

President Bush. Wait, you're not a Jordanian.

King Abdullah II. We already asked a question.

President Bush. You want to call on an American? That's very noble of you, Your Majesty. [Laughter] Very thoughtful.

Jordan's Role in Iraq

Q. Mr. President, are you asking Arab nations to send troops to Iraq?

And Your Majesty, would you send Jordanian troops to Iraq?

President Bush. I've never asked a nation to do that which they aren't comfortable doing. Jordan has been a loyal friend. They've contributed in so many ways to peace and stability. We did discuss Afghanistan, but we have not discussed sending troops to Iraq.

I'll tell you, His Majesty has got good advice, though, about Iraq. He's in the neighborhood. He hears from people. He's constantly aware of what's going on on the ground, and his advice has been very good. And part of the advice is to make sure that Sunni Iraqis have got a bright future. In other words, people aren't going to be buying into the transfer of sovereignty if they don't think tomorrow is going to be a better day. And he gave me very good advice about making sure that there's a distinction between those who are violent, those who are corrupt, those who are—would not serve a new country well and the thousands who will be honorable citi-

zens at working together to make sure Iraq emerges as a free, contiguous country.

And I told His Majesty—I think he gets the sense from me—we have an historic opportunity to begin to change a part of the world that needs to be changed in some areas. And here is a chance to take what was a threat and a destabilizing force and convert it into a force for good and reform and hope.

And I appreciate your vision and your understanding of that, Your Majesty.

King Abdullah II. I think that we in Jordan are too close, as other countries to Iraq are also, to send troops. I think it would be very difficult for Jordanians to be objective in committing troops to Iraq. We do have a long history of U.N. peace-keeping operations all over the world, but at this stage, I think the politics of the issue does not make sense for Jordanians to send troops at this time.

President Bush. Thank you, Your Majesty. Good job. Good job.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 2:03 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Lakhdar Brahimi, Special Adviser to the U.N. Secretary-General; Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel; Prime Minister Ahmed Korei of the Palestinian Authority; and Brig. Gen. Mark T. Kimmitt, USA, deputy director of operations, Coalition Joint Task Force Seven.

Remarks on the National Day of Prayer May 6, 2004

Thank you all. Please sit down. Please be seated. Thank you all. Thanks for coming. Good afternoon, and welcome to the White House. I'm honored to join you at this important annual event.

Since the Continental Congress sat in Philadelphia, America has, from time to time, set aside a national day of prayer. Under a law signed by President Ronald Reagan, that day comes every year on the

first Thursday in May. That would be today. [Laughter]

Today in our Nation's Capital and around the country, we pause to acknowledge our reliance on Almighty God, to join in gratitude for His blessings and to seek His guidance in our lives and for our Nation.

Prayer and songs of praise go together, and we're really thankful this afternoon for the beautiful music of the Washington Bach Consort, led by J. Reilly Lewis. Thank you all for being here. And we are thankful for the voice of Beth Cram Porter. I mean, what a voice. [Laughter] Thank you.

We are as grateful as well to all the organizers of the National Day of Prayer and especially for the gracious leadership of Shirley Dobson. We're also glad you brought Jim with you. [Laughter]

Colonel Oliver North is the 2004 National Day of Prayer Honorary Chairman. Thank you for taking on the job. I appreciate it. I appreciate Dr. Barry Black, the Chaplain of the United States Senate. I asked him if he had any one-liners before I came up here. [Laughter] I appreciate Father Daniel Coughlin, who will join us shortly. And Rabbi, thank you for coming. Rabbi Weinreb, I'm honored that you're here. I appreciate your reading. I also want to welcome Vonette Bright, the former National Day of Prayer Task Force chairman. Vonette, we're honored you're with us. Thank you for coming.

At so many crucial points in the life of America, we have been a nation at prayer. Abraham Lincoln, from this house, called the Nation to prayer in the darkest days of the Civil War. Franklin Roosevelt, 60 years ago on D-day, led the Nation in prayer over the radio, asking for God to watch over our sons in battle.

A prayerful spirit has always been a central part of our national tradition, and it remains a vital part of our national character. Americans of every faith and every tradition turn daily to God in reverence and humility. We bring our cares to Him

knowing He is our help in ages past, our hope for years to come.

It was Lincoln who called Americans "the almost chosen people." [Laughter] And at—that word "almost" makes quite a difference. [Laughter] Americans do not presume to equate God's purposes with any purpose of our own. God's will is greater than any man or any nation built by men. He works His will. He finds His children within every culture and every tribe. And while every human enterprise must end, His kingdom will have no end.

Our part, our calling is to align our hearts and action with God's plan, insofar as we can know it. A humble heart is not an indifferent heart. We cannot be neutral in the face of injustice or cruelty or evil. God is not on the side of any nation, yet we know He is on the side of justice. And it is the deepest strength of America that from the hour of our founding, we have chosen justice as our goal.

Our greatest failures as a nation have come when we lost sight of that goal, in slavery, in segregation, and in every wrong that has denied the value and dignity of life. Our finest moments have come when we have faithfully served the cause of justice for our own citizens and for the people of other lands. And through our Nation's history, we have turned to prayer for wisdom to know the good and for the courage to do the good.

Many people in every age have made the same request of the wise and the holy: Teach us to pray. One of the answers begins with "Our Father, who art in Heaven." That answer has guided people through two millennia. In that example, we learn to give praise where it is due. We recognize that all that we have and all that we are come as gifts, and it is natural to be grateful to the Giver.

Americans, on this National Day of Prayer, are thankful. We're thankful for our freedom, for so many blessings, large and small, and we're thankful for this wonderful land we call home.

In prayer, we offer petitions, because the Maker of the Universe knows our cares and our needs. For our Nation today, the need is great, as young men and women face danger in our defense, for the sake of freedom, and for the sake of peace. We pray that God's hand will protect them and deliver them safely home. We pray for the loved ones who anxiously await their return. And we pray for the families that have known great loss, that they might receive God's peace in the midst of their sadness.

Prayer also teaches us to trust, to accept that God's plan unfolds in His time, not our own. That trust is not always easy, as we discover in our own lives, but trust is the source of ultimate confidence. We affirm that all of life and all of history rests

entirely on the character of our creation and our Creator. And His love and His mercy extend to all and endure forever.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:15 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to J. Reilly Lewis, music director and founder, Washington Bach Consort; Shirley Dobson, chairman, National Day of Prayer Task Force, and her husband, James; Rev. Daniel P. Coughlin, Chaplain, U.S. House of Representatives; and Rabbi Tzvi Hersh Weinreb, executive vice president, Orthodox Union. The National Day of Prayer proclamation of April 30 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting Fiscal Year 2005 Budget Amendments

May 6, 2004

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed FY 2005 budget amendments for the Departments of Agriculture, Defense, Education, Energy, Homeland Security, Housing and Urban Development, the Interior, Labor, and the Treasury; the Corps of Engineers; the National Aeronautics and Space Administration; and the Securities and Exchange Commission. In addition, I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed FY 2004 language proposals for the Departments of Health and Human Services and the Treasury. Overall, the discretionary

budget authority proposed in my FY 2005 Budget would not be increased by these requests.

This transmittal also contains FY 2005 budget amendments for the legislative branch. As a matter of comity, appropriations requests of the legislative branch are commonly transmitted without change.

The details of these proposals are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH