

The President's Radio Address

October 5, 2002

Good morning. This week leaders of the Congress agreed on a strong bipartisan resolution authorizing the use of force, if necessary, to disarm Saddam Hussein and to defend the peace. Now both the House and the Senate will have an important debate and an historic vote. Speaker Hastert and Leader Gephardt and Leader Lott did tremendous work in building bipartisan support on this vital issue.

The danger to America from the Iraqi regime is grave and growing. The regime is guilty of beginning two wars. It has a horrible history of striking without warning. In defiance of pledges to the United Nations, Iraq has stockpiled biological and chemical weapons and is rebuilding the facilities used to make more of those weapons. Saddam Hussein has used these weapons of death against innocent Iraqi people, and we have every reason to believe he will use them again.

Iraq has longstanding ties to terrorist groups, which are capable of and willing to deliver weapons of mass death. And Iraq is ruled by perhaps the world's most brutal dictator, who has already committed genocide with chemical weapons, ordered the torture of children, and instituted the systematic rape of the wives and daughters of his political opponents.

We cannot leave the future of peace and the security of America in the hands of this cruel and dangerous man. This dictator must be disarmed, and all the United Nations resolutions against his brutality and support for terrorism must be enforced.

The United States does not desire military conflict, because we know the awful nature of war. Our country values life, and we will never seek war unless it is essential to security and justice. We hope that Iraq complies with the world's demands. If, however, the Iraqi regime persists in its defiance, the use of force may become unavoidable. Delay, indecision, and inaction are not options for America, because they could lead to massive and sudden horror.

Should force be required to bring Saddam to account, the United States will work with other nations to help the Iraqi people rebuild

and form a just government. We have no quarrel with the Iraqi people. They are the daily victims of Saddam Hussein's oppression, and they will be the first to benefit when the world's demands are met.

American security, the safety of our friends, and the values of our country lead us to confront this gathering threat. By supporting the resolution now before them, Members of Congress will send a clear message to Saddam: His only choice is to fully comply with the demands of the world. And the time for that choice is limited. Supporting this resolution will also show the resolve of the United States and will help spur the United Nations to act.

I urge Americans to call their Members of Congress to make sure your voice is heard. The decision before Congress cannot be more consequential. I'm confident that members of both political parties will choose wisely.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9 a.m. on October 4 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 5. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 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 to the Community in Manchester, New Hampshire

October 5, 2002

Thank you all very much. Please be seated, except for those of you who don't have a chair. [*Laughter*]

I've been here before. This was the site of the great pancake flip-off. [*Laughter*] A lot of time has passed since I was flipping pancakes in this armory. [*Laughter*] And I want to thank you all for coming. I want to thank my fellow citizens for taking time out of your day to give me a chance to come and talk about issues that confront our country, and my strong desire to work with all who live in America, to make America a safer, a stronger, and a better place.

My dream is for this country to be a strong country, as importantly, a safe country, and