

I've often talked about the goal of a welcoming society, a nation where no one is dismissed or forgotten. Our progress toward that goal is really the great American story. It is a story of inclusion and protection extending across our history to more and more Americans.

And that story's not over. There is still work to do. We must all do our duty and play our part. And I hope today we have made a good beginning.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:10 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Steven J. Tingus, director, Resource Development for the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers, who introduced the President.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Blueprint for the "New Freedom Initiative"

February 1, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Enclosed please find the blueprint for my "New Freedom Initiative" to increase investment in and access to assistive technologies and a quality education, and help integrate Americans with disabilities into the workforce and into community life. I look forward to working with the Congress to ensure that these proposals are enacted into law and to working together to ensure that every American with a disability has access to the American dream.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Proclamation 7404—National African American History Month

February 1, 2001

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

In 1915, Carter Godwin Woodson, the father of Black history, founded the Association for the Study of African-American Life and History. Each February, the Association proposes a theme to guide the celebration of National African American History Month. For this year, the Association has chosen "Creating and Defining the African-American Community: Family, Church, Politics, and Culture."

This month in particular, we remember the stories of those who have helped to build our Nation and advance the cause of freedom and civil rights. We remember the bravery of the soldiers of the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment and the sailors of the USS MASON in service to our country. We remember those who marched on Washington, sat at whites-only lunch counters, and walked rather than use segregated buses. And we remember those, known only to each of us, who helped to build our families, places of worship, and communities.

When we examine our Nation's history, we discover these and countless other stories that inspire us. They are stories of the triumph of the human spirit, tragic stories of cruelty rooted in ignorance and bigotry, yet stories of everyday people rising above their circumstances and the prejudice of others to build lives of dignity.

This month, and throughout the year, let us celebrate and remember these stories, which reflect the history of African Americans and all Americans. We can all enjoy the works of writers like Paul Laurence Dunbar, James Weldon Johnson, Zora Neale Hurston, and Langston Hughes. In our Nation's schools, our children can learn to admire Booker T. Washington, Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, and others. And Americans from all backgrounds can be ennobled by the examples of Thurgood Marshall, Roy Wilkins, Whitney Young, Mary Church Terrell, and other civil rights leaders.

As we celebrate African American History Month, let us commit ourselves to raising awareness and appreciation of African American history. Let us teach our children, and all Americans, to rise above brutality and bigotry and to be champions of liberty, human dignity, and equality. And let us rededicate ourselves to affirming the promise of our Constitution.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim February 2001 as National African American History Month. I call upon public officials, educators, librarians, and all of the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of February, in the year of our Lord two thousand one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fifth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 12:16 p.m., February 2, 2001]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on February 5.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders
Transmitting the Final Report on the
National Emergency With Respect to
the Lapse of the Export
Administration Act of 1979**

February 1, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

As required by section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1703(c)) and section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1641(c)), I transmit herewith the final report on the national emergency declared by Executive Order 12924 of August 19, 1994, to deal with the threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United

States caused by the lapse of the Export Administration Act of 1979.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

**Remarks at the Republican
Congressional Retreat in
Williamsburg, Virginia**

February 2, 2001

Thank you all very much. I like to give short speeches, and I'm always on time. [Laughter] But evidently, I didn't get the dress code. [Laughter]

I really appreciate you, Speaker, thanks for your friendship, thanks for your leadership. These are two really good men. And I want to thank you, J.C. and Rick, as well, for your—pretty darn eloquent guy for being from Oklahoma. [Laughter] He can tell it. I appreciate you. Thank you very much. I'm looking forward to welcoming the University of Oklahoma football team to the White House.

I appreciate the chairman of the Republican Party being here. I chose a fellow Governor—or I asked a fellow Governor to serve, and he's a good one. He's a strong leader. He's done a fabulous job for the Commonwealth of Virginia, and I appreciate you being here, Jim, thank you very much.

I'm glad you get to see the Secretary of the Treasury, who's smart and capable. He's surrounded by Senator Grassley and Congressman Thomas, good work. [Laughter] It didn't take you long to transition from the private sector. And Condi is here, Condi Rice; a capable Chief of Staff, Andy Card; Nick Calio, who's going to really head up our congressional affairs.

The reason I bring these people up is that they're here to serve America. They're here to work with you to make our jobs easier. And I've assembled one of the finest staffs any President has ever done in the White House.