

In Afghanistan, the people have voted in the first free Presidential elections in that nation's 5,000-year history. The people of Ukraine have made clear their own desire for democracy. The Palestinians have just elected a new President who has repudiated violence. Freedom is on the march, and the world is better for it.

Widespread hatred and radicalism cannot survive the advent of freedom and self-government. Our Nation will be more secure, the world will be more peaceful as freedom advances. Condi Rice understands that. And the terrorists understand that as well, and that is why they are now attacking Iraqi civilians in an effort to sabotage elections. We applaud the courage of ordinary Iraqis for their refusal to surrender their future to these killers.

No nation can build a safer and better world alone. The men and women of the State Department are doing a fine job of working with other nations to build on the momentum of freedom. I know our Nation will be really well served when the good folks at the State Department join with Condi Rice to face the many challenges

and opportunities that lie ahead. In the coming months and years, we must stop the proliferation of dangerous weapons and materials. We must safeguard and expand the freedom of international marketplace and free trade. We must advance justice and fundamental human rights. We must fight HIV/AIDS and other diseases and reduce poverty.

Each task will require good relations with nations around the world, and each will require a Secretary who will lead by character and conviction and wisdom. To meet these times and tasks, America has its best in Dr. Condoleezza Rice, now Secretary Condoleezza Rice, our 66th Secretary of State.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:58 a.m. at the U.S. Department of State. In his remarks, he referred to former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Andrew Young; and President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary Rice.

Remarks to the "Congress of Tomorrow" Luncheon in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia January 28, 2005

The President. Thank you all. Please be seated.

Deborah, thanks for the kind introduction. I'm kind of warming up for the State of the Union—[laughter]—some verbal jumping jacks. Thanks for letting me come by. I'm going to have a few remarks, then I'll answer questions for a while.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for your leadership. Thank you for your friendship. This country has had no better Speaker than Denny Hastert.

Appreciate Senator Ted Stevens—thank you for your tenure and your leadership

as well. I'm glad you're here. I thank my friend from the great State of Texas Tom DeLay for his leadership. I appreciate you, Mr. Leader. Mitch McConnell, the Senate majority whip—Senator McConnell, thank you, sir, appreciate you. Congressman Blunt, the House whip. Thank you, Congressman, glad you're here, appreciate you. How is your son doing?

Representative Roy Blunt. He's doing great.

The President. Good, huh?

Representative Blunt. He's taking a page out of your book.

The President. Yes, I like a guy who follows in his father's footsteps. [*Laughter*]

Senator Kyl, who's the chairman of the Republican policy committee—thank you, sir. Deborah Pryce, who you know, and Rick Santorum—thank you both for organizing this event. Thank the members of my Cabinet who are here, John Snow and Josh Bolten. I'm looking forward to working with you.

As you know, David Hobbs has handled legislative affairs for my administration for a couple of years. He's worked very closely with the leadership and the Members of both the House and the Senate. He has decided to move on. He will be replaced by Candi Wolff. I know you look forward to working with Candi. She is a fine soul. And we're going to miss David Hobbs, and I appreciate him for his—I appreciate his long service.

A couple points I'd like to make. First, I think we've proven to the country we know how to set an agenda and work together to achieve it. In other words, people ought to view this team we've put together, the relationship between the executive branch and the legislative branch, as people who are—come to Washington, DC, to solve problems. And we have done so over the last 4 years, and we will continue to do so for the next 4 years.

I look forward to addressing the Nation. I will remind the country we're still at war. And I want to thank the Congress for providing the necessary support for our troops who are in harm's way. I will also tell the people once again that I strongly believe that the way to defeat hatred and terrorism is to spread freedom. And I believe everybody in the world deserves to be free.

I look forward to discussing ways to keep this recovery going so people can find work. I look forward to talking to the country about the need to address big reforms like Social Security. I will continue to articulate the faith-based agenda, the compassion agenda so that people can find hope in our country. I'll remind the people we're a great nation. We can achieve anything we set our mind to. And I will tell them like I'm telling you, it's such an honor to be the President of the United States.

Thank you for letting me come. I look forward to answering your questions.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:06 p.m. at the Greenbrier. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Matt Blunt of Missouri, son of Representative Roy Blunt. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

The President's Radio Address *January 29, 2005*

Good morning. Tomorrow the world will witness a turning point in the history of Iraq, a milestone in the advance of freedom, and a crucial advance in the war on terror. The Iraqi people will make their way to polling centers across their nation. On the national ballot alone, voters will choose from nearly 19,000 candidates competing for seats in the Transitional National Assembly, in the country's 18 provincial

councils, and in the Kurdistan National Assembly. This historic event will be overseen by the Independent Election Commission of Iraq and will mark the first genuine, nationwide elections in generations.

The terrorists and those who benefited from the tyranny of Saddam Hussein know that free elections will expose the emptiness of their vision for Iraq. That is why