

The President's Radio Address *November 27, 2004*

Good morning. As Americans gather to celebrate this week, we show our gratitude for the many blessings in our lives. We are grateful for our friends and families who fill our lives with purpose and love. We're grateful for our beautiful country and for the prosperity we enjoy. We're grateful for the chance to live, work, and worship in freedom. And in this Thanksgiving week, we offer thanks and praise to the provider of all these gifts, Almighty God.

We also recognize our duty to share our blessings with the least among us. Throughout the holiday season, schools, churches, synagogues, and other generous organizations gather food and clothing for their neighbors in need. Many young people give part of their holiday to volunteer at homeless shelters or food pantries. On Thanksgiving and on every day of the year, America is a more hopeful nation because of the volunteers who serve the weak and the vulnerable.

The Thanksgiving tradition of compassion and humility dates back to the earliest days of our society. And through the years, our deepest gratitude has often been inspired by the most difficult times. Almost four centuries ago, the pilgrims set aside time to thank God after suffering through a bitter winter. George Washington held Thanksgiving during a trying stay at Valley Forge. And President Lincoln revived the Thanksgiving tradition in the midst of a civil war.

The past year has brought many challenges to our Nation, and Americans have met every one with energy, optimism, and faith. After lifting our economy from a recession, manufacturers and entrepreneurs are creating jobs again. Volunteers from across the country came together to help hurricane victims rebuild. And when the children of Beslan, Russia, suffered a brutal

terrorist attack, the world saw America's generous heart in an outpouring of compassion and relief.

The greatest challenges of our time have come to the men and women who protect our Nation. We're fortunate to have dedicated firefighters and police officers to keep our streets safe. We're grateful for the homeland security and intelligence personnel who spend long hours on faithful watch. And we give thanks to the men and women of our military who are serving with courage and skill and making our entire Nation proud.

Like generations before them, today's Armed Forces have liberated captive peoples and shown compassion for the suffering and delivered hope to the oppressed. In the past year, they have fought the terrorists abroad so that we do not have to face those enemies here at home. They've captured a brutal dictator, aided last month's historic election in Afghanistan, and helped set Iraq on the path to democracy.

Our progress in the war on terror has made our country safer, yet it has also brought new burdens to our military families. Many service men and women have endured long deployments and painful separations from home. Families have faced the challenge of raising children while praying for a loved one's safe return. America is grateful to all our military families, and the families mourning a terrible loss this Thanksgiving can know that America will honor their sacrifices forever.

As Commander in Chief, I've been honored to thank our troops at bases around the world, and I've been inspired by the efforts of private citizens to express their own gratitude. This month, I met Shauna Fleming, a 15-year-old from California who coordinated the mailing of a million thank

you letters to military personnel. In October, I met Ken Porwoll, a World War II veteran who has devoted years of his retirement to volunteering at a VA medical center in Minneapolis. And we've seen the generosity of so many organizations like Give2theTroops, a group started in a basement by a mother and son that has sent thousands of care packages to troops in the field.

Thanksgiving reminds us that America's true strength is the compassion and decency of our people. I thank all those who volunteer this season, and Laura and I wish every American a happy and safe Thanksgiving weekend.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 7:15 a.m. on November 26 at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 27. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 26 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address. The Thanksgiving Day proclamation of November 23 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks on the Nomination of Carlos M. Gutierrez To Be Secretary of Commerce

November 29, 2004

The President. Thank you all. I am proud to announce my nomination of Carlos Gutierrez to be America's next Secretary of Commerce. Carlos Gutierrez is one of America's most respected business leaders. He is a great American success story.

As CEO of the Kellogg Company, he has been an effective, visionary executive. He understands the world of business from the first rung on the ladder to the very top. He knows exactly what it takes to help American businesses grow and create jobs. I look forward to having his creativity and expertise in my Cabinet.

Carlos's family came to America from Cuba when he was a boy. He learned English from a bellhop in a Miami hotel and later became an American citizen. When his family eventually settled in Mexico City, Carlos took his first job for Kellogg as a truck driver, delivering Frosted Flakes to local stores. Ten years after he started, he was running the Mexican business, and 15 years after that, he was running the entire company. At every stage

of this remarkable story, Carlos motivated others with his energy and optimism and impressed others with his decency.

In his career, Carlos has been sustained by the values taught by his parents, Pedro and Olga, and by the love of his wife, Edi, and his children, Carlos, Erika, and Karina. I know Olga Gutierrez, who lives in Florida, is proud to see the boy she took from Cuba chosen to help strengthen the world's greatest and finest economy.

Carlos will carry on the work of a distinguished leader, Secretary Don Evans. During the past 4 years, our economy has overcome a recession, terrorist attack, corporate scandals, and the uncertainty that comes with war. In all these challenges, Don has been a strong and steady advocate for America's businesses and workers and entrepreneurs. Don has also been my friend for over three decades. I've counted on his wisdom and optimism and character at every step on my journey to the White House. Now Don's own journey leads him back to Texas, where we were young men