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of an oppressed people now depend on you. That trust is well-placed. The enemies you confront will come to know your skill and bravery. The people you liberate will witness the honorable and decent spirit of the American military.

In this conflict, America faces an enemy who has no regard for conventions of war or rules of morality. Saddam Hussein has placed Iraqi troops and equipment in civilian areas, attempting to use innocent men, women, and children as shields for his own military, a final atrocity against his people.

I want Americans and all the world to know that coalition forces will make every effort to spare innocent civilians from harm. A campaign on the harsh terrain of a nation as large as California could be longer and more difficult than some predict. And helping Iraqis achieve a united, stable, and free country will require our sustained commitment.

We come to Iraq with respect for its citizens, for their great civilization, and for the religious faiths they practice. We have no ambition in Iraq, except to remove a threat and restore control of that country to its own people.

I know that the families of our military are praying that all those who serve will return safely and soon. Millions of Americans are praying with you for the safety of your loved ones and for the protection of the innocent. For your sacrifice, you have the gratitude and respect of the American people. And you can know that our forces will be coming home as soon as their work is done.

Our Nation enters this conflict reluctantly. Yet our purpose is sure. The people of the United States and our friends and allies will not live at the mercy of an outlaw regime that threatens the peace with weapons of mass murder. We will meet that threat now, with our Army, Air Force, Navy, Coast Guard and Marines, so that we do not have to meet it later with armies of firefighters and police and doctors on the streets of our cities.

Now that conflict has come, the only way to limit its duration is to apply decisive force. And I assure you, this will not be a campaign of half measures, and we will accept no outcome but victory.

My fellow citizens, the dangers to our country and the world will be overcome. We will pass through this time of peril and carry on the work of peace. We will defend our freedom. We will bring freedom to others, and we will prevail.

May God bless our country and all who defend her.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:16 p.m. from the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks Following a Cabinet Meeting

March 20, 2003

I called my Cabinet together to review our strategies to make the world more peaceful, to make our country more secure, to make the lives of our citizens as healthy and as prosperous as possible.

We heard from Secretary Rumsfeld, who briefed us on the early stages of the war. There's no question we've sent the finest of our citizens into harm's way. They perform with great skill and great bravery. We thank them. We thank their loved ones. We appreciate their sacrifice.

We heard from Secretary Powell, who briefed us on the ever-growing coalition of the willing, nations who support our deep desire for peace and freedom. Over 40 nations now support our efforts. We are grateful for their determination. We appreciate their vision, and we welcome their support.

As well, we discussed the need to make sure we have plans in place to encourage economic vitality and growth. We will continue to push for a Medicare system that is compassionate for our seniors. We care deeply about the fact that some children in our society can't read. We want the best of education for every citizen in America.

This Cabinet is confident about the future of our country. We're confident we can achieve our objectives. I'm grateful for their service to their country.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:53 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House.

Message on the Observance of Nowruz

March 20, 2003

I send greetings to Iranian Americans observing Nowruz.

During Nowruz, people of Iranian descent celebrate the arrival of spring, a season of rebirth. This joyous occasion provides an opportunity for Persians to cherish their rich heritage and enjoy the company of family and friends in anticipation of happiness and blessings in the year ahead.

This year's observance comes during a challenging time for our Nation and the world. As the international community works to face great challenges and embrace important opportunities, America remains committed to peace, justice, and opportunity for all people. Throughout this time of renewal, we remain dedicated to bringing hope and freedom to troubled regions around the world.

Laura joins me in sending our best wishes for a joyous celebration to you, your families, and your relatives and friends in Iran.

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Executive Order 13290—Confiscating and Vesting Certain Iraqi Property

March 20, 2003

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) (IEEPA), the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 *et seq.*), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, and in order to take additional steps with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 12722 of August 2, 1990,

I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, hereby determine that the United States and Iraq are engaged in armed hostilities, that it is in the interest of the United States to confiscate certain property of the Government of Iraq and its agencies, instrumentalities, or controlled entities, and that all right, title, and interest in any property so confiscated should vest in the Department of the Treasury. I intend that such vested property should be used to assist the Iraqi people and to assist in the reconstruction of Iraq, and determine that such use would be in the interest of and for the benefit of the United States.

I hereby order:

Section 1. All blocked funds held in the United States in accounts in the name of the Government of Iraq, the Central Bank of Iraq, Rafidain Bank, Rasheed Bank, or the State Organization for Marketing Oil are hereby confiscated and vested in the Department of the Treasury, except for the following:

(a) any such funds that are subject to the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations or the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, or that enjoy equivalent privileges and immunities under the laws of the United States, and are or have been used for diplomatic or consular purposes, and

(b) any such amounts that as of the date of this order are subject to post-judgment writs of execution or attachment in aid of execution of judgments pursuant to section 201 of the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act of 2002 (Public Law 107–297), provided that, upon satisfaction of the judgments on which such writs are based, any remainder of such excepted amounts shall, by virtue of this order and without further action, be confiscated and vested.

Sec. 2. The Secretary of the Treasury is authorized to perform, without further approval, ratification, or other action of the President, all functions of the President set forth in section 203(a)(1)(C) of IEEPA with respect to any and all property of the Government of Iraq, including its agencies, instrumentalities, or controlled entities, and to take additional steps, including the promulgation of rules and regulations as may be necessary, to carry out the purposes of this order. The Secretary of the Treasury may redelegate such functions in accordance with applicable