

Junichiro Koizumi of Japan. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary

also included the remarks of the First Lady, who introduced the President.

## Remarks on Recovery Efforts in Millvale, Pennsylvania *September 22, 2004*

Listen, thank you all for coming. I have just flown over Allegheny County. I have seen the devastation that took place. The storm and the floods were lethal, and they cause a lot of heartache and damage. I know there are people in this part of our country who are grieving for lost ones, and we send our prayers to all who grieve.

I know there are people here who are concerned as to whether or not they'll ever get their life back together. I hope my visit here with the Senators and Congressmen say as clearly as we can that we care about the devastation that took place, that we understand the Federal Government has an obligation to help, and we will.

Most of all, I'm here to thank the people of this community who have risen up to deal with the hardship. My message not only is to the people of the Millvale but is to Etna and Carnegie as well, communities in this part of the world that were hard hit. You know, the volunteer firefighters here, I was honored to be able to shake hands with some. I looked in the guy's eyes and said, "You got flood eyes"—obviously, he had no sleep. He's doing all he could do to help save lives and help begin to heal the hurt.

The first thing I want to do is thank all the first-responders, firefighters and the police and the EMS teams. I want to thank Dave Sanko, of the State of Pennsylvania for—he's the FEMA—he's the emergency management director who has been on top of the situation ever since the flood started to come. I'm absolutely convinced that as a result of the coordination between the Federal Government, the State government, and local governments, loss of life

had been minimized. Dave has done a terrific job, and I appreciate your service to your State.

Mike Brown is with me. He's the head of the FEMA. I'm down here to let people know that FEMA is going to move quickly. The best way to make sure people understand FEMA is going to move quickly is bring the main guy with me and let the mayor, Mayor Burn, talk to him and county executive of Allegheny County. I wanted him to hear firsthand what the people in these communities and this county have been through. And I want Brown to know that he's going to respond as quickly as he can, and that's what I want the people to know.

I want to thank the local officials who are working hard to help the people in this community. You know, what happens when these disasters hit: The real character of a community comes out; people show up; neighbors love neighbors; firefighters help save lives. You met the storm—this storm with compassion and courage. You showed the true spirit of the American people by how you've responded and are responding to this—these floods.

I want to thank the National Guard and Coast Guardsmen who worked hard all across the State of Pennsylvania to save lives and do their duty. I want to thank the power workers, people that—and the telephone crews—for getting electricity back up and running for the people of this part of the world. I know there are some homes that still don't have their electricity hooked up, but I've been assured that the power company is working as hard as they can to get electricity up. I know there's

some people without natural gas. I know they're working hard to get the natural gas lines fixed so people can have power in their homes.

I appreciate the men and women of the Red Cross. The Red Cross has been tested during the last months. I've seen Red Cross workers all across our country. They're out there providing compassion and care. The Red Cross is a great organization, mainly because it's got great workers, people who care a lot.

I want to thank the faith-based communities who have been responding to this disaster. You know, the concept of neighbor loving neighbor is a powerful concept. It helps lift people's spirits. I met the lady who runs the food bank here. She's working overtime to make sure people have got something to eat. I want to appreciate all those who are working at the food banks. I asked her, I said, "Do you have enough food to make sure the good people of this part of the world got something on the table to eat?" She said, "Absolutely." People are responding to the crisis, and out of the harm is coming some good.

I want to let you know that we're dedicated to responding as quickly as we possibly can. I've been told that those who

have registered with FEMA have started to receive checks. I urge people to find out the facts, to get 800 numbers that are available, and to sign up for help. We can't help you unless you sign up for the help.

Again, I want to reassure the people of western Pennsylvania that a lot of people are praying for you. You know, I saw the look in the people's eyes when I was driving through the town here—small-business owners and entrepreneurs whose businesses were destroyed, their stuff piled up in front of their business, wondering whether or not there's a future. There is a future. I predict to you, Mr. Mayor, that within a reasonable period of time this town is going to be back on its feet, better than ever, more hopeful than ever.

We ask God's blessings on everybody who lives here. And may God continue to bless our country. Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:19 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to David M. Sanko, director, Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency; Mayor James Burn of Millvale, PA; and Allegheny County Chief Executive Dan Onorato.

## Remarks in Latrobe, Pennsylvania *September 22, 2004*

*The President.* Thank you all very much for coming. I'm proud you all are here. Thanks for coming out to say hello.

How good does it get to be introduced by Arnold Palmer? What a fantastic citizen of our country. I'm proud to be here in his hometown. He said, "Have you ever heard of Rolling Rock?" I said, "I quit drinking." [*Laughter*]

But thank you all for coming out today. I'm asking for the vote, is what I'm doing here today in Pennsylvania. I like getting

out amongst the people and letting them know I've got a reason for running—to serve you for 4 more years.

I'm here to tell you what my plans are for the future of our country. I'm also here to ask for your help. I'd like for you to register your friends and neighbors to vote. We have a duty in this country to vote. Call upon your friends and neighbors to exercise their responsibility. And when you're out registering people to vote, don't overlook discerning Democrats like Zell