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block by block. Further south, troops of Operation Resolute Sword have taken the initiative from Al Sadr's militia. Our coalition's quick reaction forces are finding and engaging the enemy. Prisoners are being taken, and intelligence is being gathered. Our decisive actions will continue until these enemies of democracy are dealt with.

Some have suggested that we should respond to the recent attacks by delaying Iraqi sovereignty. This is precisely what our enemies want. They want to dictate the course of events in Iraq and to prevent the Iraqi people from having a true voice in their future. They want America and our coalition to falter in our commitments before a watching world. In these ambitions, the enemies of freedom will fail. Iraqi sovereignty will arrive on June 30th.

In March, the Iraqi Governing Council signed a document that protects the rights of the Iraqi people, offers the timetable for elections, and paves the way for a permanent constitution. At this moment, United Nations Special Envoy Lakhdar Brahimi is conducting intensive consultations with a wide range of Iraqis on the structure of the interim government that will assume control on July the first. We welcome this U.N. engagement.

The transition to sovereignty will mark the beginning of a new Government and the end of the coalition's administrative duties, but the coalition's commitment to Iraq will continue. We will establish a new American Embassy to protect our Nation's interests. We will continue helping the Iraqi people reconstruct their economy, undermined by decades of dictatorship and corruption. And our coalition forces will remain committed to the security of Iraq.

Iraq's elections for a permanent Government are scheduled to be held near the end of 2005, and the elected Government can count on coalition assistance. We will stand with the Iraqi people as long as necessary to ensure that their young democracy is stable and secure and successful.

As we have done before, America is fighting on the side of liberty, liberty in Iraq and liberty in the Middle East. This objective serves the interests of that region, of the United States, and of all freedom-loving countries. As the greater Middle East increasingly becomes a place where freedom flourishes, the lives of millions in that region will be bettered, and the American people and the entire world will be more secure.

From the first days of the war on terror, I said our Nation would face periods of struggle and testing. As the June 30th transition approaches, we will continue to see a test of wills between the enemies of freedom and its defenders. We will win this test of wills and overcome every challenge, because the cause of freedom and security is worth our struggle.

This weekend, many of the men and women who serve that cause in uniform will celebrate Easter and Passover far from home. In this season that celebrates hope and freedom, our Nation remembers in prayer the good and the brave people of our military. They are the best of America, and America is firmly behind them.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 8:50 a.m. on April 9 at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 10. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 9 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

## Executive Order 13334—Establishing an Emergency Board To Investigate a Dispute Between the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority and Its Conductors Represented by the United Transportation Union

*April 10, 2004*

A dispute exists between the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, and its conductors represented by the United Transportation Union.

The dispute has not heretofore been adjusted under the provisions of the Railway Labor Act, as amended, 45 U.S.C. 151–188 (the "Act").

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.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:10 a.m., April 13, 2004]

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