

*The President.* I want to thank General Wilson and his wife, Lynn, for receiving Laura and me. I want to thank Larry Ellis and Jean—General Ellis. I appreciate so much General Joe Peterson. I want to thank Sergeant Major Gravens and his wife, Deborah, for joining us here today. I appreciate my friend, the Governor of the great State of Texas, Rick Perry, for joining us today. I want to thank members of the congressional delegation who are here, Joe Barton, Congressman Chet Edwards. I appreciate you all coming.

I want to thank some of the State and local officials. I know my friend Dianne White Delisi is here. I want to thank Suzanna Hupp and Sid Miller as well. I want to thank the mayor of Killeen; haven't seen the mayor in a while. It's good to be in your presence, Mayor. Appreciate all the local officials, my fellow Texans, military families, veterans, and all the community leaders who have come out today. Thanks for being here.

I know we've got some of the many veterans who live in this area with us today. The men and women of Fort Hood follow in the great traditions that you passed on to them. You each wear a proud title, veteran of the United States military, and I want to thank you for the example you have set and the service you gave to our country.

*Audience members.* Hooah!

*The President.* And I appreciate and America appreciates the sacrifices of our military families. I signed the largest increase in defense spending in a generation.

*Audience members.* Hooah!

*The President.* I wanted to make sure that our soldiers had the best possible pay—

*Audience members.* Hooah!

*The President.* —the best possible training—

*Audience members.* Hooah!

*The President.* —and to make sure the housing was the best possible for our families, military families. That's the least we

owe the husbands and wives of those who wear the uniform. Each one of you knows that Army life can be rewarding, and you know it can be dangerous and difficult. Every day, our military families are putting America's interests first, and America thanks you as well as those who wear the uniform.

Fort Hood and the units that call it home have a special place in our country's military history. For decades, soldiers from the First Team and the Iron Horse Division and from other units have fought America's battles with distinction and courage.

Now you're called again into action, to defend America and the cause of freedom in the first war of the 21st century. For this country and for our friends around the world who love freedom like we do, the stakes are great. The terrorists have shown what they intend for us, and we're not going to forget.

We're not going to forget the fact that they kill without regard for the rules of war. They don't value innocent life like we do. In America, we say everybody is precious. Everybody counts. Everybody is equal in the eyes of the Almighty.

That's not the way the enemy thinks. They don't value innocent life. They're nothing but a bunch of cold-blooded killers, and that's the way we're going to treat them.

*Audience members.* Hooah!

*The President.* They reach across oceans to target the innocent. They seek weapons of mass murder on a massive scale. The terrorists will not be stopped by mercy or by conscience, but they will be stopped.

*Audience members.* Hooah!

*The President.* And they will be stopped by the will and the might of the United States of America.

*Audience members.* Hooah!

*The President.* Our country is in a great contest of will and purpose. We're being