

before it's too late. The No Child Left Behind Act that Heather was a strong supporter of has helped change America for the better. It says, if we find a child struggling with reading early, we're going to make sure there's extra money to help that child, because we don't want one child left behind in America.

There is an achievement gap in America. There really is. When you look at the fourth grade results, there's a—the Anglo students are here, and Latino students are here, and the African American—that's not right. That's not what this country is all about. This country is about equal opportunity. This country is about making sure every child, no matter what her—his or her background is, gets a great education. And the No Child Left Behind Act is challenging mediocrity, and it's challenging failure, and that achievement gap is closing. And Heather Wilson gets credit for being a strong supporter of good schools in New Mexico.

You know, there's a lot of problems that rise—rise up for a State like New Mexico. You've got very important labs, and these labs make a difference for the United States of America. But it's not a given the labs will be there. You need people in the

Congress that understand how to get things done.

It seems like to me the people of this district would want somebody to be able to pick up the phone and call the President of the United States and have the President of the United States answer the phone. I'm close to Heather, you know. As I told you, she's independent. But that doesn't mean I don't hold her in the highest—highest regard and deep respect, which I do. I love her integrity. And when she calls me on the phone, I answer. And guess what—guess what she's generally talking about? The people of this congressional district. She loves of the people of this district. She's serving the people of this district. And I urge the people of this district, for their own sake, for their own good, and for the good of the United States of America, to send Heather Wilson back to the United States Congress.

Thanks for coming. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:40 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Albuquerque. In his remarks, he referred to Allen Weh, chairman, Republican Party of New Mexico; Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

The President's Radio Address *June 17, 2006*

Good morning. Earlier this week, I traveled to Baghdad to visit the capital of a free and democratic Iraq. It was an incredible feeling to stand in the cockpit of Air Force One and watch the pilot steer us in toward Baghdad.

After we landed, I had the pleasure of meeting with our dedicated Embassy staff and intelligence officers serving far from home under dangerous circumstances. And I was honored to meet with some of our

troops, including those responsible for bringing justice to the terrorist Zarqawi. It was a privilege to shake their hands, look them in the eye, and tell them how much the American people appreciate their daily courage and how much we appreciate the sacrifices that they and their families are making.

On my trip, I also met with the new Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki, and I was able to see firsthand his strong character and

his determination to succeed. We held a joint meeting of our two Cabinets, with members of my Cabinet participating by video teleconference from Camp David. The Prime Minister briefed us on his plan to take immediate steps in three key areas: improving security; building up Iraq's economy so Iraqis can see real progress in their lives; and reaching out to the international community to secure support for Iraq's new Government. Then we discussed how my administration can help the Prime Minister accomplish these vital objectives.

His top priority is securing Baghdad, so coalition and Iraqi forces have launched Operation Together Forward, a joint effort to restore security and the rule of law to high-risk areas of the city. To help the Prime Minister improve security, we will continue embedding coalition transition teams in Iraqi Army and police units, and we will help the new Iraqi Ministers of Defense and Interior improve their command and control, root out corruption, and investigate and punish human rights violations. We will also support the Prime Minister as he works to rein in illegal militias, build a judicial system that will provide equal justice to all, and promote reconciliation among the Iraqi people.

To aid the Prime Minister in revitalizing Iraq's economy, we will send additional experts to help the Iraqi Government develop an economic framework that will promote job creation and opportunity for all Iraqis. We will also help the Prime Minister increase oil and electricity production by working together on ways to protect key infrastructure from attacks and to quickly restore oil and electricity production when attacks do occur.

Finally, America will help the Prime Minister engage the international community in Iraq's success. We will encourage other nations to fulfill the monetary pledges they have already made to help the new Iraqi Government succeed. We will also support the Prime Minister's efforts to forge a new international compact. Under

this compact, Iraq will take a series of steps in the political, economic, and security areas, and in return, the international community will provide Iraq with more robust political and economic support.

During my trip, I was impressed with the Prime Minister, the team he has assembled, and the plan he has set for his Government. I appreciate his determination and the determination of his Cabinet to make his agenda work. I told them that the future of Iraq is in their hands. And I told them that America is a nation that keeps its word, and America will stand with them as we work toward our shared goal: a free Iraq that can govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself. By seizing this moment of opportunity, we will defeat our common enemies and build a lasting democracy in the heart of the Middle East, and that will make Americans, Iraqis, and the world more secure.

I traveled to Baghdad to personally show our Nation's commitment to a free Iraq, because it is vital for the Iraqi people to know with certainty that America will not abandon them after we have come this far. The challenges that remain in Iraq are serious. We face determined enemies who remain intent on killing the innocent, and defeating these enemies will require more sacrifice and the continued patience of our country. But our efforts in Iraq are well worth it. The mission is necessary for the security of our country, and we will succeed.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:10 a.m. on June 16 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 17. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 16 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his address, the President referred to senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi, who was killed in Baquba, Iraq, on June 7; and Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, Minister of Defense Abd al-Qadir al-Mufriji,

and Minister of the Interior Jawad al-Bulani of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary

also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Commencement Address at the United States Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, New York

June 19, 2006

The President. Thank you for the warm welcome, if you know what I mean. [Laughter] Admiral Stewart, Secretary Mineta, Members of the United States Congress, Academy staff and faculty, distinguished guests, proud family members, and most importantly, the class of 2006: I'm honored to be the first President to address the United States Merchant Marine Academy. I know that a Presidential visit to Kings Point has been a long time in coming, and, Admiral, I hope it's worth the wait. [Laughter]

This is a proud moment for the class of 2006. You have worked hard for this day. You sweated through the hardest indoc in Academy history; you braved the Jamaican beef patties of Delano Hall. [Laughter] You spent a year when your classroom was a ship and your campus the seven seas. You've made it through endless drills on the Grinder; you've survived the restriction musters that come with missing the train back from Manhattan. This fall, your football team brought home the Secretaries Cup by beating the Coast Guard. You've rung the bell outside Wiley Hall. And the words etched in your class ring affirm your commitment to teamwork: "Not for you, not for me, but for us." Your parents are proud of you; your teachers are proud of you; and this Academy is proud of you. On behalf of the American people, I congratulate you on a fine achievement, and I thank you for choosing to serve the United States of America.

This morning I flew here on Air Force One with my friend Andy Card. You might remember Andy; he was my former chief

of staff, and he attended this Academy in the 1960s. It just so happens, when he was a plebe, he was stuffed in a duffel bag and run up the flagpole. [Laughter] I know he appreciates the much warmer welcome he received here today. [Laughter]

Secretary Card also reminded me that the President of the United States has the authority to lift all demerits and restrictions. So I bring you a graduation present. [Laughter] In keeping with the longstanding tradition at our Nation's service academies, I hereby absolve all midshipmen who are on restriction for minor conduct offenses; I leave it to Admiral Stewart to define exactly what "minor" means. [Laughter]

Life at this Academy is demanding, and it is meant to be. America is a great maritime power, and our merchant marine has a vital role to play. In times of peace, the merchant marine helps ensure our economic security by keeping the oceans open to trade. In times of war, the merchant marine is the lifeline of our troops overseas, carrying critical supplies, equipment, and personnel. For more than six decades, the mission of this Academy has been to graduate highly skilled mariners to serve America's economic and national security needs. To train you for these responsibilities, this Academy sharpens your mind; it strengthens your body and builds up your character. The Academy has made you strong and instilled respect for the Kings Point motto: *Acta Non Verba*, "Deeds, Not Words."

"Deeds, Not Words" was the hallmark of this Academy in World War II. In the