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prepared to meet the new challenges of a new time.

This week, Washington has been marked by pomp and circumstance. In a free nation, these ceremonies are more than pageantry. They underscore that public office is a public trust. America's elected leaders derive their authority from the consent of the American people, whom we serve. This is a high privilege, and that privilege carries a serious responsibility, to confront problems now instead of passing them on to future generations.

As long as I hold this office, I promise that I will serve all Americans and will work to promote the unity of our great Nation. And working together, we will secure the blessings of liberty, not only for ourselves but for generations of Americans to come.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 8:30 a.m. on January 21 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 22. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 21 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on the Death of Johnny Carson

January 23, 2005

Laura and I are saddened by the death of Johnny Carson. Born in Iowa and raised in Nebraska, Johnny Carson was a steady and reassuring presence in homes across America for three decades. His wit and insight made Americans laugh and think and had a profound influence on American life and entertainment. He was a patriot who served in the United States Navy during World War II and always remembered his roots in the heartland of America. We send our prayers and condolences to the entire Carson family.

Telephone Remarks to the March for Life

January 24, 2005

Nellie, thank you. Thanks a lot for inviting me to speak. I know it's chilly there in Washington, but weather hasn't stopped thousands of participants from marching for life for the past 32 years, and it did not this year, either. And so I'm honored to be a part of this tremendous witness that is taking place in our Nation's Capital, and it's good to hear your voice again.

You know, we come from many backgrounds—different backgrounds, but what unites us is our understanding that the essence of civilization is this: The strong have a duty to protect the weak.

I appreciate so very much your work toward building a culture of life, a culture that will protect the most innocent among us and the voiceless. We are working to promote a culture of life, to promote compassion for women and their unborn babies. We know that in a culture that does not protect the most dependent, the handicapped, the elderly, the unloved, or simply inconvenient become increasingly vulnerable.

The America of our dreams, where every child is welcomed in law—in life and protected in law may still be some ways away, but even from the far side of the river, Nellie, we can see its glimmerings. We're making progress in Washington. I've been working with Members of the Congress to pass good, solid legislation that protects the vulnerable and promotes the culture of life. I've signed into law a ban on partial-birth abortion. Infants who are born despite an attempted abortion are now protected by law. So are nurses and doctors who refused to be any part of an abortion. And prosecutors can now charge those who harm or kill a pregnant woman with harming or killing her unborn child.

We're also moving ahead in terms of medicine and research to make sure that the gifts