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The President's Radio Address
April 6, 2002

Good morning. This weekend, Laura and I are hosting the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, and his family at our ranch in Crawford, Texas.

America has no better ally in our war against terrorism than Great Britain. Six months ago, when the United States launched military strikes against Al Qaida training camps and the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, British forces were right by our side. And the success of Operation Enduring Freedom owes much to the strong support from allies like Great Britain. Yet, the war against terrorism is far from over. It will continue in Afghanistan and beyond.

The world has been brutally reminded these past 2 weeks of the price exacted by terror. Prime Minister Blair and I will spend much of our time this weekend discussing the tragic outbreak of violence in the Middle East. Across the world, people are grieving for Israelis and Palestinians who have lost their lives.

When an 18-year-old Palestinian girl is induced to blow herself up and in the process kills a 17-year-old Israeli girl, the future itself is dying—the future of the Palestinian people and the future of the Israeli people. The United States is strongly committed to finding a just settlement in the Middle East. That settlement must lead to two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security.

This goal can never be realized through terrorism. It can only be realized through a political process. Arab governments, the Palestinian leadership, and the Palestinian people must recognize that suicide bombings are jeopardizing the very possibility of an independent Palestinian state. This week, I called upon the Palestinian leadership to order an immediate and effective cease-fire and a crackdown on terrorist networks.

Israel, too, faces hard choices. America will always be a committed friend of Israel, and we recognize Israel's right to defend itself against terror. Yet, to lay the foundations of future peace, I've asked Israel to halt incursions into Palestinian-controlled areas and begin withdrawing from those cities it has recently occupied.

Next week, Secretary of State Powell will travel to the Middle East to seek broad international support for these principles and to work towards a cease-fire that will lead to a political settlement. I have no illusions about the difficulty of this mission. Yet, our determination is strong. We'll work closely with nations in the region and with close allies such as Great Britain to end this conflict and to begin an era of peace.

This could be a hopeful moment in the Middle East. A number of Arab leaders have endorsed a proposal that brings them closer than ever to recognizing Israel's right to exist. The United States is on record supporting the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people for a Palestinian state. And Israel has recognized the goal of a Palestinian state.

I believe the region could write a new story of democracy and development and trade and join the progress of our times. Yet, progress requires an atmosphere of peace, and peace requires acts of leadership, not acts of terror.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:20 a.m. on April 5 at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 6. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 5 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom in Crawford, Texas
April 6, 2002

President Bush. Good morning. Laura and I are very honored to have our friends Tony and Cherie Blair and their family visit us here in Crawford. We appreciate the rain that the Prime Minister brought with him—[*laughter*]—and so do the other farmers and ranchers in the area. Mr. Prime Minister, thanks for bringing it.

Prime Minister Blair. My pleasure, George. [*Laughter*]

President Bush. It is always a pleasure for any American President to welcome the Prime Minister of Great Britain, because ours is a special and unique relationship. And our relationship is strong because of my respect for the Prime Minister. I appreciate his advice. I appreciate his counsel, and I appreciate his friendship.

This morning I conveyed to the Prime Minister the condolences of the American people for the recent passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother. This remarkable woman is warmly remembered on both sides of the Atlantic for her grace and her strength and particularly for her inspiration she provided during the darkest days of World War II.

Today, the bond between our peoples that she symbolized is stronger than ever. Our nations share more than just a common language and a common history. We also share common interests and a common perspective on the important challenges of our times.

No nation has been stronger in fighting global terrorism than Great Britain. I'm extremely grateful for the Prime Minister's courageous leadership since September the 11th. And the world is grateful for all that Great Britain has contributed in the war against terror, everything from special forces to ground forces to naval forces to peacekeepers.

The Prime Minister and I both understand that defeating global terror requires a broad based, long-term strategy. We understand the importance of denying terrorists weapons of mass destruction. And we understand the importance of adapting NATO to meet new threats, even as NATO prepares to take on new members and forges a new relationship with Russia.

The Prime Minister and I also agree that, even as we work to make the world safer, we must also work to make the world better. Our countries will continue to work closely to bring greater hope and opportunity to developing nations.

We also had extensive conversations about the situation in the Middle East. Both our nations are strongly committed to finding a just settlement. Both of us agree on the fundamental elements that a just settlement must include. We share a vision of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and in security.

We agree that this vision will never be realized through terrorism and that it can only be realized through a political process. We agree that the Palestinian leadership must order an immediate and effective