

to answer either of them, since you violated a major rule. [Laughter] At least it's not a cell phone. [Laughter]

Randy, you tell me, how many sources have you had that's leaked information that you've exposed or have been exposed? Probably none. I mean this town is a—is a town full of people who like to leak information. And I don't know if we're going to find out the senior administration official. Now, this is a large administration, and there's a lot of senior officials. I don't have any idea. I'd like to. I want to know the truth. That's why I've instructed this staff of mine to cooperate fully with the investigators—full disclosure. Everything we know, the investigators will find out. I have no idea whether we'll find out who the leaker is, partially because, in all due respect to your profession, you do a very good job of protecting the leakers. But we'll find out.

In terms of Prime Minister Sharon, I have constantly said Israel should defend herself. But I've also told—as I mentioned to you at the press availability yesterday—that it's important for the Prime Minister to avoid escalation, that the decisions he makes to defend her people are valid decisions. We would be doing the same thing. This country will defend our people.

But we are also mindful when we make decisions, as the Prime Minister should be, that the—that he fully understand the consequences of any decision and that while he defends his people that there is not—that he doesn't create the conditions necessary for—that would cause the escalation—the violence to escalate.

Q. Did the strike on Syria—did the strike on Syria cause an escalation?

The President. The Prime Minister must defend his country. It's essential. This is a country which recently was attacked by a suicider that killed innocent children and women, people that were celebrating in a restaurant. And he must do what is necessary to protect himself. At the same time, as I said yesterday and will continue to say to Ariel Sharon, "Avoid escalating violence."

Listen, thank you all. Anybody else did not get a question in this vaunted press corps?

American League Championship Series

Q. Red Sox—Red Sox or Yankees?

The President. Listen, I'm excited about the playoffs. I tuned in after the state dinner that was somewhat covered in the press yesterday. [Laughter] But it was—you know, it's good for baseball. My team, of course, was eliminated in June. [Laughter]

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:42 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel. A reporter referred to former Ambassador Joseph C. Wilson IV, who served as CIA envoy to Niger in February 2002.

Statement on the Decision of Senator Don Nickles Not To Seek Reelection

October 7, 2003

For more than two decades, Don Nickles has served the people of Oklahoma and America as a distinguished United States Senator. As a longtime member of the Senate leadership and most recently as chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, he has led efforts to keep Government spending in check and to keep more money in the pockets of American taxpayers. He has left his mark on virtually every major issue that has moved through the Senate. Senator Nickles is a friend and trusted adviser, and I look forward to working with him for the remainder of his time in the Senate and in the future.

Laura and I extend our thanks and best wishes to Don, Linda, and their four children, Don, Jenny, Kim, and Robyn, for their commitment to public service, and we wish them all the best.

Statement on the Decision by the Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit on the Do-Not-Call Registry

October 7, 2003

Today's decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit to allow the FTC