

she brought—you all saw her, at least if you were on the pool, right? Let's see—anyway, she was with the Midway girls softball team when they came out, the national champs softball team. Her daughter is a player on it, and so she came out with the parents. But she was one excited lady. And she did a heck of a job.

Q. Blew them out.

The President. They've got a great team. I'm looking forward to welcoming them to the White House.

NOTE: The interview began at 8:29 a.m. en route from Rome, Italy, to the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX. In his remarks, the President referred to Lt. Gen. William E. Ward, USA, Senior U.S. Security Coordinator, Department of State; President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority; Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jafari and President Jalal Talabani of the Iraqi Transi-

tional Government; President Jacques Chirac of France and his wife, Bernadette; former President Lech Walesa of Poland; Theodore E. Cardinal McCarrick, Archbishop of Washington; U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad, nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Iraq; James Jeffrey, Deputy Chief of Mission, U.S. Embassy in Iraq; Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; John D. Negroponte, nominee to be Director of National Intelligence; National Security Adviser Stephen J. Hadley; and Kim Mulkey-Robertson, head coach, Baylor University's women's basketball team. He also referred to the President's Advisory Panel on Federal Tax Reform and the President's Commission to Strengthen Social Security (Moynihan Commission). A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

The President's Radio Address *April 9, 2005*

Good morning. This week I have been in Rome to attend the funeral mass of Pope John Paul II. The ceremonies were a powerful and moving reminder of the profound impact this Pope had on our world. And on behalf of America, Laura and I were honored to pay tribute to this good and holy man.

During nearly three decades on the Chair of Saint Peter, this Pope brought the gospel's message of hope and love and freedom to the far corners of the Earth. And over this past week, millions of people across the world returned the Pope's gift with a tremendous outpouring of affection that transcended differences of nationality, language, and religion.

The call to freedom that defined his papacy was forged in the experiences of Pope

John Paul's own life. He came to manhood during the Nazi occupation of his beloved Poland, when he eluded the Gestapo to attend an underground seminary. Later, when he was named Poland's youngest bishop, he came face to face with the other great totalitarianism of the 20th century, communism. And soon he taught the communist rulers in Warsaw and Moscow that moral truth had legions of its own and a force greater than their armies and secret police.

That moral conviction gave the man from Krakow a confidence that inspired millions. In 1978, when he looked out at the crowd in front of Saint Peter's as their new Pope, the square rang with his words "Be Not Afraid."

Everywhere he went, the Pope preached that the call of freedom is for every member of the human family because the Author of Life wrote it into our common human nature.

Many in the West underestimated the Pope's influence, but those behind the Iron Curtain knew better, and ultimately even the Berlin Wall could not withstand the gale force of this Polish Pope.

The Pope held a special affection for America. During his many visits to our country, he spoke of our "providential Constitution," the self-evident truths about human dignity enshrined in our Declaration, and the blessings of liberty that followed from them. It is these timeless truths about man, enshrined in our founding, the Pope said, that have led freedom-loving people around the world to look to America with hope and respect. And he challenged America always to live up to its lofty calling. The Pope taught us that the foundation for human freedom is a universal respect for human dignity. On all his travels, John Paul preached that even the least among us bears the image of our Creator, so we must work for a society where the most

vulnerable among us have the greatest claim on our protection.

And by his own courageous example in the face of illness and suffering, he showed us the path to a culture of life where the dignity of every human person is respected and human life at all its stages is revered and treasured.

As the Pope grew physically weaker, his spiritual bond with young people grew stronger. They flocked to him in his final moments, gathering outside his window to pray and sing hymns and light candles. With them, we honor this son of Poland who became the Bishop of Rome and a hero for the ages.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:45 a.m. on April 8 at the U.S. Ambassador's residence in Rome, Italy, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 9. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 8 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel in Crawford, Texas *April 11, 2005*

President Bush. Mr. Prime Minister, welcome to my home. Appreciate you coming. I appreciate our meeting. I'm looking forward to serving you some good food for lunch. Most importantly, I'm looking forward to driving you around the ranch; I want you to see my place. I know you love the land. The Prime Minister was telling me he's really a farmer at heart, and I look forward to sharing with my friend what life is like here in central Texas. So, welcome. He invited me to his place one

day, in Israel, and it's something that I look forward to doing as well.

The United States and the State of Israel have a deep and lasting friendship based on our shared values and aspirations for a peaceful world. The United States is committed to Israel's security and well-being as a Jewish state, including secure and defensible borders. We're committed to preserving and strengthening Israel's capability to deter its enemies and to defend itself.

Today we discussed ways to expand cooperation of our economies. The Prime