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secure a level playing field for American businesses. And we will remain committed to improving both the environment and worldwide labor standards.

In the future, trade will continue to play a crucial role in creating economic and political stability, building democracies, reducing poverty, and contributing to an increased standard of living around the world. Open trade will help ensure a more peaceful and prosperous tomorrow for all people.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 19 through May 25, 2002, as World Trade Week. I encourage all Americans to observe this week with events, trade shows, and educational programs that celebrate the benefits of trade to our economy and the global economy.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-sixth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., May 21, 2002]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 22. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

May 18, 2002

Good morning. Medicare is one of the most important and compassionate programs in American history. It provides medical care to the elderly and people with disabilities. It is a source of security and dignity for tens of millions of Americans. The health of America's senior citizens is one of America's most sacred obligations, and it is a commitment my administration will fully honor.

Yet we need to do more to fulfill Medicare's promise. Seniors should have affordable coverage choices that meet their needs, but Medicare does not do that. Many seniors need prescription drug coverage; Medicare does not provide it. And because Medicare does not cover prescription drugs, seniors often pay the highest prices for drugs out of their own pockets, forcing too many of our seniors to choose between paying for pills or paying their bills.

Medicare is an essential program, but it has not kept pace with the advances in medicine. The Medicare program is costly for seniors and too often does not provide the choices that our seniors need and our seniors want, so Medicare must be strengthened, and it must be improved.

Congress is working hard to pass legislation that will help many seniors with their drug costs and guarantee all senior citizens prescription drug coverage. I strongly support these efforts.

At the same time, I am working for a Medicare-endorsed drug card that will allow seniors to get lower prices from drug manufactures right away. And I'm working for temporary assistance with drug costs for seniors with limited incomes, even before the full prescription drug benefit becomes available a few years from now.

Medicare also needs to give every senior affordable, up-to-date health insurance options. Right now, more than 5 million Medicare members have access to valuable modern health insurance benefits and prescription drug coverage in Medicare Plus Choice plans.

These improved benefits, along with innovative treatments, probably saved Joe Hotin's life. Mr. Hotin served in the Navy in World War II. He joined his Medicare Plus Choice in 1995. Because his health plan covers annual checkups, Joe's doctor caught a spot and got it treated before it turned into life threatening cancer.

Many of these treatments and programs that can save and improve lives and reduce health care costs are only available through Medicare's private plans. Unfortunately, millions of Medicare members do not have the option to choose these benefits. The Federal Government has long provided reliable coverage choices to all its employees, but current law prevents private health plans from giving Medicare enrollees the same choices. As a result, over 100 private plans have left Medicare, and millions of seniors have lost

the valuable additional benefits that private plans provide.

We must act now to provide every Medicare member with more choices and more savings. Medicare needs a fair system of competition, a system that encourages additional benefits and options for better care at lower cost. Medicare is crucial to elderly Americans. I urge members of both parties to work together to protect and improve Medicare and to maintain our moral commitment to millions of Americans.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:10 a.m. on May 17 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 18. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 17 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks Announcing the Initiative for a New Cuba

May 20, 2002

Bienvenidos. Welcome to the White House for the 100th anniversary of Cuban independence. Today we honor the ties of friendship and family and faith that unite the Cuban people and the people of the United States. We honor the contributions that Cuban Americans have made to all aspects of our national life. And today I am issuing a proposal and a challenge that can put Cuba on the path to liberty.

I appreciate our Secretary of State being here. He and I take this issue very seriously. He loves freedom as much as I love freedom. I want to thank Mel Martinez, a graduate of Pedro Pan, for being here. Mr. Secretary, you're doing a great job. Welcome.

I appreciate members of the diplomatic corps who are here. Thank you all for coming; I'm honored to have you here.

I want to thank Senator George Allen from the Commonwealth of Virginia. I want to thank Congressman Dan Burton; Mr. Chairman. And of course, two great Members of the United States Congress, people who have got a lot to offer, a lot of sound advice: Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and Lincoln Diaz-Balart. Thank you all for coming.

Cuba's independence one century ago today was the inspiration of great thinkers such as Felix Varela. It was the result of determination and talent on the part of a great statesman such as Jose Marti and great soldiers such as Antonio Maceo and Maximo Gomez. Most of all, Cuba's independence was the product of the great courage and sacrifice of the Cuban people.

Today, and every day for the past 43 years, that legacy of courage has been insulted by a tyrant who uses brutal methods to enforce a bankrupt vision. That legacy has been debased by a relic from another era who has turned a beautiful island into a prison.

In a career of oppression, Mr. Castro has imported nuclear-armed ballistic missiles, and he has exported his military forces to encourage civil war abroad. He is a dictator who jails and tortures and exiles his political opponents. We know this. The Cuban people know this, and the world knows this. After all, just a month ago the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, in a resolution proposed by the nations of Latin America, called upon Cuba's Government to finally—to finally—begin respecting the human rights of its people.

Through all their pains and deprivation, the Cuban people's aspirations for freedom are undiminished. We see this today in Havana, where more than 11,000 brave citizens have petitioned their Government for a referendum on basic freedoms. If that referendum is allowed, it can be a prelude, a beginning for real change in Cuba.

The United States has no designs on Cuban sovereignty. It's not a part of our strategy or a part of our vision. In fact, the United States has been a strong and consistent supporter of freedom for the Cuban people. And it is important for those who love freedom on that beautiful island to know that our support for them will never waver.

Today I'm announcing an Initiative for a New Cuba that offers Cuba's Government a way forward towards democracy and hope and better relations with the United States.

Cuba's scheduled to hold elections to its National Assembly in 2003. Let me read Article 71 of the Cuban Constitution. It says,