AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

During last week's memorial service at the Pentagon, Secretary Rumsfeld observed that the terrorists reserve special contempt for the United States military. And it's easy to see why. In the values and traditions of our military, you represent everything they hate. You defend human freedom. You value life. Here and around the world, you keep the peace that they seek to destroy. You live by a code of honor and a tradition of loyalty and decency.

The new Chairman of the Joint Chiefs represents the best in this tradition. Since the day he was commissioned as second lieutenant in 1965, Dick Myers has brought great credit to his uniform and to his country. He and his outstanding Vice Chairman have assumed crucial positions at a crucial hour, and our country is thankful for your service.

May God bless you all, and may God bless the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:30 p.m. in Conmy Hall at Fort Myer. In his remarks, he referred to Mary Jo Myers, wife of Gen. Richard B. Myers, USAF, and their son, Rich, and their daughters, Nicole and Erin; and Lynne Pace, wife of Gen. Peter Pace, USMC, their son, Lt. Pete Pace, USMC, their daughter, Tiffany, and Gen. Pace's mother, Doris Pace.

Proclamation 7485—National School Lunch Week, 2001

October 15, 2001

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Our Nation's future depends on fulfilling the promise in our children. As parents, teachers, community activists, governmental leaders, and concerned citizens, we must strongly commit ourselves to ensuring that our young people receive the care, education, and resources they need to realize their potential.

Since 1946, the National School Lunch Program has played an important part in pursuing that goal, by serving schoolchildren nutritious, well-balanced meals. Currently, the National School Lunch Program daily provides more than 27 million lunches in more than 97,700 schools. Of the children who participate in this program, 57 percent receive their meals for free or at a reduced price. For many of them, lunch is their only meal of the day that meets recommended nutritional guidelines.

The National School Lunch Program contributes to the development of healthy eating habits among our children. The Program's Team Nutrition Initiative focuses on teaching and motivating children to make food choices that enhance their energy, growth, and potential.

The Program is vitally important to achieving our educational goals. Poorly fed children have more difficulty learning, are less attentive in class, and suffer more chronic problems, such as absenteeism and tardiness, than children who are properly nourished. By making nutritious meals available to all schoolchildren, the National School Lunch Program will help us ensure that we leave no child behind.

In recognition of the contributions of the National School Lunch Program to the health, education, and well-being of our Nation's children, the Congress, by joint resolution of October 9, 1962 (Public Law 87–780), has designated the week beginning on the second Sunday in October of each year as "National School Lunch Week" and has requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this week.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 14 through October 20, 2001, as National School Lunch Week. I call upon all Americans to join the dedicated individuals who lead child nutrition programs at the State and local levels in appropriate activities and celebrations that promote these programs.

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

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., October 16, 2001]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 17.

Proclamation 7486—White Cane Safety Day, 2001

October 15, 2001

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

National White Cane Safety Day, observed annually on October 15, is a day of special significance for blind and visually impaired Americans because it represents a declaration of freedom. It also signifies a commitment by the sighted community to improve access to basic services for blind and visually impaired persons.

The familiar "white cane" is recognized as a tool of independence that enables the blind and visually impaired to participate in the facets of daily life. The core principles of our country promise freedom, justice, and hope; and these principles should guarantee the opportunity for every disabled American to live full and productive lives. The new millennium brings with it a renewed pledge to ensure that no citizen is prevented from realizing the American dream because of a disability.

Eleven years ago, when the Americans with Disabilities Act was enacted into law, America opened its doors to a new age of access for people with disabilities. To build on this landmark civil rights law, I have launched the "New Freedom Initiative," which is intended to ensure that all Americans with disabilities can participate more fully in the life of their communities and of our country. As part of this initiative, my Administration has asked the Congress to increase significantly Federal funding for State low-interest loan programs, so Americans with disabilities can purchase new assistive technologies. To help researchers continue to develop these types of helpful technologies, we have asked the Congress to increase Federal investment in assistive technology research and development. All Americans must work together to break down barriers and obstacles that may impede the progress of individuals with disabilities; and we must provide them with ever greater access to the workplace and public transportation.

The Congress, by joint resolution approved on October 6, 1964, has designated October 15 of each year as White Cane Safety Day. I call upon every American to observe this day by joining with me in working to open the doors of opportunity further and making the American dream a reality for all blind and visually impaired citizens of our Nation.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 15, 2001, as White Cane Safety Day. I call upon public officials, educators, librarians, and all the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs.

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

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., October 16, 2001]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 17.

Remarks on America's Fund for Afghan Children

October 16, 2001

Thank you all very much. Last week I asked America's children to send a dollar to the White House to help provide food and medicine to the children of Afghanistan. Today I'm pleased to report that in just a few short days, children all across our country have responded with remarkable generosity and deep compassion.

I want to thank Dr. Healy for doing such a fine job as the president of the American Red Cross. I'm proud to be your chairman. And I want to thank Kristen. In my speech to the country the other night, I said, "Why don't you go out and mow a lawn or do somebody a favor to earn a dollar." Never did I think feeding chickens would be part—[*laughter*]—but she fed so many chickens, she told me, she raised $45 for the children of Afghanistan. Good job.