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Week Ending Friday, December 5, 2003

The President's Radio Address

November 29, 2003

Good morning. On Thursday, I was honored to travel to Iraq to spend Thanksgiving with some of the finest men and women serving in our military.

My message to the troops was clear: Your country is thankful for your service; we are proud of you; and America stands with you in all that you are doing to defend America. I'm pleased to report back from the frontlines that our troops are strong. Morale is high, and our military is confident we will prevail.

Many members of our Armed Forces, Guard, and Reserve observed Thanksgiving in places far from home. In Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere, our military is confronting the terrorist enemy so we don't meet that enemy in our own country. They're serving the cause of freedom. They're helping millions of people in newly liberated countries to build lives of dignity and hope. They are protecting the lives and security of the American people. All of us can be grateful to live in a country that has produced such brave men and women who stand between us and the dangers of the world.

This holiday weekend is also a time when many proud military families are also feeling separation and worry. Long deployments in dangerous places have added hardships in military communities across the country. Many parents are dealing with the burdens of raising families while praying for the safe return of a loved one. Our whole Nation respects and appreciates the commitment and sacrifice of our military families.

Americans are also thinking of the military families that must face this holiday with sorrow of recent loss. It is the nature of terrorism that a small number of people can inflict such terrible grief. Every person who dies in the line of duty commands the special gratitude of the American people. And the military families that mourn can know this: Our Nation will not forget their loved ones and the sacrifice they made to protect us all.

The courage of our soldiers and their families show the spirit of this country in great adversity. And many citizens are showing their appreciation by helping military families here at home. Members of the VFW have started an Adopt-A-Unit program, so veterans and their families can support military units in Iraq and Afghanistan. Volunteers from a group called Rebuilding Together have repaired homes for military families while their spouses are deployed.

Citizens interested in finding volunteer opportunities to support our military should visit the USA Freedom Corps web site at usafreedomcorps.gov.

Our Nation owes a debt of gratitude to every member of the United States military and to their families. It was a privilege to offer that gratitude in person to some of our troops serving in Iraq. May God bless them all, and may He continue to bless the United States of America.

Happy Thanksgiving, and thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:55 a.m. on November 28 at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 29. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 28 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 a Bush-Cheney Luncheon in Dearborn, Michigan

December 1, 2003

Thank you all very much. Thanks for coming. I appreciate you joining our campaign. You know what this means? It means we're laying the foundation for what is going to be