

As you said so, we've had some very fruitful discussions on the peace process and Iraq. And I want to thank you again for the support that we have gotten from you for so many years on giving hope to Israelis and Palestinians. And I know that you want to find a solution that Israelis and Palestinians can live in peace and harmony, and I hope that, if we can help in that respect, that is a great honor for us.

Thank you for allowing us to see you again, sir.

President Bush. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:48 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel; and President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority.

Remarks at the Federal Emergency Management Agency and an Exchange With Reporters

September 23, 2005

The President. I stopped by the center to get a full briefing on Rita. We're now facing yet another big storm, and I appreciate the folks here who are working so hard to help the folks on the ground prepare for the storm.Q05

I'm going down to San Antonio to see the prepositioned assets, to understand the relationship—or that the Federal Government's role is to support State and local governments. I want to watch that happen. Then I'm going to go out to our NORTHCOM headquarters to watch the interface between our United States military and again, the State and local authorities. Our job is to assist—prepare for and assist the State and local people to save lives and to help these people get back on their feet.Q05

Again, I want to thank the people here in Washington who are working with the folks in the—out in the field to do everything we possibly can to prepare for this second big storm that's coming into the Gulf of Mexico.

Thank you all.

President's Upcoming Visit to Texas and Colorado

Q. Sir, what good can you do going down to the hurricane zone? Might you get in the way, Mr. President?

The President. One thing I won't do is get in the way.

Q. But I mean, how—what good can you actually do? I mean, isn't there a risk of you and your entourage getting in the way?

The President. No, there will be no risk of me getting in the way, I promise you. We're going to make sure that we're not in the way of the operations. What I am going to do is observe the relationship between the State and local government, particularly out in Colorado Springs. That's what I want to see.

See, NORTHCOM is the main entity that interfaces, that uses Federal assets, Federal troops to interface with local and State government. I want to watch that relationship. It's an important relationship, and I need to understand how it works better.

Q. But critics might say this is overcompensation for the response to Katrina.

The President. We will make sure that my entourage does not get in the way of people doing their job, which will be search and rescue immediately. And rest assured, I understand that we must not and will not interfere with the important work that will be going forward.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:32 p.m. at the Federal Emergency Management Agency Headquarters.

Remarks on Presenting the Congressional Medal of Honor to Tibor Rubin

September 23, 2005

Laura and I welcome you to the White House. This is a special occasion for our Nation. We're here to pay tribute to a soldier with an extraordinary devotion to his brothers in arms and an unshakeable love for his adopted homeland of America.