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certain that the turnout was significant and that the violence was down.

And, first, I want to congratulate the Iraqi citizens for being courageous and—in defying the terrorists and refusing to be cowed into not voting. I believe freedom is universal. I believe the Iraqi citizen cares just as much about freedom and living a free life as the American citizen does.

Secondly, I want to thank our Embassy for doing such good work there and working with the Iraqi citizens to get this vote off. And I want to thank the international community for participating in these elections. This is a major step forward in achieving our objective, which is an ally—having a democratic Iraq, a country able to sustain itself and defend itself, a country that will be an ally in the war on terror, and a country which will send such a powerful example to others in the region, whether they live in Iran or Syria, for example.

I've assured these good Iraqis citizens that the United States will stay with them and complete this job. They've expressed concern about listening to the commentary that we'll leave before the job is done; they don't have to worry. We're doing the right thing. And we've got partners in peace with the Iraqi citizens.

This is a crucial part of the war on terror, as is the PATRIOT Act. The PATRIOT Act was passed 4 years ago. It gave our law enforcement the tools necessary to help protect the—America, the same tools that law enforcement uses, for example, against drug dealers. The PATRIOT Act is set to expire. The House of Representatives, recognizing the value of the PATRIOT Act, voted in a bipartisan way to extend the PATRIOT Act, and now there are Senators who are filibustering the PATRIOT Act. That is a bad decision for the security of the United States. I call upon the Senate to end the filibuster and to pass this important legislation so that we have the tools necessary to defend the United States of America in a time of war.

I want to thank you all again for coming. May God bless your citizens. May God bless a free Iraq. I appreciate you being here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:47 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Senators John McCain and John Warner

December 15, 2005

The President. It's my honor to welcome two good friends, the Chairman, John Warner, and of course, John McCain—Senator John McCain, here to the Oval Office. We share a common goal and that is to protect the American people and to win the war on terror.

Senator McCain has been a leader to make sure that the United States of America upholds the values of America as we fight and win this war on terror. And we've been happy to work with him to achieve a common objective, and that is to make it clear to the world that this Government does not torture and that we adhere to the international convention of torture, whether it be here at home or abroad. And so we have worked very closely with the Senator and others to achieve that objective as well as to provide protections for those who are on the frontline of fighting the terrorists.

And so I appreciate your hard work, Senator. You're a good man who honors the values of America. I also appreciate the strong support that you've given—both of you have given in the war on terror. The central front of that war is Iraq. Part of our strategy is to train Iraqis so they can join our forces and fight off the terrorists and, eventually, have the Iraqis be able to stand on their own. The other part is the democratic process that will help marginalize the Saddamists and the rejectionists.

And today the Iraqi people went to the polls. I was so honored to welcome some young Iraqi Fulbright scholars here that were able to vote. And to see the joy—and to hear the joy they expressed and to see the joy on their faces after having just voted in a—for a permanent Government and a new Constitution was just a fantastic experience.

And so I want to welcome you all to the Oval Office. Thanks for coming. Thanks for your good work on behalf of America.

Senator McCain. Thank you, Mr. President. I want to take this opportunity to thank you for the effort that you made to resolve this very difficult issue. I thank you for your

active participation in it. And I also want to thank your National Security Adviser, Steve Hadley, who played a very important role as well. And I'm very pleased that we reached this agreement, and now we can move forward and make sure that the whole world knows that, as the President has stated many times, that we do not practice cruel, inhuman treatment or torture.

This agreement basically does two things: One, puts into the Army Field Manual the specific procedures for interrogations. And two, it prohibits cruel, inhumane—or torture.

In our negotiations, there was legitimate concerns raised by the administration concerning the rights of interrogators. And taking language from the Uniform Code of Military Justice, we provide them with legal counsel and certain protections that a reasonable person might view as carrying out of orders, not to contradict the Nuremberg decision, which, of course, said that obeying orders is not a sufficient defense.

I, again, thank the President. And I would like to also repeat, we've sent a message to the world that the United States is not like the terrorists. We have no grief for them, but what we are is a nation that upholds values and standards of behavior and treatment of all people, no matter how evil or bad they are. And I think that this will help us enormously in winning the war for the hearts and minds of people throughout the world in the war on terror.

And again, I want to thank the President. I want to thank Steve Hadley. I thank all the people who worked so hard to come to this agreement. Now I think we can move forward with winning the war on terror and in Iraq.

I thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Thanks, John.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:41 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Message to the Congress on Export of Accelerometers to the People's Republic of China

December 14, 2005

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the provisions of section 1512 of the Strom Thurmond National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1999 (Public Law 105–261), I hereby certify that the export of 36 accelerometers to the People's Republic of China's Ministry of Railways, for use in a railroad track geometry measuring system, is not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry, and that the material and equipment, including any indirect technical benefit that could be derived from such export, will not measurably improve the missile or space launch capabilities of the People's Republic of China.

George W. Bush

The White House,
December 14, 2005.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 16. An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Remarks Following Discussions With Ambassador to the United Nations Samir Shakir Mahmood Sumaida'ie of Iraq

December 16, 2005

President Bush. It's my honor to welcome the Ambassador to the United Nations from Iraq. This good man has been a—is an Iraqi patriot. He was there in Iraq right after liberation. He helped write the TAL, which is the go-by for the new Constitution. He's serving his country in New York now. He was a voter yesterday in the elections.

The reason he came by to say hello is, we want to talk about what a glorious day it was yesterday for the Iraqi citizens and what we're going to do to work together to make sure that we complete our mission, and that is to have an Iraq that can defend itself and sustain itself, an Iraq that will help us defeat the terrorists in this war on terror, an Iraq that will serve as such a powerful example