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every land and every language. We will answer violent men with patient, determined justice. We will expand human freedom and the peace that freedom brings. And by our resolve and by our courage, we will prevail.

I want to thank you for your dedication to the security of America and to the safety of Israel. I want to thank you for your warm hospitality today. May God bless America. May God bless Israel. Thank you for coming. Thank you all for your time. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:53 a.m. at the Washington Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Amy Friedkin, president, board of directors, Bernice Manocherian, president-elect, and Howard Kohr, executive director, American Israel Public Affairs Committee; Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Prime Minister (Acting) Ehud Olmert, and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice Yosef "Tommy" Lapid of Israel; American hostage Nicholas Berg, who was killed in Iraq in early May by senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan; and Iraqi Governing Council President Izz al-Din al-Salim, who was killed in a suicide car bomb attack on May 17 in Baghdad.

Statement on Establishing the Great Lakes Interagency Task Force

May 18, 2004

The Great Lakes are a national treasure that represents 20 percent of the world's fresh water. The Great Lakes region is an economic engine and recreational haven, and we are making great progress in protecting and restoring this vital natural resource.

To build on that progress, today I am establishing the Great Lakes Interagency Task Force, chaired by EPA Administrator Mike Leavitt. The Task Force will address environmental and natural resource issues of national concern and better coordinate the region's sustainable development and restoration. It will harness the collective efforts of the Federal Government, Governors, mayors, Members of Congress, tribes, and citizen stewards to ensure that the greatness of the lakes endures for generations. The Task Force will also consult with the Government of Canada on the most effective way forward on addressing past and current environmental impacts to the Great Lakes ecology.

Executive Order 13340—Establishment of Great Lakes Interagency Task Force and Promotion of a Regional Collaboration of National Significance for the Great Lakes

May 18, 2004

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and to help establish a regional collaboration of national significance for the Great Lakes, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. *Policy.* The Great Lakes are a national treasure constituting the largest freshwater system in the world. The United States and Canada have made great progress addressing past and current environmental impacts to the Great Lakes ecology. The Federal Government is committed to making progress on the many significant challenges that remain. Along with numerous State, tribal, and local programs, over 140 Federal programs help fund and implement environmental restoration and management activities throughout the Great Lakes system. A number of intergovernmental bodies are providing leadership in the region to address environmental and resource management issues in the Great Lakes system. These activities would benefit substantially from more systematic collaboration and better integration of effort. It is the policy of the Federal Government to support local and regional efforts to address environmental challenges and to encourage local citizen and community stewardship. To this end, the Federal Government will partner with the Great Lakes States, tribal and local governments, communities, and other interests to establish a regional collaboration to address nationally significant environmental and natural resource issues involving the Great Lakes. It is the further policy of the Federal Government that its executive departments and agencies will ensure that their programs are