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Week Ending Friday, August 19, 2005

The President's Radio Address

August 13, 2005

Good morning. This week I met in Texas with Secretary of State Rice, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, and the rest of my senior foreign and defense policy advisers. We discussed recent events in Iraq, including the political progress that is taking place in that country. Despite the acts of violence by the enemies of freedom, Iraq's elected leaders are now finishing work on a democratic constitution. Later this year, that constitution will be put before the Iraqi people for their approval.

The establishment of a democratic constitution is a critical step on the path to Iraqi self-reliance. Iraqis are taking control of their country, building a free nation that can govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself. And we're helping Iraqis succeed. We're hunting down the terrorists and training the security forces of a free Iraq so Iraqis can defend their own country. Our approach can be summed up this way: As Iraqis stand up, we will stand down. And when that mission of defeating the terrorists in Iraq is complete, our troops will come home to a proud and grateful nation.

The recent violence in Iraq is a grim reminder of the brutal nature of the enemy we face in the war on terror. Our mission in Iraq is tough because the enemy understands the stakes. The terrorists know that a free Iraq in the heart of the Middle East will be a crippling blow to their hateful ideology. And that is why our work in Iraq is a vital part of the war on terror we're waging around the world.

This war on terror arrived on our shores on September the 11th, 2001. Since that day, the terrorists have continued to kill in Madrid, Istanbul, Jakarta, Casablanca, Riyadh, Bali, Baghdad, London, and elsewhere. The enemy remains determined to do more harm. The terrorists kill indiscriminately but with a clear purpose. They're trying to shake our will. They want to force free nations to retreat so they can topple governments across the Middle East, establish Taliban-like regimes in their place, and turn the Middle East into a launching pad for attacks against free people.

The terrorists will fail. Because we are fighting their murderous ideology with a clear strategy, we're staying on the offensive in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other fronts in the war on terror, fighting terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. When terrorists spend their days and nights struggling to avoid death or capture, they're less capable of arming and training and plotting new attacks on America.

We're also spreading the hope of freedom across the broader Middle East, because free societies are peaceful societies. By offering a hopeful alternative to the terrorists' ideology of hatred and fear, we are laying the foundations of peace for our children and grandchildren.

In the war on terror, our troops are serving with courage and commitment, and their bravery is inspiring others to join them. All of our services met or exceeded their active duty recruitment goals last month, and the troops closest to the fight continue to reenlist in impressive numbers. The Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines are all on track to meet or exceed their reenlistment goals for the year. Our troops know the stakes of this war, and Americans can have pride and confidence in our All-Volunteer Forces.

In recent days, we have seen again that the path to victory in the war on terror will include difficult moments. Our Nation grieves the death of every man and woman we lose in combat, and our hearts go out to the loved ones who mourn them. Yet, even in our grief, we can be confident in the future, because the darkness of tyranny is no match for the shining power of freedom.

The terrorists cannot defeat us on the battlefield. The only way they can win is if we lose our nerve. That will not happen on my watch. Withdrawing our troops from Iraq prematurely would betray the Iraqi people and would cause others to question America's commitment to spreading freedom and winning the war on terror. So we will honor the fallen by completing the mission for which they gave their lives, and by doing so, we will ensure that freedom and peace prevail.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 8:50 a.m. on August 12 at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 13. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 12 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at the Little League Baseball Southwest Regional Championship Game in Waco, Texas

August 13, 2005

Thank you all for the warm welcome. Welcome to Texas. Steve, thank you very much for inviting me. Mayor DuPuy, thank you very much for being such a gracious host for this important regional tournament. It's great to see you. I'm proud to be here, by the way, with the mayor of Crawford, Texas, Mayor David Posten. Mr. Mayor, it's good to see you. Laura and I are really thrilled to be here.

Before I say something about the families here, I do want to thank the Pride of the Blue, the Robinson High School Band, for being here.

I particularly want to say to the coaches of both teams, thanks for setting such a good example. Thanks for taking time out of your lives to help these young men understand the importance of teamwork and sportsmanship and hard work.

To the families who are here, thank you very much for supporting your Little Leaguer. Thanks for taking time out of your life to set such a good example for them and show them the love and compassion that is necessary.

And to the players, congratulations to you. You've worked hard to get here. Laura and I and Condi are looking forward to seeing a great game. We wish you all the very best.

Play hard. Play fair. Play to win. God bless you all, and may God continue to bless our great country. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:45 p.m. at Marvin Norcross Stadium. In his remarks, he referred to Steven D. Keener, president and chief executive officer, Little League International; Mayor Virginia DuPuy of Waco, TX; and Mayor David Posten of Crawford, TX.

Statement on the 70th Anniversary of Social Security

August 14, 2005

For 70 years, Social Security has been a vital program and helped millions of America's seniors in retirement. The Social Security system is sound for today's seniors, but there is a hole in the safety net for younger workers. On this 70th anniversary, we renew our commitment to save and strengthen Social Security for our children and grandchildren and keep the promise of Social Security for future generations.

Statement on Iraqi Progress Toward a Draft Constitution

August 15, 2005

Iraqi leaders have announced that they have made substantial progress toward a draft constitution. They have indicated that their deliberations will continue beyond today to refine the text and build an enduring consensus. I applaud the heroic efforts of Iraqi negotiators and appreciate their work to resolve remaining issues through continued negotiation and dialog. Their efforts are a tribute to democracy and an example that difficult problems can be solved peacefully through debate, negotiation, and compromise. We wish the Iraqi leaders and the Iraqi people well as the negotiators complete the constitutional drafting process.