

facing our Nation. By giving the auto companies a chance to restructure, we will shield the American people from a harsh economic blow at a vulnerable time. And we will give American workers an opportunity to show the world once again that they can meet challenges with ingenuity and determination and emerge stronger than before.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 12 p.m. on December 19 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on December 20. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 19 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks During a Visit With Volunteers of the One Warm Coat Service Project

December 22, 2008

The President. Listen, Laura and I are here with the Mayor and other volunteers who are just trying to make a difference in one person's life. And today we're honoring a project called One Warm Coat. And it's an effort—a nationwide effort to convince our fellow citizens to contribute a used, but not overly used, coat to help a soul who may need to be warm this winter.

I think there's 2,000 chapters nationwide. The program was started by this lady right here—who is the ultimate social entrepreneur—and until 1992, this was operated out of San Francisco. And today it's—as I said, there's 2,000 coat drives. If you want to help, you can get on the web page and call onewarmcoat.org—call it up on your computer.

A couple of examples, or a couple of reasons why we've come—and one such example is the great example of how a single citizen, and eventually a group of citizens, can make a difference, positive difference; that our communities are enriched by programs such as these.

We're also here, by the way, at the headquarters for Pathway to Housing, which is a program of—all aimed at helping the homeless find a place to live.

And I want to thank, Mr. Mayor, your leadership—and all of you all for being involved in this vital program.

If you want to serve your Nation, you can find a lot of ways to serve. And I hope you do. I hope you realize the great blessings that come when you put your heart and soul into making somebody else's life better.

And so, Mr. Mayor, Laura and I wish you and the citizens of this fine city a happy holidays, and thank you for joining us today.

Mayor Adrian M. Fenty of Washington, DC. Thank you. Thank you for the donations from your White House staff and yourself personally.

The President. A hundred and fifty coats—I'm so pleased that those good souls who Laura and I work with agreed to contribute.

Anyway, thank you all.

The First Lady. Happy holidays. Thank you.

The President. All get a team picture—come on. Come on, Laura; soldiers in the army of compassion.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:13 a.m. at Pathways to Housing DC. In his remarks, he referred to Lois Pavlow, founder, and Sherri Lewis Wood, national coordinator, One Warm Coat. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks Following a Visit to Walter Reed Army Medical Center and an Exchange With Reporters

December 22, 2008

The President. Every time I come here, I get amazed at the quality of care, the professionalism, and the courage of our troops. I can say with certainty that the health care that our troops get in the military medical facilities is excellent. I am so pleased to hear from spouses and other loved ones about the care they get as well, when they come to visit their wounded child or wounded husband or wounded spouse.

And so this will probably be my last time coming here as the Commander in Chief. It gives me a great pleasure to thank all those who serve here, and all those who serve

throughout our military, the military medical facilities. You know, I oftentimes say being the Commander in Chief of the military is the thing I'll miss the most, and coming here to Walter Reed is a reminder of why I'll miss it.

Thank you very much.

President's Health

Q. How is your shoulder, Mr. President?

The President. Yes, good shape—it's about an 80 mile-an-hour fastball.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:03 p.m.

Message on the Observance of Christmas 2008

December 23, 2008

"I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Luke 2:10–12

Each year, Christmas brings together families, friends, and communities to rejoice in the birth of Jesus Christ and celebrate the wonderful gifts God has bestowed upon us. During this season, we remember Jesus' birth from the Virgin Mary, His justice and mercy that changed the world, and His ultimate sacrifice for all people. Though Jesus was born humbly in a manger, He was destined to be the Savior of the world. The light He brought into the world continues to break through darkness and change people's lives two thousand years later.

This holiday season, as you rejoice in the good news of Jesus' love, forgiveness, acceptance, and peace, I encourage you to show grace to those less fortunate, just as God showed it to us. By serving those in need and through other acts of love and compassion, we can honor God's goodness and affirm the immeasurable value God places on

the sanctity of life. We remember the members of our Armed Forces serving to protect our country and secure God's gift of freedom for others around the globe. All Americans are indebted to these men and women and their families for their sacrifice, devotion to duty, and patriotism.

Laura and I send our best wishes for a very Merry Christmas. May you be surrounded by loved ones and blessed by the Author of Life during this joyous holiday and throughout the New Year.

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Message Sending Holiday Greetings to Members of the Armed Forces

December 23, 2008

To the Men and Women of the United States Armed Forces

Laura and I send season's greetings to you and your families during the holidays.

America is blessed to have brave citizens willing to step forward to defend our freedoms and keep us safe from our enemies. For many of you, this holiday season will be spent far from home, and our Nation honors your sacrifice. We remain mindful of your courage, ask God to watch over you, and pray for your safe return.

Your family members serve our country as well. During this time of year, they are a special source of hope and strength to you, and they both deserve and have the thanks and support of our whole Nation. Their selfless dedication sets an example of patriotism for all Americans to follow.

May God bless you and keep you safe, and may God bless America.

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.