

who have got a loved one deployed overseas, we stand with you, and we pray with you for the safety of your loved one. We want to send our greetings to your loved one overseas and tell him how much we appreciate you serving for the cause of freedom and peace.

Anyway, I hope you all have a great holiday. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:25 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on Congressional Passage of Legislation Funding the Armed Forces for the War on Terror in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Elsewhere *December 22, 2005*

I applaud the Congress for passing legislation to fund our troops who are fighting the war on terror in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. This funding will help us con-

tinue to hunt down the terrorists, pursue our strategy for victory in Iraq, and make America more secure. I look forward to signing the bill into law.

Statement on Congressional Action To Reauthorize PATRIOT Act Reauthorization Legislation *December 22, 2005*

I appreciate the strong commitment by the majority of the House and of the Senate to reauthorize the PATRIOT Act. The terrorists are determined to strike America again and inflict even greater damage than they did on September 11, 2001. The PATRIOT Act is essential to protecting the American people against the terrorists. The act tore down the wall between law enforcement and intelligence officials so that they can share information and work to-

gether to help prevent attacks. The Senate Democratic leader boasted last week that the Senate Democrats had “killed the PATRIOT Act.” Our Nation’s security must be above partisan politics. The PATRIOT Act has helped us disrupt terrorist plots and break up cells here in the United States. I will work closely with the House and Senate to make sure that we are not without this crucial law for even a day.

The President’s Radio Address *December 24, 2005*

Good morning. On this Christmas Eve, Laura and I send our best wishes to families across America as you gather in your homes to celebrate the holiday. Christmas is a time of joy and peace, and we hope

the holiday season brings all of you happy reunions with families and friends and time to rest and reflect as you look forward to a new year.

At Christmas, we give thanks for the gift of the birth of Christ and for the blessings that surround us every day of the year. In this great and prosperous land, we have so much to be thankful for, and Christmas reminds us of our obligation to share these blessings with others. There are many among us who are hurting and require a helping hand. In the new year, I hope Americans will look for ways to volunteer your time and talents where they are needed most. By reaching out to a neighbor in need, we make our Nation a more just and compassionate place.

This Christmas, we remember our fellow citizens who suffered from the hurricanes and other disasters that struck our Nation this past year. We pray for their strength as they continue to recover and rebuild their lives and their communities.

During the holiday season and throughout the year, we think with pride of the men and women of our Armed Forces, who are keeping our Nation safe and defending freedom around the world. In Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, they are protecting our liberty by spreading liberty to others, and all Americans are grateful to our troops for their courage and commitment.

We're also grateful to their families. Staying behind when a family member goes to war is a heavy burden, and it's particularly hard at Christmas. We pray for our military families; we ask Almighty God to bestow His protection and care on their

loved ones as they protect our Nation from grave dangers.

We also remember the heroic men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our Nation's freedom. We pray that God will comfort the loved ones they left behind. The sacrifices of these brave troops have rescued millions from lives of tyranny and sorrow and made America more secure. We will always cherish the memory of each of our fallen service men and women and count it a privilege to be citizens of the country they served.

The times we live in have brought many challenges to our country. And at such times, the story of Christmas brings special comfort and confidence. Christmas reminds us that we can trust in God's promise of peace on Earth and good will toward men. On a night more than 2,000 years ago, an angel of the Lord brought good tidings of great joy: The God of Heaven had come to Earth, and He would be with us always.

Thank you for listening, and Merry Christmas.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:10 a.m. on December 22 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on December 24. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 23 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on the Anniversary of the Earthquake and Tsunamis in the Indian Ocean

December 30, 2005

One year ago, an earthquake off the island of Sumatra caused a violent tsunami. The tsunami swept across the Indian Ocean and caused enormous destruction from Asia to the Horn of Africa. More than 200,000 men, women, and children lost their lives,

and entire villages were destroyed. A year later, we remember those days of sorrow, and we also recall acts of courage and kindness as America and many other nations rallied to help those in need and provide urgent relief. Our Nation is proud of the