

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.