AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

Week Ending Friday, May 11, 2007

Message on the Observance of Cinco de Mayo, 2007

May 4, 2007

I send greetings to those celebrating Cinco de Mayo.

The story of Cinco de Mayo represents the triumph of liberty over tyranny and a joyful moment in Mexican history. In 1862, Mexican General Ignacio Zaragoza and his militia defended their independence and won an important victory for freedom. Because of their courage, Mexican citizens would come to know the full blessings of liberty, and their triumph at the Battle of Puebla remains an inspiration to all who thirst for freedom.

Cinco de Mayo is also an opportunity to celebrate the warm ties between Mexico and the United States. Geography has made us neighbors, but our friendship is based on shared values of family, democracy, and faith. Our country is grateful for the countless contributions of Mexican Americans whose hard work and strong character have strengthened our country. On Cinco de Mayo and throughout the year, may we remember that together we can build a better life and a future of hope for both our peoples.

Laura and I send our best wishes for a festive Cinco de Mayo.

George W. Bush

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this message. An original was not available for verification of the content of this message. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks on Physical Fitness Month in Beltsville, Maryland

May 5, 2007

Thank you all for coming. This is Physical Fitness Month, and I'm with members of the President's Physical Fitness Council. Their job is to encourage all Americans, young and old, to exercise.

I love exercise. Today I'm going to ride, with a group of friends, on a mountain bike. But the message to all Americans is to find time in your schedule to walk, run, swim, bike, to take care of yourselves.

I appreciate Mike Leavitt, who is the Secretary of Health and Human Services, for joining us today. He knows what I know, that if someone takes care of their body through good exercise, that it is—it's the beginning of really good health policy for the United States.

It doesn't take much time to stay fit—30 minutes, 5 days a week; 30 minutes of walking, 30 minutes of running, 30 minutes of biking, 30 minutes of swimming on a regular basis will help deal with a lot of health issues here in America. I have found that exercise not only is a good excuse to get outdoors; it helps relieve stress as well. And so, on behalf of the President's Council on Physical Fitness, I say to America, get outside, take time out of your life, schedule yourself, be disciplined, and exercise.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:19 a.m. at the U.S. Secret Service Training Facility.

The President's Radio Address

May 5, 2007

Good morning. At this hour, America's brave men and women in uniform are engaging our enemies around the world. And in this time of war, our elected officials have no higher responsibility than to provide these troops with the funds and flexibility they need to prevail.

On Wednesday, I met with congressional leaders from both parties here at the White House. We discussed ways to pass a responsible emergency war spending bill that will fully fund our troops as quickly as possible.

It was a positive meeting. Democratic leaders assured me they are committed to funding our troops, and I told them I'm committed to working with members of both parties to do just that.

I've appointed three senior members of my White House staff to negotiate with Congress on this vital legislation: my Chief of Staff Josh Bolten, National Security Adviser Steve Hadley, and Budget Director Rob Portman. By working together, I believe we can pass a good bill quickly and give our troops the resources and flexibility they need.

Earlier this week, I vetoed the bill Congress sent me because it set a fixed date to begin to pull out of Iraq, imposed unworkable conditions on our military commanders, and included billions of dollars in spending unrelated to the war. And on Wednesday, the House voted to sustain my veto by a wide margin.

I recognize that many Democratic leaders saw this bill as an opportunity to make a statement about their opposition to the war. In a democracy, we should debate our differences openly and honestly. But now it is time to give our troops the resources they are waiting for.

Our troops are now carrying out a new strategy in Iraq under the leadership of a new commander, General David Petraeus. He's an expert in counterinsurgency warfare. The goal of the new strategy he is implementing is to help the Iraqis secure their capital so they can make progress toward reconciliation and build a free nation that respects the rights of its people, upholds the rule of law, and fights extremists alongside the United States in the war on terror. This strategy is still in its early stages, and Congress needs to give General Petraeus's plan a chance to work.

I know that Republicans and Democrats will not agree on every issue in this war, but the consequences of failure in Iraq are clear. If we were to leave Iraq before the Government can defend itself, there would be a security vacuum in the country. Extremists from all factions could compete to fill that vacuum, causing sectarian killing to multiply on a horrific scale.

If radicals and terrorists emerge from this battle with control of Iraq, they would have control of a nation with massive oil reserves, which they could use to fund their dangerous ambitions and spread their influence. The Al Qaida terrorists who behead captives or order suicide bombings would not be satisfied to see America defeated and gone from Iraq. They would be emboldened by their victory, protected by their new sanctuary, eager to impose their hateful vision on surrounding countries, and eager to harm Americans.

No responsible leader in Washington has an interest in letting that happen. I call on Congress to work with my administration and quickly craft a responsible war spending bill. We must provide our men and women in uniform with the resources and support they deserve. I'm confident that leaders of good will can deliver this important result.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:50 a.m. on May 4 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 5. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 4 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks on Tornado Damage in Greensburg, Kansas

May 6, 2007

Our hearts are heavy for the loss of life in Greensburg, Kansas. A tornado devastated that community. It just basically wiped it out.

I spoke to the Governor and Senator Pat Roberts about the extent of the devastation. They said to me, "It's hard to describe how bad this community was hit."

I have declared a major disaster for that community, and I hope that helps. It's going to take a long time for the community to recover. And so we will help in any way we can. There's a certain spirit in the Midwest of our country, a pioneer spirit that still exists, and I'm confident this community will be rebuilt. To the extent that we can help, we will. The most important thing now, though, is for our citizens to ask for the good Lord to comfort those who hurt.

Thank you very much.