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NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate.

The President's Radio Address
February 16, 2002

Good morning. Today I'm flying west across the Pacific to visit Japan, South Korea, and China. The people of Tokyo, Seoul, and Beijing touched all our hearts in the days after September 11, with moving displays of sympathy and support in the wake of the terrorist attacks. Today, all three nations are supporting our fight against terrorism.

I look forward to discussing our progress in ridding the world of this great threat to civilization, and we'll discuss our work to build a better world beyond terror, a world of greater opportunity and more open trade, stronger security and more individual freedom.

I will speak to the Japanese Parliament and thank Japan for five decades of friendship. Our great alliance has helped make possible the remarkable economic success of the Pacific region, which creates so much opportunity and so many jobs for Americans.

Today, Japan is in the midst of economic uncertainty and transition. But I have great confidence in Japan's future and in the unlimited potential of its people. And I'm confident that Japan will make the bold reforms needed to restore growth and opportunity, which will benefit the people of both our nations.

I will visit South Korea and travel to the Demilitarized Zone, one of the most dangerous places on Earth, where barbed wire marks a line dividing freedom and oppression. I will visit with American service men and women who defend this frontier and provide stability on the Korean Peninsula.

The people of South Korea have built a vibrant democracy and Asia's third largest economy. The people of the South are now reaching out to the North in a spirit of friendship and reconciliation. I support these efforts. Yet I will remind the world that America will not allow North Korea and other dangerous regimes to threaten freedom with weapons of mass destruction.

In China, I look forward to seeing again firsthand the remarkable changes that are taking place as China opens to the world. America welcomes China's recent entry into the World Trade Organization, which will encourage American trade with China and encourage economic freedom and the rule of law in China itself.

I look forward to talking to the Chinese about their commitment to open up their markets to U.S. agricultural products. I'm also looking forward to meeting with Chinese students, because it gives me an opportunity to talk about the America I know, an America with strong values of family, community, faith, and freedom. And I will express my hopes that as China moves forward, it too will embrace the universal demands of human dignity, freedom of conscience and religion, and the rights and value of every life.

The flight across the northern Pacific is a long one. But in our spirit of friendship and cooperation, the nations of the northern Pacific are drawing ever closer. All around this great ocean we see good friends, Canada and Australia, New Zealand and Thailand, the Philippines and Taiwan. And they will find in America a nation that is determined and patient and committed to the great cause of building a world that

is more peaceful, more secure, and more prosperous.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 11:42 a.m. on February 15 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 16. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 15 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks to the Troops at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Anchorage, Alaska
February 16, 2002

The President. Thank you all.

Audience members. U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

The President. Thank you all. Colonel, thank you very much. It's nice to be back in Alaska. I was told I was the only President of the United States ever to live in Alaska. And even though that was in 1974, I have incredibly fond memories of such a beautiful, beautiful part of the world.

I want to thank you very much for your hospitality. And I'm so honored that, on my way overseas, that you all would greet Laura and me. I know—I'm confident that you're as proud of her as I am. A lot of people are. People all across America now know why I married her. [*Laughter*] A lot of them are still wondering why she married me. But we're honored to be here.

And I'm honored to be in a place where people understand the need for sacrifice and patriotism. There's no question that Anchorage, Alaska, the Anchorage Bowl is full of people who have dedicated themselves to serving our country, not only those who wear the uniform but the family members of those who wear the uniform. And I've come to Alaska to let you know that I'm proud of our United States military, that when I sent you into action, I knew you would not let this Nation down.

And I want to tell all of you, those who wear the uniform, the family members of those who wear the uniform, and those who support out United States military in Alaska, that our cause is just, our cause is noble, and we will defeat the forces of terror.

I want to thank Doug Miller, and I want to thank General Schwartz and Colonel Nickerson, and thank you all, as well.

As you can see, I'm traveling in some pretty fancy company today. I'm traveling with a man who has put together one of the greatest coalitions of freedom in the history of mankind, a man who has served our country with such incredible distinction and class, a valuable member of my Cabinet, Colin Powell.

And I appreciate—I appreciate the congressional delegation from Alaska, three really fine people, one of whom I traveled from Washington today with, and that's, of course, Senator Frank Murkowski. Thank you, Frank. He, along with Senator Stevens, does a fabulous job in Washington, DC, not only for Alaska but for the country—are tireless advocates for the people of Alaska. And so is Congressman Don Young. You've done a good job by putting good people in Washington, DC.

I don't know whether your Governor has admitted it or not, but he went to Yale. [*Laughter*] He probably slurs his words so it sounds like "jail." [*Laughter*] And we were classmates, and it's probably not politically correct to say it, but we were fraternity brothers. And I'm glad to be here with my old friend Tony Knowles.