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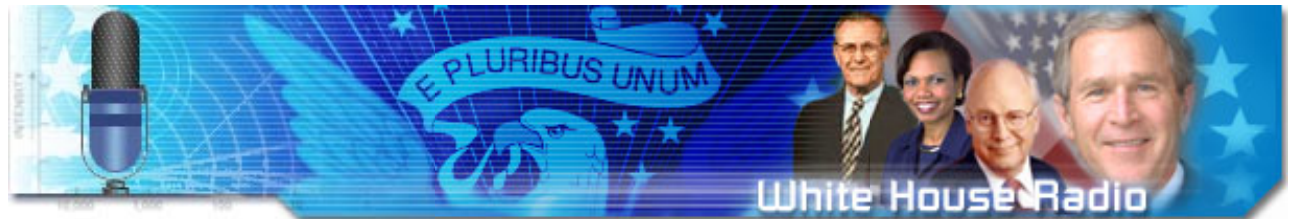
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June 18, 2005**President's Radio Address** **Audio** **en Español**

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning.

Today we face two issues of vital importance for all Americans: growing our economy and protecting our citizens from those who wish to do us harm. So in the weeks ahead, I will continue to focus on ways to ensure that our government takes the side of working families, and that America prevails in the war on terror. As we take the steps necessary to achieve these goals, we will make our future one of peace and prosperity.

Today we have good reason to be optimistic about our economy. More Americans are working today than at any time in our history. More Americans own their homes than at any time in our history. More Americans are going to college and own their own businesses than at any time in our history -- and a new economic report shows that inflation is in check. Our policies have put us on the track to growth, but leaders in Washington must not become complacent. We need to work together to ensure that opportunity reaches every corner of our great country.

Delivering opportunity means allowing families to keep more of the money they earn. So we enacted the largest tax relief in a generation. That is only a beginning. You need a reformed tax code that is simple, fair, and easy to understand, and rewards your hard work and entrepreneurial spirit. And Congress needs to do its part by making the tax relief we passed permanent and burying the death tax forever.

Delivering opportunity also means adapting to the needs of a new century. In this new century, American prosperity will increasingly depend on our ability to sell our goods and services overseas, so we need to pass initiatives like the Central American Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement to create a level playing field for American farmers and small businesses. In this new century, Americans require a reliable and affordable supply of energy. I proposed a comprehensive energy policy to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. In this new century, Americans need to know that if they work hard their whole lives, they will retire with dignity, so we're working to save Social Security to ensure that the next generation of retirees will be as secure in their retirement as today's generation.

As we work to deliver opportunity at home, we're also keeping you safe from threats from abroad. We went to war because we were attacked, and we are at war today because there are still people out there who


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want to harm our country and hurt our citizens. Some may disagree with my decision to remove Saddam Hussein from power, but all of us can agree that the world's terrorists have now made Iraq a central front in the war on terror. These foreign terrorists violently oppose the rise of a free and democratic Iraq, because they know that when we replace despair and hatred with liberty and hope, they lose their recruiting grounds for terror.

Our troops are fighting these terrorists in Iraq so you will not have to face them here at home. We mourn every one of these brave men and women who have given his or her life for our liberty. The terrorists know they cannot defeat our troops, so they seek to weaken our nation's resolve. They know there is no room for them in a free and democratic Middle East, so the terrorists and insurgents are trying to get us to retreat. Their goal is to get us to leave before Iraqis have had a chance to show the region what a government that is elected and truly accountable to its citizens can do for its people.

Time and again, the Iraqi people have defied the skeptics who claim they are not up to the job of building a free society. Nearly a year ago, Iraqis showed they were ready to resume sovereignty. A few months ago, Iraqis showed they could hold free elections. This week, Iraqis have worked on an agreement to expand their constitutional drafting committee to ensure that all communities are represented in the process. I am confident that Iraqis will continue to defy the skeptics as they build a new Iraq that represents the diversity of their nation and assumes greater responsibility for their own security. And when they do, our troops can come home with the honor they have earned.

This mission isn't easy, and it will not be accomplished overnight. We're fighting a ruthless enemy that relishes the killing of innocent men, women, and children. By making their stand in Iraq, the terrorists have made Iraq a vital test for the future security of our country and the free world. We will settle for nothing less than victory.

I'll continue to act to keep our people safe from harm and our future bright. Together we will do what Americans have always done: build a better and more peaceful world for our children and grandchildren.

Thank you for listening.

END

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