

offers a powerful reminder of the relationship between respect for the word of God and the preservation of civil peace and liberty.

Through the observance of Shavuot and other special days, Jews affirm both their faith and their identity as a people. As the recent celebration of Passover reminds us, that faith has been tested, and proved, time and again in the history of the Jewish people.

The Jewish people have been subjected to a number of great trials during this century alone. On Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Memorial Day, Jews recall the Nazi atrocities that claimed the lives of 6 million of their fellow Jews, as well as the lives of millions of other men, women, and children in Europe during World War II. By joining in this commemoration, and in remembrance of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, we are reminded of the enduring faith and courage of the Jewish people.

Jews have played a vital role in our country's history since colonial times. Many were active in supporting the Revolutionary War and in the settling of new lands and cities during America's westward expansion. Jewish men, women, and children also formed part of each great wave of immigration to these shores. Today, Jews continue to contribute in virtually every aspect of American life.

As we celebrate the many contributions that Jewish men and women have made to our Nation, we also reaffirm the deep friendship between the United States and Israel. The founding of the modern State of Israel following the Holocaust is further testimony to the faith, determination, and industry of the Jewish people.

The Congress, by House Joint Resolution 134, has designated the week of April 14 through April 21, 1991, and the week of May 3 through May 10, 1992, as "Jewish Heritage Week" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of these occasions.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the weeks of April 14 through April 21, 1991, and May 3 through May 10, 1992 as Jewish Heritage Week. I encourage all Americans to join in observing these occasions with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fifteenth.

GEORGE BUSH

Proclamation 6273 of April 18, 1991

National Education First Week, 1991

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

Labor and learning precede every inch of human progress. That is why improving our Nation's educational system must be a priority for all

Americans. If our citizens are to have the knowledge and skills needed to enjoy full, productive lives, our schools must achieve excellence.

Recognizing our responsibility to nourish the young minds that enter the Nation's classrooms, and knowing that this country cannot have a first-class economy without a world-class education system, the Nation's Governors and I have established six National Education Goals for the year 2000. They include: ensuring that every child starts school ready to learn; raising the graduation rate to at least 90 percent; ensuring that our students demonstrate competency in five core subjects in grades 4, 8, and 12; ranking first in the world in science and math; ensuring that every American adult is literate and possesses the skills, including the technical skills, needed to compete in the global economy; and, finally, making all of our schools safe, disciplined, and drug free. Achieving these goals will require the sustained cooperation of parents, educators, public officials, and the community at large.

While the Federal Government can and will serve as a catalyst for excellence, pointing the way forward and helping schools to meet higher standards, success will require the concerted efforts of parents, educators, and local government leaders. Because competition breeds quality, we can begin by expanding choice and accountability in education. Parents have primary responsibility for the education of their children, and they should have a genuine say in what, where, and how their children learn. Teachers should be able to enjoy greater flexibility in the classroom, and local school systems should act to utilize the talent and experience of persons who want to teach but are prohibited by cumbersome regulations. However, since the best measure of our schools is not how many resources we put into them but what outcomes are achieved, we must hold ourselves accountable for results, verifying what works and what does not.

We must also work together to ensure that our children dwell in an environment that is conducive to learning. Such an environment includes schools that are safe, disciplined, and drug free. However, because what goes on in school is only part of a child's educational experience, we must also maintain in our homes and neighborhoods an atmosphere that encourages learning and rewards diligent effort. Parents are their children's first and most influential teachers, and they can help to make ours a more literate Nation by reading to and with their little ones; by taking an active interest in their youngsters' homework and academic progress; and by demonstrating through example the joys of lifelong learning.

Local libraries and museums, business and civic groups, and members of the media can assist parents by offering high-quality educational programs and activities designed to ignite the natural curiosity of children. Indeed, by sparking the imaginations of our students, by ensuring that our schools tend the light of learning with utmost care and expertise, we can build a brighter future for all Americans.

The Congress, by House Joint Resolution 197, has designated the week of April 15 through April 21, 1991, as "National Education First Week" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week of April 15 through April 21,

1991, as National Education First Week. I call upon all Americans to observe this week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighteenth day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fifteenth.

GEORGE BUSH

Proclamation 6274 of April 22, 1991

Earth Day, 1991

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

During the two decades that have passed since our Nation first observed Earth Day, we have made great strides in restoring and protecting our environment. Through our firm commitment and our substantial investment, we have improved significantly the quality of our air, land, and water resources. The United States leads the world in environmental protection, and we intend to keep it that way.

Our accomplishments during the past year are a special source of pride. During 1990 the United States was instrumental in strengthening the Montreal Protocol on Substances That Deplete the Ozone Layer. A total phaseout of chlorofluorocarbons, or CFCs, was adopted in July as part of a package of amendments to the Protocol. The United States also signed the Basel Convention, which requires that transboundary shipments of hazardous wastes be conducted in an environmentally sound manner. We expanded the world's leading global climate change research program, and we took several domestic policy actions, including an ambitious reforestation initiative, that will reduce harmful emissions that can contribute to the "greenhouse effect." In November, I signed into law important amendments to the Clean Air Act—amendments based, in large part, on a proposal that I submitted to the Congress in July 1989. That proposal helped to break a 13-year legislative logjam. The new Clean Air Act will reduce risks of cancer, respiratory disease, and other health problems; it will limit damage to crops, forests, parks, lakes, and streams; and it will help to reduce smog in our Nation's cities.

On Earth Day 1990 and, indeed, throughout the year, millions of Americans participated in activities that underscore how individuals can make a difference in cleaning up and protecting the environment. Today countless Americans are changing their daily habits to reflect a renewed sense of environmental stewardship, and many businesses are working to apply new, environmentally conscious methods of operation. As we celebrate Earth Day 1991, we affirm, once again, the importance of public education and individual action to further progress in environmental protection. This is a good opportunity to remind our-