

to be killed or captured and are paraded on television——

**The President.** I say to the families, thank—I thank them for the sacrifice they make, and we pray with them. I pray for God’s comfort and God’s healing powers to anybody, coalition force, American, Brit, anybody who loses a life in this—in our efforts to make the world more peaceful and more free.

Ed [Ed Chen, Los Angeles Times].

#### **Weapons of Mass Destruction**

**Q.** Mr. President, are you surprised the enemy has not used any weapons of mass destruction?

**The President.** I am thankful the enemy has not used any weapons of mass destruction. And we will continue employing a strategy to make it difficult for the enemy to use weapons of mass destruction.

A couple more; then I’ve got to go.

#### **Funding for Operation Iraqi Freedom**

**Q.** Mr. President, what will you be telling the congressional leaders tomorrow about the cost——

**The President.** Wait until I talk to them. It’s probably best they hear it directly from me.

#### **Prisoners of War**

**Q.** Mr. President, to your knowledge, is there any hope of getting these soldiers back?

**The President.** What?

**Q.** To your knowledge, is there any chance of getting these soldiers back?

**The President.** Of course.

#### **Humanitarian Aid**

**Q.** Mr. President, how swiftly do you expect to get humanitarian aid——

**The President.** Good question. I appreciate you asking that question. The question is on humanitarian aid. In the south of Iraq, coalition forces have worked hard to make the port area secure, to make the transit of humanitarian aid as safe as possible. As—I was told this morning in my briefings that humanitarian aid should begin moving—massive amounts of humanitarian aid should begin moving within the next 36 hours. And that’s going to be very positive news for a

lot of people who have suffered a long time under Saddam Hussein.

We’ve got a massive ground assault going on, and right behind it will be a massive movement of humanitarian aid to help the people of Iraq. We have made that promise to the people of this country that we will do everything we can to protect innocent life. And we’re doing that. And we’ll do everything we can to help the Iraqi people. First thing, of course, that will help the Iraqi people is to rid them from a brutal dictator, somebody who has stayed in power through mutilation and rape and torture, somebody who has starved his own people so he could build palaces. When free from that dictatorship, life will be a lot better.

But we also understand we have an obligation—and this is just not America; it’s coalition forces—have an obligation to put food and medicine in places so the Iraqi people can live a normal life and have hope. And that’s exactly what’s going to happen shortly when the area is completely—safe enough to move the equipment forward.

Listen, thank you all.

#### **President’s Stamina**

**Q.** How are you holding up, sir?

**The President.** I feel just fine. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

#### **Proclamation 7655—Cancer Control Month, 2003**

March 24, 2003

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

Millions of Americans are winning the fight against cancer, but much work remains. More than 3,500 Americans are diagnosed with cancer each day, and more than 45,000 will die from the disease this month. Yet, experts believe that half of all cancer deaths are preventable. With exercise, nutrition, and

healthy behavior, we can help prevent this deadly disease and save lives. During Cancer Control Month, we renew our commitment to over coming cancer by learning more about its prevention and early detection.

To protect against disease, Americans can make smart choices that will lead to longer, healthier lives. A critical step that Americans can take to improve their health and reduce the risk of cancer is to avoid the use of tobacco. Also, avoiding excessive drinking and sun exposure can help guard against cancer and help ensure better health.

Improvements in diet and fitness can help prevent many serious health problems. A diet rich in fruits and vegetables and regular physical activity help protect us from illness and can add years to our lives. Research suggests that we can decrease the number of cancer deaths in America by one-third simply by changing our diets and getting more exercise.

Preventative health screening is vital to early detection and treatment of cancer. Regular screening can save lives and enhances the well-being of our Nation. Screening can detect many forms of cancer at earlier, less dangerous stages, allowing patients to seek treatment and defeat the cancer before it spreads. I urge all Americans to talk to their doctors about when to start preventative screening and how often to schedule appointments.

Our Nation's investment in cancer prevention and research is making a difference, and recent medical discoveries offer hope to many Americans. The National Cancer Institute (NCI) is currently sponsoring more than 60 clinical trials on cancer prevention and screening. One major clinical trial for men and women at risk for lung cancer began this year, and is investigating the most effective method of detecting lung cancer in order to reduce deaths from this devastating disease.

As part of my HealthierUS Initiative and my Administration's ongoing commitment to helping the American people live healthier lives, I encourage all Americans to eat right, get more exercise, and take advantage of preventative screening. To learn more about ways to prevent cancer, you can talk to your doctor or contact the NCI's Cancer Information Service at 1-800-4-CANCER or visit its

Internet address at <http://www.cancer.gov>. Through healthy lifestyles, a better understanding of this disease, and new technology, I believe we will achieve a victory over cancer.

In 1938, the Congress of the United States passed a joint resolution (52 Stat. 148; 36 U.S.C. 103) as amended, requesting the President to issue an annual proclamation declaring April as "Cancer Control Month."

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush**, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim April 2003 as Cancer Control Month. I encourage concerned citizens, government agencies, private businesses, nonprofit organizations, and other interested groups to join in activities that will increase awareness of measures all Americans can take to prevent and control cancer.

**In Witness Whereof**, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fourth day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-seventh.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., March 26, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on March 27.

### **Memorandum on Assistance for Iraq** *March 24, 2003*

Presidential Determination No. 2003-18

*Memorandum for the Secretary of State*

*Subject:* Assistance for Iraq

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by section 507 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2003, Division E of the Consolidated Appropriations Resolution, 2003 (Public Law 108-7), I hereby determine that the provision of assistance or other financing for Iraq is important to the national security interests of the United States. I hereby authorize the furnishing of this assistance or other financing.