

In prayer, we offer petitions, because the Maker of the Universe knows our cares and our needs. For our Nation today, the need is great, as young men and women face danger in our defense, for the sake of freedom, and for the sake of peace. We pray that God's hand will protect them and deliver them safely home. We pray for the loved ones who anxiously await their return. And we pray for the families that have known great loss, that they might receive God's peace in the midst of their sadness.

Prayer also teaches us to trust, to accept that God's plan unfolds in His time, not our own. That trust is not always easy, as we discover in our own lives, but trust is the source of ultimate confidence. We affirm that all of life and all of history rests

entirely on the character of our creation and our Creator. And His love and His mercy extend to all and endure forever.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:15 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to J. Reilly Lewis, music director and founder, Washington Bach Consort; Shirley Dobson, chairman, National Day of Prayer Task Force, and her husband, James; Rev. Daniel P. Coughlin, Chaplain, U.S. House of Representatives; and Rabbi Tzvi Hersh Weinreb, executive vice president, Orthodox Union. The National Day of Prayer proclamation of April 30 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting Fiscal Year 2005 Budget Amendments

May 6, 2004

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed FY 2005 budget amendments for the Departments of Agriculture, Defense, Education, Energy, Homeland Security, Housing and Urban Development, the Interior, Labor, and the Treasury; the Corps of Engineers; the National Aeronautics and Space Administration; and the Securities and Exchange Commission. In addition, I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed FY 2004 language proposals for the Departments of Health and Human Services and the Treasury. Overall, the discretionary

budget authority proposed in my FY 2005 Budget would not be increased by these requests.

This transmittal also contains FY 2005 budget amendments for the legislative branch. As a matter of comity, appropriations requests of the legislative branch are commonly transmitted without change.

The details of these proposals are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

Interview With Al-Ahram International May 6, 2004

U.S. Goals in the Middle East

Q. I have learned that President Mubarak sent you, recently, two important messages. I don't know, I mean, the contents of these messages, but I assume that of course it be linked by the situation in Iraq and Palestine. I would like to ask, in the beginning, one general question about how do you look at this vision of the Middle East.

The President. Well, first of all, I communicate with President Mubarak a lot, because I value his judgment, and we've got a frank relationship where if he thinks things are going badly, he'll tell me. In other words, he doesn't gloss over.

I think that things in the Middle East for the United States are difficult right now. I think they're difficult because people don't really understand our intentions. I think they're difficult because some people ascribe bad values and bad motives to the American people and the American Government.

Our intentions are to work for free societies and peaceful societies. Our intentions are to protect our own security, on the one hand, but also enable people to live in peace. Obviously, our reputation has been damaged severely by the terrible and horrible acts, inhumane acts that were conducted on Iraqi prisoners. Today I can't tell you how sorry I am to them and their families for the humiliation.

I'm also sorry because people are then able to say, "Look how terrible America is." But this isn't America. That's not—Americans are appalled at what happened. We're a generous people. I don't think a lot of people understand that, so I've got to do a better job of explaining to people that we're for a lot of things that most people who live in the Middle East want. We want there to be peace. We want people to have a living. We want people to

send their kids to schools that work. We want there to be health care. We want there to be a Palestinian state at peace with its neighbors. We want there to be reform. We want people to have a chance to participate in the process.

But I'd say right now times are tough for the United States and the Middle East.

Q. I have four topics, Mr. President: Iraq, the Israeli-Arab issue, the so-called greater Middle East, and bilateral—which one do you choose of them, Mr. President?

The President. Whatever you want to do, sir. You're the distinguished journalist.

Arab-Israeli Conflict

Q. Thank you very much, indeed. Okay, I will shoot for the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The President. Okay.

Q. Many Arabs feel that after the letter of assurances you gave to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, any future Palestinian state would exist on less than half what the partition plan offered them in '47. How do you reconcile this with a moral concept of justice?

The President. First of all, I made it very clear in my letter that I recognized circumstances had changed, but I made it very clear of a couple of very important points: One, that any final status would be negotiated by the parties—that would be the Israelis and the Palestinians—not the United States. We won't prejudice final status.

Secondly, I made it clear that I supported what the Prime Minister had done, because I think it's a great opportunity for the establishment of a Palestinian state. I'm the first President ever to have articulated the vision of a Palestinian state.

Q. I'm writing here, and I wanted to appreciate that very highly.

The President. Well, I'll tell you, and I'm somewhat amazed, sir, that the debate has