

A party empowered by the Act has requested that the President establish an emergency board pursuant to section 9A of the Act (45 U.S.C. 159a).

Section 9A(c) of the Act provides that the President, upon such request, shall appoint an emergency board to investigate and report on the dispute.

Now, Therefore, by the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 9A of the Act, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Establishment of Emergency Board (“Board”). There is established, effective April 12, 2004, a Board of three members to be appointed by the President to investigate and report on this dispute. No member shall be pecuniarily or otherwise interested in any organization of railroad employees or any carrier. The Board shall perform its functions subject to the availability of funds.

Sec. 2. Report. The Board shall report to the President with respect to this dispute within 30 days of its creation.

Sec. 3. Maintaining Conditions. As provided by section 9A(c) of the Act, from the date of the creation of the Board and for 120 days thereafter, no change in the conditions out of which the dispute arose shall be made by the parties to the controversy, except by agreement of the parties.

Sec. 4. Records Maintenance. The records and files of the Board are records of the Office of the President and upon the Board’s termination shall be maintained in the physical custody of the National Mediation Board.

Sec. 5. Expiration. The Board shall terminate upon the submission of the report provided for in section 2 of this order.

George W. Bush

The White House,
April 10, 2004.

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NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on April 14.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters at Fort Hood, Texas

April 11, 2004

Easter

The President. Happy Easter to everybody. It’s our honor to have celebrated this holy day with family members whose loved one is in Iraq. Fort Hood has made a mighty contribution to freedom in Iraq and to security for the country. I value my time with the family members and those who sacrifice on behalf of the country.

Today I ask for God’s blessings for our troops overseas. May He protect them, and may He continue to bless our country.

I’ll answer a couple of questions. Scott [Scott Lindlaw, Associated Press].

Situation in Iraq

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. We’re coming off a week in which dozens of American soldiers have died. We’ve seen images of incredible violence and chaos. Should Americans brace for weeks or months of this? Do you expect it to abate soon? And also, what’s General Abizaid telling you about how many more troops he’ll need, if any?

The President. Yes, I’ve spoken to General Abizaid twice in the last 4 or 5 days. He knows full well that when he speaks to me that if he needs additional manpower, he can ask for it. He believes, like I believe, that this violence we’ve seen is part of a few people trying to stop progress toward democracy. Fallujah, south of Baghdad—these incidents were basically thrust upon the innocent Iraqi people by gangs, violent gangs.

And our troops are taking care of business. Their job is to make Iraq more secure so that a peaceful Iraq can emerge, and they’re doing a great job. And it was a tough week last week, and my prayers and thoughts are with those who paid the ultimate price for our security. A free Iraq will make the world more peaceful. A free Iraq is going to change the world. And it’s been tough, and our troops are performing brilliantly and bravely.

Q. Do you think it’s right to add—[inaudible]—

The President. It’s hard to tell. I just know this, that we’re plenty tough, and we’ll remain tough. Now, listen, obviously, we’re

openminded to suggestions—members of the Governing Council wanted a chance to move into Fallujah and see if they could bring some order to the gangs and violence. And as you can tell, our military is giving them a chance to do so. Obviously, I pray every day there's less casualty.

But I know what we're doing in Iraq is right. It's right for long-term peace. It's right for the security of our country, and it's hard work. And today, on bended knee, I thank the good Lord for protecting those of our troops overseas and our coalition troops and innocent Iraqis who suffer at the hands of some of these senseless killings by people who are trying to shake our will.

Yes, sir.

President's Daily Briefing

Q. Mr. President, could you tell us, did you see the Presidential—the President's Daily Brief from August of '01 as a warning—

The President. Did I see it? Of course I saw it. I asked for it.

Q. No, no, I'm sorry. Did you see it as a warning of hijackers? And how did you respond to that?

The President. My response was exactly like then as it is today, that I asked for the Central Intelligence Agency to give me an update on any terrorist threats. And the PDB was no indication of a terrorist threat. There was not a time and place of an attack. It said Usama bin Laden had designs on America. Well, I knew that. What I wanted to know was, is there anything specifically going to take place in America that we needed to react to?

As you might recall, there was some specific threats for overseas that we reacted to. And as the President, I wanted to know whether there was anything, any actionable intelligence. And I looked at the August 6th briefing. I was satisfied that some of the matters were being looked into. But that PDB said nothing about an attack on America. It talked about intentions, about somebody who hated America—well, we knew that.

Yes, Dave [David Gregory, NBC News].

Q. Just to follow up on that, Mr. President. There was, in that PDB, specific information about activity that may speak to a larger bat-

tle plan, even if it wasn't specific. So I wonder if you could say what specifically was done, and do you think your administration should have done anything more?

The President. David, look, let me just say it again. Had I known there was going to be an attack on America, I would have moved mountains to stop the attack. I would have done everything I can. My job is to protect the American people. And I asked the intelligence agency to analyze the data to tell me whether or not we faced a threat internally, like they thought we had faced a threat in other parts of the world. That's what the PDB request was. And had there been actionable intelligence, we would have moved on it.

I'm not exactly sure what you're referring to in the PDB, but if you're referring to the fact that the FBI was investigating things, that's great. That's what we expect the FBI to do.

Q. Wasn't that current threat information? That wasn't historical; that was ongoing.

The President. Right, and had they found something, they would have reported it to me. That's—we were doing precisely what the American people expects us to do, run down every lead, look at every scintilla of intelligence, and follow up on it. But there was—again, I can't say it as plainly as this: Had I known, we would have acted. Of course we would have acted. Any administration would have acted. The previous administration would have acted. That's our job.

Q. Are you satisfied, though, that each agency was doing everything it should have been doing?

The President. Well, that's what the 9/11 Commission should look into, and I hope it does. It's an important part of the assignment of the 9/11 Commission. And I look forward to their recommendations, a full analysis of what took place. I am satisfied that I never saw any intelligence that indicated there was going to be an attack on America—at a time and a place, an attack. Of course we knew that America was hated by Usama bin Laden. That was obvious. The question was, who was going to attack us, when and where and with what. And you might recall the hijacking that was referred to in the PDB. It was not a hijacking of an airplane to fly

into a building; it was hijacking of airplanes in order to free somebody that was being held as a prisoner in the United States.

Okay, thank you all. Happy Easter to everybody. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:15 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. John P. Abizaid, USA, combatant commander, U.S. Central Command; and Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

The President's News Conference With President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt in Crawford, Texas

April 12, 2004

President Bush. Thank you all for coming. I'm pleased to welcome my friend Hosni Mubarak to my home. Welcome. I always look forward to visiting with him, and I look forward to hearing his wise counsel. I appreciate his frank views on many challenges that face our two nations and that face the greater Middle East.

Our nations have a relationship that is strong and warm. Our people share the bonds of friendship, a commitment to prosperity and peace and regional stability. Egypt is a strategic partner of the United States, and we value President Mubarak's years of effort on behalf of the peace and stability of the Middle East.

The meetings we have just had focused on these goals and on ways to make the Middle East safer and more secure. We recognize that the starting point for a prosperous and peaceful Middle East must be the rejection of terror. Egypt has taken a firm stand against terror by working to disrupt the activities and capabilities of the region's terrorist organizations. These are the policies of a nation and a statesman that understand the threat that terrorism poses to all of us, to my Nation, to his, to all the Arab states, to Israel, and to the future of any Palestinian state. Terrorism must be opposed, and it must be defeated. And I'm grateful for President Mubarak's support in the global war against terror.

Our objective in the Middle East must be true peace, not just a pause between wars, which can only happen within a framework of democracy and stability. I'm pleased that Egypt has engaged its neighbor Israel on closer trade ties that will help the Egyptian people find jobs and improve their lives. President Mubarak and I discussed the possible Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and our shared view that creation of a democratic, peaceful Palestinian state is a necessary goal on the road to peace.

We also believe that the future of the Middle East and the future of Iraq are closely linked, and I am grateful for President Mubarak's support for Iraq as it transitions to democracy and stability. The people of the greater Middle East have a right to be safe, secure, prosperous, and free.

President Mubarak and I spoke about the future of the region and of Egypt. Just as Egypt has shown the way toward peace in the Middle East, it will set the standard in the region for democracy by strengthening democratic institutions and political participation.

I'm encouraged by the ongoing debate on reform in Egypt, including the excellent discussions involving civil society representatives from the Arab world who met at the Alexandria Library in March. And President Mubarak can be confident in my friendship and America's partnership as he moves forward to realize the hopes of his people.

I welcome my good friend Hosni to my home. Our countries have three decades of solid, beneficial relations behind us, and the United States will continue to work with Egypt and the Arab world in a spirit of common purpose and mutual respect.

Thank you for coming, sir.

President Mubarak. I would like to thank President Bush for inviting me to his ranch in Crawford and for the friendly atmosphere and the gracious hospitality that prevailed throughout our meeting today. I had constructive, candid, and friendly discussions with President Bush and with members of his administration on a wide range of issues of mutual concern.

Our strategic relationship, which has matured over the past 30 years, has constituted