

We are following a clear strategy with three objectives: Destroy the terrorists; enlist international support for a free Iraq; and quickly transfer authority to the Iraqi people. Through a series of ongoing operations, our military is taking direct action against Saddam loyalists and foreign terrorists. One major effort underway right now, called Operation Longstreet, is seeking and finding our enemies wherever they hide and plot. Already, this operation has yielded hundreds of detainees and seized hundreds of weapons, and we will remain on the offensive against the terrorists.

We are expanding international cooperation in rebuilding Iraq. Today in Geneva, Secretary of State Powell is meeting with Secretary-General of the United Nations and representatives of the five permanent members of the Security Council. They are discussing ideas for a new resolution to encourage wider participation in this vital task.

And we're moving forward on a specific plan to return sovereignty and authority to the Iraqi people. We have created a Governing Council made up of Iraqi citizens. The Council has selected a committee that is developing a process through which Iraq will draft a new constitution for their

country. Day-to-day operations of many government tasks have been turned over to ministers appointed by the Governing Council. And when a constitution has been drafted and ratified by the Iraqi people, Iraq will enjoy free and fair elections, and the coalition will yield its remaining authority to a free and sovereign Iraqi Government.

We have a strategy in Iraq and a mission. We will fight and defeat the terrorists there so we don't have to face them in America. And we will help transform Iraq into a example of progress and democracy and freedom that can inspire change and hope throughout the Middle East.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 1:20 p.m. on September 11 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on September 13. In his remarks, the President referred to Secretary-General Kofi Annan of the United Nations. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 12 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

## **Statement on the Death of Frank O'Bannon** *September 13, 2003*

Frank O'Bannon was a dedicated public servant and a good and decent man. He led a distinguished career, including service in the Air Force, in the Indiana State senate, and as Lieutenant Governor. Since being sworn in as Governor of Indiana in

1997, he has served the people of his State with integrity and devotion. Laura joins me in sending our thoughts and prayers to his wife, Judy, and their family.