

begin to see concrete results when it comes to removing this debris.

We've got people looking at the infrastructure. One of the questions I asked in Washington, DC, as the principle party responsible for rebuilding the infrastructure, is, "Have you got your assessment teams out there?" You know, looking at these bridges requires more than just, you know, writing a check. It requires the Coast Guard to look at the spans. It requires the—I think you've got a role, in parts, on the State highways.

I mean, we're trying to help get this recovery going by plowing through the paperwork requirements as fast as possible so that we can reduce the frustration to you. And Haley is right, we have a responsibility by law to help rebuild the infrastructure. You can't rebuild a part of the world without your infrastructure in place, and we know that. And so we look forward to working with you to get this infrastructure up and running.

On the other hand, as Jim Barksdale said, "If you don't have a plan, if you don't have a plan of action, the recovery and the rebuilding will be haphazard." So I want to applaud this commission. In my speech the other night, I made it clear to the country that we expect local folks to come up with the vision. We want the Mississippi people to lay out the Mississippi vision about what this important part of the world is going to look like. And that's exactly what this commission is all about.

When they told me that Haley and Barksdale had invited me to come, I was thrilled, because I think it's really smart

and really important to bring capable people together to delegate tasks, to think anew, obviously to utilize that which worked in the past to your advantage, but be willing to think anew, because you've got a fantastic opportunity. We'll get the debris removed. We'll get your water systems up and running as quickly as possible. We'll get your bridges built, but the vision that you detail as a result of this commission is going to be the blueprint for the future.

And so I really appreciate all the citizens who have agreed to take time out of your busy schedules to help plot the strategy for the future. It's really important; it's really important. And there's no doubt in my mind that out of the rubble and out of those huge heaps of timber that used to be homes, a better Mississippi will emerge.

At any rate, we look forward to working with you. Let me put it another way: We look forward to hearing your vision, so we can more better do our job. That's what I'm telling you.

And so, thanks for taking this on. Good luck. Think bold.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:35 a.m. at the Prime Outlets—Gulfport on Factory Shops Blvd. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi; Roland Kell, refinery general manager, Chevron Pascagoula Refinery; and Representative Gary Eugene Taylor of Mississippi, member, and James L. Barksdale, chairman, Governor's Commission on Recovery, Rebuilding, and Renewal.

Remarks to Reporters in New Orleans, Louisiana September 20, 2005

Hurricane Katrina Recovery

The President. I want to thank the folks here at the Folger plant for inviting us to

come say hello. The reason I've come with the mayor and with Admiral Allen is because I want the people to know that

there's progress being made in this part of the world. We've got some people working here because of the ingenuity of the plant managers. Behind me you see temporary housing where this company has provided housing for the folks who work here.

Mayor C. Ray Nagin. FEMA helped.

The President. And FEMA helped with that. And what you're beginning to see is a revitalized economy. Progress is being made toward meeting the mayor's vision of a—and my vision and everybody's vision involved with this of a vibrant New Orleans and surrounding parishes.

The other thing, I've just come from a briefing about Hurricane Rita—or Storm Rita, now a category 2 hurricane—and we were watching very closely, of course, its track. All up and down this coastline, people are now preparing for what is anticipated to be yet another significant storm. Admiral Allen is going to stay in charge of the Louisiana/Mississippi area. We've got another admiral who is now being stationed in Texas to coordinate the relief response. We've got military assets that are being taken out of the New Orleans area, out of harm's way, and have come back in behind the storm, to follow up where it's needed.

I've been in touch with the Governor of Texas. I've been briefed on the planning for what we pray is not a devastating storm—but there's one coming. And I appreciate the mayor recognizing that, and he made a wise decision to say to people, "Be cautious about returning here because a flood—a rain of any amount could cause these levees to break again."

But progress is being made. As I said in Mississippi, I was pleased to see the progress being made on the ground. There's still a lot of work, but they're making progress. And they're making progress here in New Orleans too. Again, we've got a lot of work to do, but people are determined to get the job done.

Anyway, I want to thank you for having me. Thanks for having me back. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:40 p.m. at the Folgers Coffee plant. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA; Vice Adm. Thad W. Allen, USCG, U.S. Coast Guard Chief of Staff; Rear Adm. Larry L. Hereth, USCG, commander, Fifth Coast Guard District; and Gov. Rick Perry of Texas.

Statement on the Death of Simon Wiesenthal *September 20, 2005*

Laura and I are saddened by the death of Simon Wiesenthal, a tireless and passionate advocate who devoted his life to tracking down Nazi killers and promoting freedom. Simon Wiesenthal lost 89 relatives in the Holocaust, yet he survived the death camps himself. He gathered intelligence to be used in war crimes trials and also passed

on important information that led to the conviction of Adolf Eichmann. Throughout his long career, he relentlessly pursued those responsible for some of the most horrific crimes against humanity the world has ever known. Simon Wiesenthal fought for justice, and history will always remember him.