

Korea. We talked about the Palestinian/Israeli issue. I reminded him that I was the first President ever to articulate the vision of a Palestinian state. No other President has ever done that. I was pleased to do so because I believe that is the best hope for the Palestinian people and the best way to promote peace.

But no, our discussions—we don't spend any time on politics, you'll be happy to hear. We spend time on what's best for our respective countries and how we can work together.

Prime Minister Persson. We talked about all people's freedom and peace in the whole world, and then we touched upon some specific issues that is of mutual interest to us. We can discuss that because we are both democrats, and we are both strongly in favor of freedom and building democratic institutions. That what's—is what we have in common. And then, also, we realize that Europe—and Sweden is a part of Europe—and U.S. are interdependent and we need each other for the future good development in the world.

President Bush. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:45 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Lakhdar Brahimi, Special Adviser to the U.N. Secretary-General; Muqtada Al Sadr, Iraqi Shiite leader whose militia engaged in an uprising in Iraq in early April; Gen. John P. Abizaid, USA, combatant commander, U.S. Central Command; and Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea.

Statement on the United Nations Security Council's Resolution on Weapons of Mass Destruction

April 28, 2004

Last September, I called on the United Nations Security Council to urge the cooperative action of all U.N. members against the illicit trafficking of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. I commend today's unanimous Security Council resolution, which answers that call.

It now remains for all member states to act on the measures urged by this resolution. Member states should enact strict export controls, criminalize the proliferation of

weapons of mass destruction, and secure all related materials within their borders.

Today's resolution is an important achievement. We must continue to press these efforts to ensure that the world's most destructive weapons are kept from the world's most dangerous regimes and organizations.

Remarks Following a Conversation With the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States and an Exchange With Reporters

April 29, 2004

The President. The Vice President and I just finished a good conversation with the 9/11 Commission. It was wide ranging. It was important. It was just a good discussion, and I appreciate the members.

I want to thank the Chairman and Vice-Chairman for bringing the Commission here and giving us a chance to share views on different subjects. They had a lot of good questions. I'm glad I did it. I'm glad I took the time. This is an important Commission, and it's important that they ask the questions they ask so that they can help make recommendations necessary to better protect our homeland. It was—I enjoyed it.

Let me ask—answer a couple of questions.

President's Meeting With the 9/11 Commission

Q. Mr. President, what topic did the Commissioners want to spend most of the time on? And were there any subjects that you didn't answer or were advised by your Counsel not to answer?

The President. No, I was never advised by my Counsel not to answer anything. I answered every question they asked. Really—probably best that I not go into the details of the conversation. Let them incorporate into their report. There was a lot of interest in—about how to better protect America. In other words, they're very interested in the recommendations that they're going to lay out, and I'm interested in those as well.

And we discussed a lot of things, Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press], a lot of

subjects, and it was a very cordial conversation. I was impressed by the questions, and I think it helped them understand how I think and how I run the White House and how we deal with threats.

John [John King, CNN].

Joint Appearance With Vice President Cheney

Q. Mr. President, as you know, a lot of critics suggested that you wanted to appear jointly with the Vice President so that you two could keep your stories straight, or something—

The President. Yes.

Q. —can you tell us what you think of the value of appearing together and how you would answer those critics?

The President. Yes. First of all, look, if we had something to hide, we wouldn't have met with them in the first place. We answered all their questions, and as I say, I think I—I came away good about the session, because I wanted them to know how I set strategy, how we run the White House, how we deal with threats. The Vice President answered a lot of their questions—answered all their questions. And I think it was important for them to see our body language as well, how we work together.

But it was—you know, the Commissioners will speak for themselves over time. They will let you know whether they thought it was a fruitful series of discussions. I think they did. I think they found it to be useful.

Yes.

Transcript

Q. Mr. President, don't you think that the families deserve to have a transcript or to be able to see what you said?

The President. Adam [Adam Entous, Reuters], you asked me that question yesterday.

Q. I'm hoping for an answer today.

The President. I've got the same answer. Yes.

Al Qaida

Q. Mr. President, can you say with any confidence that there are no Al Qaida operatives active in the country today?

The President. No, I can't say that.

Q. Did the Commission ask you about that?

The President. No, they didn't. But I'm not going to get into any more details about what they asked me. I told you I wasn't going to get into details about what they asked me, and then I just fell into your trap.

But no, let me talk about vulnerabilities, and then I've got to get back to work. We are still vulnerable to attack. And the reason why is, Al Qaida still exists. Al Qaida is dangerous. Al Qaida hates us. And we have to be correct 100 percent of the time in defending America, and they've got to be right once. And therefore, we are vulnerable.

But people need to know, we're working—we, the government, at all levels—are working long hours to protect America. We're doing the best we can. The best way to secure America, however, is to stay on the offensive and bring those people to justice before they harm America again. And that's what we're continuing to do. But yes, so long as there's an Al Qaida enemy that is willing to kill, we are vulnerable.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:16 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Thomas H. Kean, Chairman, and Lee H. Hamilton, Vice Chairman, National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (9/11 Commission).

Statement on Senate Action on the Proposed "Internet Tax Nondiscrimination Act"

April 29, 2004

I commend the Senate for moving forward to expand access to broadband technology. The "Internet Tax Nondiscrimination Act" is an important step toward permanently banning access taxes on broadband that will help make high-speed Internet services more affordable, increase the number of broadband users, and enhance our Nation's economic competitiveness.