

The details of this action are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

The President's Radio Address *May 28, 2005*

Good morning. This Memorial Day weekend, Americans pay tribute to those who have given their lives in the service of our Nation. As we honor the members of our Armed Forces who have died for our freedom, we also honor those who are defending our liberties today.

On Friday, I met with some of the courageous men and women who will soon take their place in the defense of our freedom, the graduating class of the United States Naval Academy. These new officers will soon be serving on ships, flying combat missions, and leading our troops into battle against dangerous enemies. They are prepared for the challenges ahead, morally, mentally, and physically. The American people can be confident that their freedom is in good hands.

Our citizens live in freedom because patriots are willing to serve and sacrifice for our liberty. And on Monday, I will lay a wreath at Arlington National Cemetery in honor of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. This year marks the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II, a victory for freedom in which more than 400,000 Americans gave their lives. Today, a new generation of Americans is making its own sacrifice on behalf of peace and freedom, and some have given their lives.

In their hometowns, these soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines are more than names on a roll of honor. They were friends and neighbors, teachers and coaches, classmates and colleagues. Each was the most important person in someone's life. Each had hopes for the future, and each left a place that can never be filled. We

mourn their loss, and we honor their sacrifice. We pray for their families. And we take heart in knowing that these men and women believed deeply in what they were fighting for.

Christopher Swisher was a staff sergeant from Lincoln, Nebraska, who joined the Army a year after graduating from high school. He was killed in an ambush while on patrol in Baghdad. Sergeant Swisher told his loved ones, "If anything happens to me, I'm doing what I want to be doing—I'm protecting my family and my home."

Rafael Peralta also understood that America faces dangerous enemies, and he knew the sacrifices required to defeat them. An immigrant from Mexico, he enlisted in the Marine Corps the day after he got his green card. Just before the battle of Fallujah, he wrote his 14-year-old brother, "We are going to defeat the insurgents. Be proud of me. I'm going to make history and do something that I always wanted to do." A few days later, Sergeant Peralta gave his life to save his fellow marines.

This Memorial Day, we remember Sergeant Peralta, Sergeant Swisher, and all who have given their lives for our Nation. And we honor them as we continue to wage the war on terror and spread freedom across the world. The people of Iraq and Afghanistan are determined to secure their freedom, and we will help them. We're training Iraqi and Afghan forces so they can take the fight to the enemy and defend their own countries, and then our troops will return home with the honor they have earned.