

Thank you, President Bush

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**From Brazil's most popular novelist, Paulo Coelho,
an open letter of praise for President Bush.**

Thank you, great leader George W. Bush.

Thank you for showing everyone what a danger Saddam Hussein represents. Many of us might otherwise have forgotten that he used chemical weapons against his own people, against the Kurds and against the Iranians. Hussein is a bloodthirsty dictator and one of the clearest expressions of evil in today's world.

But this is not my only reason for thanking you. During the first two months of 2003, you have shown the world a great many other important things and, therefore, deserve my gratitude.

So, remembering a poem I learned as a child, I want to say thank you.

Thank you for showing everyone that the Turkish people and their parliament are not for sale, not even for 26 billion dollars.

Thank you for revealing to the world the gulf that exists between the decisions made by those in power and the wishes of the people. Thank you for making it clear that neither Jos Mara Aznar nor Tony Blair give the slightest weight to or show the slightest respect for the votes they received. Aznar is perfectly capable of ignoring the fact that 90% of Spaniards are against the war, and Blair is unmoved by the largest public demonstration to take place in England in the last thirty years.

Thank you for making it necessary for Tony Blair to go to the British parliament with a fabricated dossier written by a student ten years ago, and present this as 'damning evidence collected by the British Secret Service.'

Thank you for allowing Colin Powell to make a complete fool of himself by showing the UN Security Council photos which, one week later, were publicly challenged by Hans Blix, the chief weapons inspector in Iraq.

Thank you for adopting your current position and thus ensuring that, at the plenary session, the French foreign minister, Dominique de Villepin's anti-war speech was greeted with applause -- something, as far as I know, that has only happened once before in the history of the UN, following a speech by Nelson Mandela.

Thank you too, because, after all your efforts to promote war, the normally divided Arab nations were, for the first time, at their meeting in Cairo during the last week in February, unanimous in their condemnation of any invasion.

Thank you for your rhetoric stating that 'the UN now has a chance to demonstrate its relevance,' a statement which made even the most reluctant countries take up a position opposing any attack on Iraq.

Thank you for your foreign policy which provoked the British foreign secretary, Jack Straw, into declaring that in the 21st century, 'a war can have a moral justification,' thus causing him to lose all credibility.

Thank you for trying to divide a Europe that is currently struggling for unification; this was a warning that will not go unheeded.

Thank you for having achieved something that very few have so far managed to do in this century: the bringing together of millions of people on all continents to fight for the same idea, even though that idea is opposed to yours.

Thank you for making us feel once more that though our words may not be heard, they are at least spoken -- this will make us stronger in the future.

Thank you for ignoring us, for marginalising all those who oppose your decision, because the future of the Earth belongs to the excluded.

Thank you, because, without you, we would not have realised our own ability to mobilise. It may serve no purpose this time, but it will doubtless be useful later on.

Now that there seems no way of silencing the drums of war, I would like to say, as an ancient European king said to an invader: "May your morning be a beautiful one, may the sun shine on your soldiers' armour, for in the afternoon, I will defeat you."

Thank you for allowing us -- an army of anonymous people filling the streets in an attempt to stop a process that is already underway -- to know what it feels like to be powerless and to learn to grapple with that feeling and transform it.

So, enjoy your morning and whatever glory it may yet bring you.

Thank you for not listening to us and not taking us seriously, but know that we are listening to you and that we will not forget your words.

Thank you, great leader George W. Bush.

Thank you very much.

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