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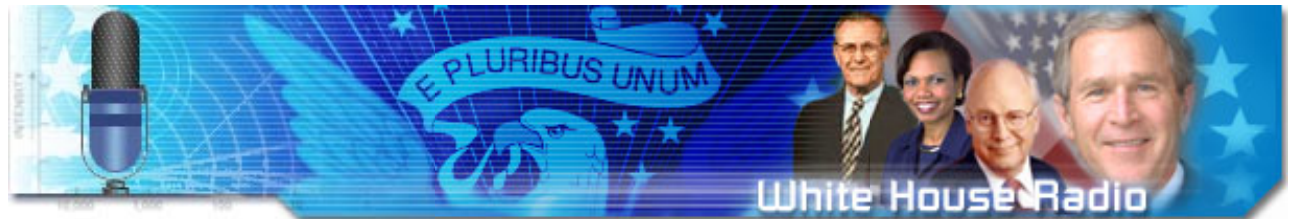
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For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
August 13, 2005

President's Radio Address

Crawford, Texas

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THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. This week I met in Texas with Secretary of State Rice, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, and the rest of my senior foreign and defense policy advisors. We discussed recent events in Iraq, including the political progress that is taking place in that country. Despite the acts of violence by the enemies of freedom, Iraq's elected leaders are now finishing work on a democratic constitution. Later this year, that constitution will be put before the Iraqi people for their approval.

The establishment of a democratic constitution is a critical step on the path to Iraqi self-reliance. Iraqis are taking control of their country, building a free nation that can govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself. And we're helping Iraqis succeed. We're hunting down the terrorists and training the security forces of a free Iraq so Iraqis can defend their own country. Our approach can be summed up this way: As Iraqis stand up, we will stand down. And when that mission of defeating the terrorists in Iraq is complete, our troops will come home to a proud and grateful nation.

The recent violence in Iraq is a grim reminder of the brutal nature of the enemy we face in the war on terror. Our mission in Iraq is tough because the enemy understands the stakes. The terrorists know that a free Iraq in the heart of the Middle East will be a crippling blow to their hateful ideology. And that is why our work in Iraq is a vital part of the war on terror we're waging around the world.

This war on terror arrived on our shores on September the 11th, 2001. Since that day, the terrorists have continued to kill -- in Madrid, Istanbul, Jakarta, Casablanca, Riyadh, Bali, Baghdad, London, and elsewhere. The enemy remains determined to do more harm. The terrorists kill indiscriminately, but with a clear purpose -- they're trying to shake our will. They want to force free nations to retreat so they can topple governments across the Middle East, establish Taliban-like regimes in their place, and turn the Middle East into a launching pad for attacks against free people.

The terrorists will fail. Because we are fighting a murderous ideology with a clear strategy, we're staying on the offensive in Iraq, Afghanistan and other fronts in the war on terror, fighting terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. When terrorists spend their days and nights struggling to avoid death or



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capture, they're less capable of arming and training and plotting new attacks on America.

We're also spreading the hope of freedom across the broader Middle East, because free societies are peaceful societies. By offering a hopeful alternative to the terrorists' ideology of hatred and fear, we are laying the foundations of peace for our children and grandchildren.

In the war on terror, our troops are serving with courage and commitment, and their bravery is inspiring others to join them. All of our services met or exceeded their active duty recruitment goals last month, and the troops closest to the fight continue to reenlist in impressive numbers. The Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines are all on track to meet or exceed their reenlistment goals for the year. Our troops know the stakes of this war, and Americans can have pride and confidence in our all-volunteer forces.

In recent days, we have seen again that the path to victory in the war on terror will include difficult moments. Our nation grieves the death of every man and woman we lose in combat, and our hearts go out to the loved ones who mourn them. Yet, even in our grief, we can be confident in the future, because the darkness of tyranny is no match for the shining power of freedom.

The terrorists cannot defeat us on the battlefield. The only way they can win is if we lose our nerve. That will not happen on my watch. Withdrawing our troops from Iraq prematurely would betray the Iraqi people, and would cause others to question America's commitment to spreading freedom and winning the war on terror. So we will honor the fallen by completing the mission for which they gave their lives, and by doing so we will ensure that freedom and peace prevail.

Thank you for listening.

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