

Message on the Observance of Cinco de Mayo, 2004
May 5, 2004

I send greetings to those celebrating Cinco de Mayo.

On May 5, 1862, Mexican soldiers held back an invading army at the Battle of Puebla. This victory played a decisive role in the eventual expulsion of foreign forces from Mexico in 1867. Led by Texas-born Mexican General Ignacio Zaragoza, a small outnumbered militia of freedom-loving soldiers halted the invasion of their country. One hundred forty-two years after this victory, Cinco de Mayo pays tribute to the bravery and victory of General Zaragoza's soldiers and the strong, independent spirit of the Mexican people.

This observance is also a time to celebrate the strong friendship between the United States and Mexico. More than

neighbors, we are partners in building a safer, more democratic, and more prosperous hemisphere. The United States continues to share close ties of family, culture, and history with Mexico and the Mexican people, and we recognize the vital role Mexican Americans play in shaping our Nation. We look forward to a future of continued friendship and collaboration with Mexico as we work to advance peace and democracy in the world.

Laura joins me in sending our best wishes for a joyous celebration.

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Statement Announcing a Request to Congress for the Establishment of a Contingency Reserve Fund
May 5, 2004

This morning, Secretary Rumsfeld and I discussed recommendations from our commanders in Iraq and Afghanistan about additional resources that they may require.

While we do not know the precise costs for operations next year, recent developments on the ground and increased demands on our troops indicate the need to plan for contingencies. We must make sure there is no disruption in funding and resources for our troops.

I am requesting that Congress establish a \$25 billion contingency reserve fund for the coming fiscal year to meet all commit-

ments to our troops and to make sure we succeed in these critical fronts in the war on terror. As my administration has previously said, we will pursue a full FY 2005 supplemental request when we can better estimate precise costs.

Our troops in Iraq are performing superbly in their efforts to help the Iraqi people realize a free and peaceful future. I have pledged to our troops that they will have all the resources they need to get the job done, and I look forward to working with Congress on this high priority.

Remarks at a Republican National Committee Dinner May 5, 2004

The President. I'm ready. I'm here to tell you I appreciate your support and I want your vote. I stand ready and eager to lead this Nation for 4 more years.

I've recently come off a bus tour in Michigan and Ohio. The crowds were big. The enthusiasm was high. Our support is strong. We're rolling on our way to victory in November of 2004.

There's going to be many turns in this campaign, but this will remain constant: I will offer a positive, optimistic, and hopeful vision to the American people. I have a plan to win the war on terror and to spread peace and freedom throughout the world. I have a plan to help create an environment so more jobs are created and every single citizen of this country can realize the great promise of our country. I have a plan to promote the compassion and spirit of this country, so all citizens—all citizens—can realize their dreams.

I will leave no doubt where I stand. I will leave no doubt that after 4 more years, this country will be safer and stronger and better. And with this message and with your help, I am confident that Vice President Cheney and I will be reelected.

A good reason to put me back in office is to make sure Laura has 4 more years as the First Lady.

Audience member. We love Laura!

The President. Yes, you love Laura, and I love Laura. [*Laughter*]

When you're out there gathering the vote, make sure you tell people that I put together a fantastic administration to serve the American people, people from all walks of life, people who have come to our Nation's Capital to serve the people, not their self-interest. I'm proud to be running with a fine Vice President, Dick Cheney.

And I appreciate the team we put together, starting with the RNC chairman, Ed Gillespie. He's a fine guy. I told Ed

when he took the job, I said I want him reaching out to people from all walks of life. I want him to understand our message is so optimistic and hopeful that people, regardless of their political party, are going to like what they hear, that we've got to keep working with everybody in this country. I appreciate the fact that his wife, Cathy, has taken a strong lead in the campaign as well. She's working for "W Stands for Women."

I appreciate so very much the leadership that Al Hoffman has provided to make sure that the Republican National Committee is well funded. I want to thank Ann Wagner as the cochairman. I appreciate my friend Mercer Reynolds for being the Victory 2004 finance chairman. He got bumped up. He was the finance chairman for Bush-Cheney. He did such a good job that we moved him up to the Victory committee.

I want to thank all my friends who are seated on the stage here for working hard. I want to thank you all for coming. As Ed said, this is a record night. It wouldn't have happened without you. It's important to have enough fuel to make sure that the grassroots are activated as we come down the stretch next fall. That's what we're here to talk about.

I've got some members of my administration here tonight—fine Cabinet Secretaries Gale Norton, Ann Veneman, Tommy Thompson, and Spence Abraham. These people are doing a superb job on behalf of the American citizens, and I'm proud to call them Cabinet members in the Bush administration.

We've got a fantastic Congress right now. We've got great leadership in Bill Frist and Speaker Denny Hastert. I'm proud to be working with them. I not only want to make sure I find work after November—[*laughter*]*—*but I want them in power too. They made a big difference to this country.