [Elisabeth Bumiller, New York Times], you're not Australian. That's the second time in a row.

Prime Minister Howard. Mr. Lewis, Steve Lewis, The Australian.

President Bush. Nice try, though. She tried to become Australian. [Laughter]

Q. President Bush, if I could ask you a question—

President Bush. Where are you? There you are.

Q. Just here.

President Bush. Thank you.

Australian Elections and Commitment to Iraq

Q. Mr. Howard and yourself reaffirmed the commitment that Australia and the U.S. have to staying the course in Iraq. But you would be aware the alternative Prime Minister in Australia, Mark Latham, has promised to withdraw Australian troops from Iraq by Christmas—

President Bush. Yes.

Q. —if he wins the election. What signal—

President Bush. That, that—

Q. What signal would that send to the Iraqi people and the other members of the coalition?

President Bush. I think that would be disastrous. It would be a disastrous decision for the leader of a great country like Australia to say that, "We're pulling out." It would dispirit those who love freedom in Iraq. It would say that the Australian Government doesn't see the hope of a free and democratic society leading to a peaceful world. It would embolden the enemy who believe that they can shake our will. See, they want to kill innocent life because they think that the Western World and the free world is weak, that when times get tough we will shirk our duty to those who long for freedom, and we'll leave. And I—anyway.

Q. Mr. President, can I ask you and Prime Minister Howard—

President Bush. No, you can't anymore. Thank you all very much for coming.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 9:53 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Australian citizen David Hicks, a detainee at the U.S. Navy base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; and Prime Minister Ayad Allawi of the Iraqi interim government. Prime Minister Howard referred to his wife, Janette.

Remarks on the Resignation of George J. Tenet as Director of Central Intelligence

June 3, 2004

Today George Tenet, the Director of the CIA, submitted a letter of resignation. I met with George last night in the White House. I had a good visit with him. He told me he was resigning for personal reasons. I told him I'm sorry he's leaving. He's done a superb job on behalf of the American people. I accepted his letter. He will serve at the CIA as the Director until mid-July, at which time the Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, John McLaughlin, will serve as the Acting Director.

George Tenet is the kind of public service you like—servant you like to work with.

He's strong. He's resolute. He served his Nation as the Director for 7 years. He has been a strong and able leader at the Agency. He's been a strong leader in the war on terror, and I will miss him. I send my blessings to George and his family. I look forward to working with him until the time he leaves the Agency. And I wish him all the very best.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:26 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Determination on Trade With Belarus

June 3, 2004

To the Congress of the United States:

I hereby transmit the document referred to in subsection 402(d)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974 (the "Act"), as amended, with respect to the continuation of a waiver of application of subsections (a) and (b) of section 402 of the Act to the Republic of Belarus. This document constitutes my recommendation to continue this waiver for a further 12-month period and includes my determination that continuation of the waiver currently in effect for Belarus will

substantially promote the objectives of section 402 of the Act, and my reasons for such determination.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
June 3, 2004.

NOTE: The Presidential determination of June 3 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.