

furnish information to the Congress on various subjects. The executive branch shall construe the provisions in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to withhold information the disclosure of which could impair foreign relations, national security, the deliberative processes of the Executive, or the performance of the Executive's constitutional duties.

The executive branch shall implement section 319 of the Act in a manner consistent with the requirement to afford equal protection of the laws under the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution.

Section 502 purports to place restrictions on use of the U.S. Armed Forces and other personnel in certain operations. The executive branch shall construe the restrictions in section 502 as advisory in nature, so that the provisions are consistent with the President's constitutional authority as Commander in Chief, including for the conduct of intelligence operations, and to supervise the unitary executive branch.

Section 106 enacts by reference certain requirements set forth in the joint explanatory statement of the House-Senate committee of conference or in a classified annex. The executive branch continues to discourage this practice of enacting secret laws and encourages instead appropriate non-binding uses of classified schedules of authorizations, classified annexes to committee reports, and joint statements of managers that accompany the final legislation.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
December 13, 2003.

NOTE: H.R. 2417, approved December 13, was assigned Public Law No. 108-177.

**Address to the Nation on the Capture  
of Saddam Hussein**  
*December 14, 2003*

Good afternoon. Yesterday, December the 13th, at around 8:30 p.m., Baghdad time, United States military forces captured Saddam Hussein alive. He was found near a farmhouse outside the city of Tikrit, in a swift

raid conducted without casualties, and now the former dictator of Iraq will face the justice he denied to millions.

The capture of this man was crucial to the rise of a free Iraq. It marks the end of the road for him and for all who bullied and killed in his name. For the Ba'athist holdouts largely responsible for the current violence, there will be no return to the corrupt power and privilege they once held. For the vast majority of Iraqi citizens who wish to live as free men and women, this event brings further assurance that the torture chambers and the secret police are gone forever.

And this afternoon, I have a message for the Iraqi people: You will not have to fear the rule of Saddam Hussein ever again. All Iraqis who take the side of freedom have taken the winning side. The goals of our coalition are the same as your goals: Sovereignty for your country; dignity for your great culture; and for every Iraqi citizen, the opportunity for a better life. In the history of Iraq, a dark and painful era is over. A hopeful day has arrived. All Iraqis can now come together and reject violence and build a new Iraq.

The success of yesterday's mission is a tribute to our men and women now serving in Iraq. The operation was based on the superb work of intelligence analysts who found the dictator's footprints in a vast country. The operation was carried out with skill and precision by a brave fighting force. Our service men and women and our coalition allies have faced many dangers in the hunt for members of the fallen regime and in their effort to bring hope and freedom to the Iraqi people. Their work continues, and so do the risks. Today, on behalf of the Nation, I thank the members of our Armed Forces, and I congratulate them.

I also have a message for all Americans: The capture of Saddam Hussein does not mean the end of violence in Iraq. We still face terrorists who would rather go on killing the innocent than accept the rise of liberty in the heart of the Middle East. Such men are a direct threat to the American people, and they will be defeated.

We've come to this moment through patience and resolve and focused action, and that is our strategy moving forward. The war on terror is a different kind of war, waged

capture by capture, cell by cell, and victory by victory. Our security is assured by our perseverance and by our sure belief in the success of liberty, and the United States of America will not relent until this war is won.

May God bless the people of Iraq, and may God bless America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:15 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

### **Statement on the Death of William V. Roth, Jr.**

*December 14, 2003*

During his extraordinary career as a United States Senator, Bill Roth was the taxpayer's friend and the people's champion. He worked to cut wasteful Government spending and was one of the first to argue that lower taxes would lead to greater economic growth. Among his many other legislative achievements, he helped create the retirement account that bears his name and that has benefited millions of American families. He was an American hero, earning a Bronze Star for his service in World War II. Bill Roth was loved and respected by the people of Delaware and by his colleagues in the United States Congress. Laura and I send our condolences to his wife, Jane, herself a dedicated public servant and superb Federal judge; to the Roth family; and to the Roths' many friends in Delaware and throughout the country.

### **The President's News Conference**

*December 15, 2003*

**The President.** Thank you all. Please be seated. Thank you for coming to this, the last press conference of the year 2003.

Before I begin, I do want to talk a little bit about a meeting I just attended. Rend al-Rahim is here—she's the representative from the Iraqi Government, the interim Government, to the United States—as well as Dr. Khadir Abbas, who is the interim Minister of Health. We just had an interesting discussion in the Roosevelt Room about the health

needs of Iraq, about the future of the health care system in Iraq. And we were joined by doctors, Iraqi doctors who were anxious to work with their fellow counterparts here in America to enhance educational opportunities and to get caught up on the latest technologies in health care.

The thing that struck me about the meeting was the kind of joy that they expressed about being free. It was a touching meeting, and I want to thank you all for coming. And Doc, I want to thank you for your good work. We are making progress together in improving the lives of your citizens with better health care. Immunization rates are up. People are getting better health care.

He was reminding me, I think the budget of Saddam Hussein's Government for health was, like, \$16 million, less than a dollar per person. And of course, we're spending a lot more than that now on health care in Iraq. But it was a very meaningful meeting. I want to thank you—please thank those good docs for being there.

This weekend's capture of Saddam Hussein was a great moment for the people of Iraq. Iraqi citizens have lost a source of fear, and they can now focus with confidence on the task of creating a hopeful and self-governing nation. With the capture of the former dictator, the enemies of a free Iraq have lost their leader, and they've lost any hope of regaining power. The nightmare of the Ba'athist tyranny is finally over.

The terrorists in Iraq remain dangerous. The work of our coalition remains difficult and will require further sacrifice. Yet, it should now be clear to all, Iraq is on the path to freedom, and a free Iraq will serve the peace and security of America and the world.

This achievement comes at the end of an extraordinary year for our country, abroad and here at home. In 2003, we have become a safer, more prosperous, and better nation. Our Armed Forces, joined by our allies, continue on the offensive against terrorist enemies around the world. We continue our systematic hunt for Al Qaida leaders and Al Qaida cells in many countries. I want to thank the Congress for standing behind our military with needed resources and for giving