

## *Foreword*

This volume collects my speeches, major statements, and papers from the first 6 months of 2003.

The year began with Saddam Hussein still defying the world. For more than a decade, the United States and other nations had sought through patient diplomacy to disarm the Iraqi regime of its weapons programs and to have international inspectors verify this disarmament. These efforts had not been successful. In November 2002, the United Nations Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 1441, which declared Hussein's regime in material breach of its longstanding obligations—and vowed serious consequences if Iraq continued its violations of U.N. resolutions. Saddam Hussein offered no proof that he had abandoned his weapons programs, and he continued to deceive weapons inspectors.

We knew that Saddam Hussein had a long history of aggression, that he had developed and used weapons of mass destruction in the past, and that he had cultivated ties to terrorist groups and had harbored known terrorists. And we knew that in a post-September 11th world, America must confront gathering threats before it is too late. We gave Saddam Hussein another chance, a final chance, to meet his responsibilities to the civilized world—and again, he refused. By mid-March, we had exhausted all diplomatic options. Faced with continued defiance from Baghdad, America and its allies were obligated to enforce the just demands of the world.

On my orders, on March 19 our Armed Forces began striking selected military targets to undermine Saddam Hussein's ability to wage war. In one of the swiftest advances of heavy arms in history, our Marines and soldiers charged to Baghdad across 350 miles of hostile ground, alongside troops from other coalition countries. By April, the world was watching Iraqis pull down a statue of their former dictator.

As the Iraqi people celebrated the end of Saddam Hussein's dictatorship, we mourned the loss of the brave men and women in the coalition forces who gave their lives in battle. We also recognized that many difficult challenges remained to secure peace and freedom in Iraq and that the transition would take time. Many of the old regime's leaders were still at large, parts of Iraq remained dangerous, and basic services needed to be reestablished. The highest priority was to replace Saddam Hussein's tyranny with a government of, by, and for the Iraqi people.

The liberation of Iraq was part of a broader American effort to combat terrorism, promote peace, and bring hope to the suffering. In my January 2003 State of the Union address, I proposed a historic \$15 billion initiative to address the worldwide HIV/AIDS pandemic. I also announced Project Bioshield, a new initiative to develop vaccines and other countermeasures against biological weapons and other dangerous agents, as well as the creation of a new office to merge and analyze all threat infor-