



For Immediate Release
March 18, 2006

President's Radio Address

[Fact Sheet: Operation Iraqi Freedom: Three Years Later](#)

[In Focus: Renewal in Iraq](#)

[President's Radio Address](#)

[Audio](#)

[En Español](#)

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. In recent weeks, Americans have seen horrific images from Iraq: the bombing of a great house of worship in Samarra, sectarian reprisals between Sunnis and Shias, and car bombings and kidnappings. Amid continued reports about the tense situation in parts of that country, it may seem difficult at times to understand how we can say that progress is being made. But the reaction to the recent violence by Iraq's leaders is a clear sign of Iraq's commitment to democracy.

I'm encouraged to see that Iraqi political leaders are making good progress toward forming a unity government, despite the recent violence. Our Ambassador to Iraq, Zal Khalilzad, reports that the violence has created a new sense of urgency among these leaders to form a national unity government as quickly as possible. I urge them to continue their work to put aside their differences, to reach out across political, religious, and sectarian lines, and to form a government that can confront the terrorist threat and earn the trust and confidence of all Iraqis.

I also remain optimistic because slowly but surely our strategy is getting results. This month I'm giving a series of speeches to update the American people on that strategy. I'm discussing the progress we are making, the lessons we have learned from our experience, and how we are fixing what has not worked. This past week, I discussed the security element of our strategy. I spoke about our increasingly successful efforts to train Iraqi security forces to take the lead in the fight against the terrorists. And I described our strengthened efforts to defeat the threat of improvised explosive devices, or IEDs.

On Monday, I will give a speech discussing how we are working with all elements of Iraqi society to remove the terrorists and restore order in Iraqi cities, to rebuild homes and communities, and to achieve the stability that can come only from freedom. I will also share some concrete examples of how this approach is succeeding -- evidence of real progress that is too often lost amid the more dramatic reports of violence.

Archives

Radio Address:

[2008](#)

[2007](#)

[2006](#)

[2005](#)

[2004](#)

[2003](#)

[2002](#)

[2001](#)

Radio Interviews:

[2006](#)

[2005](#)

[2004](#)

Sunday marks the third anniversary of the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The decision by the United States and our Coalition partners to remove Saddam Hussein from power was a difficult decision -- and it was the right decision. America and the world are safer today without Saddam Hussein in power. He is no longer oppressing the Iraqi people, sponsoring terror, and threatening the world. He is now being tried for his crimes, and over 25 million Iraqis now live in freedom. This is an achievement America and our allies can be proud of.

These past three years have tested our resolve. We've seen hard days and setbacks. After the fall of Saddam Hussein, the terrorists made Iraq the central front in the war on terror, in an attempt to turn that country into a safe haven where they can plan more attacks against America. The fighting has been tough. The enemy has proved brutal and relentless. We have changed our approach in many areas to reflect the hard realities on the ground. And our troops have shown magnificent courage and made tremendous sacrifices.

These sacrifices by our Coalition forces -- and the sacrifices of Iraqis -- have given Iraq this historic opportunity to form a democratic government and rebuild itself after decades of tyranny. In the past three years, Iraqis have gone from living under a brutal tyrant, to liberation, sovereignty, free elections, a constitutional referendum, and last December, elections for a fully constitutional government. By their courage, the Iraqi people have spoken and made their intentions clear: They want to live in a democracy and shape their own destiny.

In this fight, the American and Iraqi people share the same enemies because we stand for freedom. The security of our country is directly linked to the liberty of the Iraqi people, and we will settle for nothing less than complete victory. Victory will come when the terrorists and Saddamists can no longer threaten Iraq's democracy, when the Iraqi security forces can provide for the safety of their own citizens, and when Iraq is not a safe haven for the terrorists to plot new attacks against our nation.

More fighting and sacrifice will be required to achieve this victory, and for some, the temptation to retreat and abandon our commitments is strong. Yet there is no peace, there's no honor, and there's no security in retreat. So America will not abandon Iraq to the terrorists who want to attack us again. We will finish the mission. By defeating the terrorists in Iraq, we will bring greater security to our own country. And when victory is achieved, our troops will return home with the honor they have earned.

Thank you for listening.

END

FAQ

I can't find a radio station that carries the radio address. Do any stations in Pomona carry it?

[Click here for answer....](#)



Return to this article at:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/03/20060318.html>

