

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



Monday, April 14, 2003
Volume 39—Number 15
Pages 413–433

Contents

Addresses and Remarks

See also Meetings With Foreign Leaders
Iraqi people, videotape remarks—424
Maryland, visit with troops wounded in
Operation Iraqi Freedom in Bethesda—427
Radio address—414

Communications to Congress

North Atlantic Treaty, message transmitting
Protocols on the accession of Bulgaria,
Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania,
Slovakia, and Slovenia—426

Interviews With the News Media

Exchange with reporters in Bethesda, MD—
427
News conference with Prime Minister Tony
Blair of the United Kingdom in
Hillsborough, Northern Ireland, April 8—
415

Joint Statements

President George W. Bush and Prime
Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom
on Iraq—420
President George W. Bush and Prime
Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom
and Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland
on Northern Ireland—421

Letters and Messages

National Youth Service Day, message to
participants—425

Meetings With Foreign Leaders

Ireland, Prime Minister Ahern—421
United Kingdom, Prime Minister Blair—415,
420, 421

Proclamations

Education and Sharing Day, U.S.A.—425
National Crime Victims' Rights Week—413
National D.A.R.E. Day—423
National Former Prisoner of War Recognition
Day—421

Statements by the President

Congress
Action on the budget resolution—429
Passage of Amber Alert system legislation—
424
House of Representatives passage of
comprehensive energy legislation—429
Senate passage of legislation on the Faith-
Based Initiative—422

Supplementary Materials

Acts approved by the President—433
Checklist of White House press releases—432
Digest of other White House
announcements—430
Nominations submitted to the Senate—431

Editor's Note: The President was at Camp David, MD, on April 11, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* is published pursuant to the authority contained in the Federal Register Act (49 Stat. 500, as amended; 44 U.S.C. Ch. 15), under regulations prescribed by the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, approved by the President (37 FR 23607; 1 CFR Part 10).

Distribution is made only by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* will be furnished by mail to domestic subscribers for \$80.00 per year (\$137.00 for mailing first class) and to foreign subscribers for \$93.75 per year, payable to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The charge for a single copy is \$3.00 (\$3.75 for foreign mailing).

The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* is also available on the Internet on the GPO Access service at <http://www.gpo.gov/nara/nara003.html>.

There are no restrictions on the republication of material appearing in the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*.

Week Ending Friday, April 11, 2003

Proclamation 7659—National Crime Victims' Rights Week, 2003

April 4, 2003

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Crime brings trauma, pain, and insecurity into the lives of too many Americans each year. As we work to reduce crime and protect the rights of the accused, we must take equal care to protect the rights of their victims. During National Crime Victims' Rights Week, we remember those who have suffered as a result of crime and honor those who have helped these victims.

Americans suffered over 24 million crimes in 2001, 5.7 million of which involved violence. While we have improved policies and our justice system has treated victims with greater respect in recent years, we must continue our work to ensure the full rights of all crime victims and better protect our citizens. My Administration believes that victims of violent crime have important rights that deserve protection in our Constitution, and to guarantee these rights, I strongly support the passage of the bipartisan Crime Victims' Rights Amendment. This amendment will provide victims of violent crime the right to reasonable and timely notice of any public proceedings involving the crime or release of the perpetrator, and the right to be heard at public proceedings regarding the criminal's sentence or potential release. It will also assure that such victims receive timely notice of any escape of their attacker. Under this amendment, decision makers will duly consider the victim's safety and payment of restitution from the offender to the victim. This important amendment will strike the right balance in protecting individual rights and ensuring fairness and equity in our criminal justice system.

Across our Nation, victims' rights groups work on behalf of victims every day. Through care and compassion, these groups and individuals are bringing hope and comfort to their neighbors in need. Domestic violence shelters, support groups for families of homicide victims, rape crisis centers, and other organizations in our cities and communities offer vital assistance to individuals who have been affected by crime. In times of such crises, counselors, hotline operators, clergy, doctors, nurses, law enforcement, and countless others also help their fellow Americans cope with their pain and suffering.

As a Nation, we must continue to seek justice on behalf of all people who have been victimized by crime. The heroes in these efforts are the individuals and organizations who work to provide valuable support and assistance to those who have suffered from crime. This week allows us to recognize these heroes and renew our commitment to fulfilling the promise of our Nation of justice for all.

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 April 6 through April 12, 2003, as National Crime Victims' Rights Week. I encourage every community to embrace the cause of victims' rights and to advance it in all sectors of our society.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fourth day of April, 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., April 8, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 9. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

April 5, 2003

Good morning. American and coalition forces are steadily advancing against the regime of Saddam Hussein. With each new village they liberate, our forces are learning more about the atrocities of that regime and the deep fear the dictator has instilled in the Iraqi people. Yet no crime of this dying regime will divert us from our mission. We will not stop until Iraq is free.

This week, coalition forces have been clearing southern cities and towns of Saddam's death squads and enforcers. Our special forces and Army paratroopers, working with Kurdish militia, have opened a northern front against the enemy. In the town of An Najaf, members of our 101st Airborne Division have been welcomed as liberators. At An Nasiriyah, marines continue to eliminate the enemy while other Army and Marine units have closed in on Baghdad. From the skies above, coalition aircraft and cruise missiles are removing hundreds of military targets from the map.

As the vise tightens on the Iraqi regime, some of our enemies have chosen to fill their final days with acts of cowardice and murder. In combat, Saddam's thugs shield themselves with women and children. They have killed Iraqi citizens who welcome coalition troops, and they have forced other Iraqis into battle by threatening to torture or kill their families. They have executed prisoners of war, waged attacks under the white flag of truce, and concealed combat forces in civilian neighborhoods, schools, hospitals, and mosques. In this war, the Iraqi regime is terrorizing its own citizens, doing everything possible to maximize Iraqi civilian casualties and then to exploit the deaths they have caused for propaganda. These are war criminals, and they'll be treated as war criminals.

In stark contrast, the citizens of Iraq are coming to know what kind of people we have sent to liberate them. American forces and our allies are treating innocent civilians with kindness and showing proper respect to the soldiers who surrender. The people of the United States are proud of the honorable

conduct of our military. And I am proud to lead such brave and decent Americans.

In recent days, we have also brought food and water and medicine to the Iraqi people. We're delivering emergency rations to the hungry. Right now, cargo ships are bound for Iraq, carrying wheat from Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas—enough to feed 4.5 million Iraqis for 1 month. Additional food, supplied by the World Food Program, is moving by truck convoy across the Turkish border into northern Iraq.

We are bringing aid to the long-suffering people of Iraq, and we are bringing something more. We are bringing hope. One Iraqi, when the coalition troops arrived, described the emotions of his village. "They were waiting for you," he said, "and all the people believe that America and Britain have come to liberate them, not to conquer."

Village by village, city by city, liberation is coming. The people of Iraq have my pledge: Our fighting forces will press on until their oppressors are gone and their whole country is free.

By our actions in this war, we serve a great and just cause. Free nations will not sit and wait, leaving enemies free to plot another September the 11th—this time perhaps with chemical, biological, or nuclear terror. We'll remove weapons of mass destruction from the hands of mass murderers. And by defending our own security, we are ridding the people of Iraq from one of the cruelest regimes on Earth. The United States and our allies pledged to act if the dictator did not disarm. The regime in Iraq is now learning that we keep our word.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 1 p.m. on April 4 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 5. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 4 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

**The President's News Conference
With Prime Minister Tony Blair of
the United Kingdom in Hillsborough,
Northern Ireland**

April 8, 2003

Prime Minister Blair. Good morning, everyone. First of all, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to President Bush to Northern Ireland. America has long been a friend of Northern Ireland and a friend to us in this important period for the peace process. So it's both significant and welcome that the President is here in person to give once more his support and to join with me and, later today, with the Irish Taoiseach in urging the parties to take the final steps towards a lasting peace here in Northern Ireland.

It's also perhaps fitting that here in Northern Ireland a good part of our discussion focused on the Middle East. It's not so many years ago that it would have been said that the peace process here was in far worse shape than the process out in the Middle East. Yet, here we are, for all the difficulties in Northern Ireland, able to point back to real improvements in the security and the standard of living of people here and to point forward to turning progress into lasting change, lasting security, and lasting peace, which is what people want to see here. And we've made that progress because of patience and perseverance and because friends like those in the United States of America have helped us get there.

So to those who can sometimes say that the process in the Middle East is hopeless, I say we can look at Northern Ireland and take some hope from that.

I want to thank the President also for the impetus he has given to the two-state solution in the Middle East that he outlined last June, a secure Israel and a viable Palestinian state, and for his decision that the roadmap be published, which as you know, depends upon the foundation of Abu Mazen's cabinet.

Of course, our discussions have naturally continued to focus upon Iraq, upon the continuing military campaign, where, once again, our forces have performed superbly. And I want to pay tribute to the U.S., UK, and other coalition forces. In all parts of the

country, our power is strengthening; the regime is weakening; the Iraqi people are turning towards us.

I'd like to pay tribute to the professionalism and the compassion that they continue to show and to express my condolences to the families of those that have lost their lives in this conflict, most recently, the three brave soldiers who lost their lives fighting to liberate Basra. I think anyone who has seen the joy on the faces of people in Basra as they realize that the regime that they detest is finally collapsing knows very well that this was, indeed, a war of liberation and not of conquest.

On weapons of mass destruction, we know that the regime has them. We know that as the regime collapses, we will be led to them. We pledged to disarm Iraq of weapons of mass destruction, and we will keep that commitment.

On Saddam, his grip on power has been prized away. He has ruled by fear. But as the knowledge sinks in that we will get the job done, the people realize there's not going to be a repeat of 1991; there's not going to be a repeat of the past. The power of Saddam is ending.

And our enemy in this conflict has always been Saddam and his regime, not the Iraqi people. We are the friends of the Iraqi people. So much of our discussion today has focused on how we continue to get vital supplies of food, water, and medicines to them and how we help the process of transition to the day when Iraq is governed by the Iraqi people for the Iraqi people.

As we said, our forces will not stay in Iraq a day longer than is necessary. We will take on the legal and moral obligations that will fall to us as the forces on the ground to stabilize the country, to keep basic services going, to protect civilian life. Then we will help Iraq move as swiftly as possible to an Interim Authority run by Iraqis. And that, in turn, is designed to pave the way for a truly representative government which respects human rights and the rule of law, which spends Iraq's wealth not on palaces and weapons of mass destruction but on the well-being, prosperity of the people of Iraq.

And this new Iraq that will emerge is not to be run either by us or, indeed, by the U.N.

That is a false choice. It will be run by the Iraqi people. All of us will do what we can to help in that process of transition. We are, of course, agreed, as we say in our joint statement, that there will be a vital role for the United Nations in the reconstruction of Iraq. But the key is that Iraq, in the end, should be governed by the Iraqi people.

Once again, let me thank President Bush for coming here. Let me say, as well as our own pride in our own forces during the course of this conflict, we have watched with immense admiration the skill and tenacity and professionalism of the American forces. This is a strong alliance. We're strong allies. And I think, day by day, the proof of the wisdom of that alliance grows.

Thank you.

President Bush. Thank you very much, Tony. It's an honor to be with you again. It's—I'm really pleased to be here in Northern Ireland.

The Prime Minister is a man of his word. He is a man of great ability, deep conviction, and steady courage. He has my admiration, and he has the admiration of the American people.

Our two countries are joined in large tasks because we share fundamental convictions. We believe that free nations have the responsibility to confront terrorism. We believe free nations must oppose the spread of weapons of mass destruction. And we believe that free nations must advance human rights and dignity across the world. We believe that the just demands of the international community must be enforced, not ignored. We believe this so strongly that we are acting on our convictions.

America and Britain have been partners in Afghanistan, where a terrorist regime has been replaced by a government committed to justice and to peace. At this moment, our military forces are fighting side by side in Iraq to defend our security and to free that nation from oppression. Our Governments are working to help bring about a settlement in the Middle East that protects the rights of Israelis and Palestinians, that promotes the peace, that promotes security, that promotes human dignity.

In Northern Ireland, the Prime Minister and I are committed to helping the parties

take the final steps toward a lasting peace. Later this week, Prime Minister Blair and the Taoiseach will release a plan setting out the remaining actions that must be taken to realize the promise of the Good Friday agreement. I support and my Government strongly supports their efforts. At the meeting this afternoon, I will urge Northern Ireland's political leaders to adopt this plan as their own.

This is an historic moment, and I ask all the communities of Northern Ireland to seize this opportunity for peace.

Prime Minister Blair and I are also reviewing the course of the battle in Iraq. We're spending a lot of time talking about that country's future beyond war and beyond tyranny. As the Prime Minister mentioned, our armed services are conducting themselves with great courage and, at the same time, great humanity. I'm proud of our forces. I'm proud of the British forces. We're both proud of the Australian forces.

We share sacrifices. We share grief. We pray for those families who mourn the loss of life, American families, British families. And as this war has progressed, the world has witnessed the brutal desperation, the true character of the Iraqi regime. The world is also witnessing the liberation and humanitarian aid our coalition is bringing to that country as a new day begins in Iraq.

In fighting this war, we're taking every precaution to protect innocent life. We're showing respect for the Iraqi people, respect for their culture. There will be difficult fighting ahead, yet the outcome is not in doubt: Iraq will be free.

After the current regime is removed, our coalition will work to restore electricity and water supplies, medical care, and other essential services in Iraq. We'll move as quickly as possible to place governmental responsibilities under the control of an Interim Authority composed of Iraqis from both inside and outside the country. The Interim Authority will serve until a permanent government can be chosen by the Iraqi people.

The rebuilding of Iraq will require the support and expertise of the international community. We're committed to working with international institutions, including the

United Nations, which will have a vital role to play in this task.

This work when the war is finished will not be easy, but we're going to see it through. A free Iraq will be ruled by laws, not by a dictator. A free Iraq will be peaceful and not a friend to terrorists or a menace to its neighbors. A free Iraq will give up all its weapons of mass destruction. A free Iraq will set itself on the path to democracy. The end of Saddam's regime will also remove a source of violence and instability in the Middle East.

Prime Minister Blair and I are determined to move toward our vision of broader peace in that region. We're committed to implementing the roadmap toward peace, to bring closer the day when two states, Israel and Palestine, live side by side in peace and stability.

Peace in the Middle East will require overcoming deep divisions of history and religion. Yet we know this is possible; it is happening in Northern Ireland. We are proving that old patterns of bitterness and violence, the habits of hatred and retribution, can be broken when one generation makes the choice to break those habits. And now this process of healing must be carried forward.

The United States and the United Kingdom accept our responsibilities—accept our responsibilities for peace. We accept our responsibilities for security. Across the world, we are meeting these responsibilities together. America has no finer ally than the United Kingdom and no finer friend than the Prime Minister. And I'm grateful for his leadership in these crucial days.

Prime Minister Blair. Right. Adam [Adam Boulton, Sky News].

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, welcome to Northern Ireland. I wonder if I could ask you how you feel about meeting the leaders of the Republican movement, bearing in mind that unlike Saddam Hussein, they have directly targeted British civilians, British politicians, members of the British military and the police, and also, of course, that they oppose the war. So you're welcoming Gerry Adams, apparently, and yet, you're not going to see someone like the Democratic Unionists who are a constitutional party opposed to terrorism.

President Bush. Right. This isn't my first time I've met Mr. Adams or any of the other parties who have committed to the Good Friday agreement—as a matter of fact, I welcomed to the Oval Office, around Saint Patrick's Day of this year and last year and the year before.

I am honored to have been asked to be here to help move the process along. These are men who have committed to an agreement that the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach worked a long time to achieve. They've signed on to a process that will yield peace. They have agreed to put hatreds in the past. They have agreed to say the history is just that—history. And they look forward to a future in which young generations of Northern Irishers can grow up in peace. That's what they've committed themselves to. And as a result of making that commitment, I am perfectly comfortable about urging them to see the process through.

There is such hope here in Northern Ireland that the past can be broken. And the Prime Minister is right when he says that when the peace process is successful here, it will send a really important signal to other parts of the world. It'll confirm the fact that people who have a vision for peace can see that vision become a reality.

It's the same vision we need to have in the Middle East. It's a hopeful time in the Middle East, as far as I'm concerned. I believe we can make substantial progress. I'm pleased with the new leader of the Palestinian Authority. I look forward to him finally putting his cabinet in place so we can release the roadmap.

I believe peace is possible. Being here in Northern Ireland even makes me even more firm in my belief that peace is possible. I've talked at length with the Prime Minister about how hard he had to work to bring the process this far. I'm willing to expend the same amount of energy in the Middle East. And so I hope these leaders hear me when I say that—achieve the agreement, because it will have an effect beyond Northern Ireland. And I think it will.

Yes, Ron [Ron Fournier, Associated Press].

Regime Change in Iraq/Postwar Plans

Q. Mr. President, how reliable was the intelligence that put Saddam Hussein at the site of last night's attack? Did he survive? And given the incursions in Baghdad recently, is the war nearly over?

President Bush. You know, I don't know whether he survived. The only thing I know is he's losing power. I know that because the Royal Marines in Basra worked so hard that the people of Basra are beginning to understand that—a couple of things: One, when we said we would come and stay to achieve their liberty, we meant it; that in Basra, for example, the Royal Marine—the presence of the Royal Marines is providing enough comfort for people to begin to express their own opinions. They're beginning to realize freedom is real.

These are people in the south of Iraq that had been betrayed, tortured, had been told they were going to be free, took a risk in the past and then were absolutely hammered by the Iraqi regime. They were skeptical. They were cynical. They were doubtful. Now they believe. They're beginning to understand we're real and true, and it's happening elsewhere. Freedom is spreading south to north.

So the only thing I can tell you is, is that that grip I used to describe that Saddam had around the throats of the Iraqi people are loosening. I can't tell you if all 10 fingers are off the throat, but finger by finger, it's coming off. And the people are beginning to realize that. It's important for the Iraqi people to continue to hear this message: We will not stop until they are free; Saddam Hussein will be gone. It might have been yesterday. I don't know. But he'll be gone, and they just need to know that, because we're not leaving. And not only that, they need to hear the message that we're not leaving after he's gone until they are ready to run their own government.

I hear a lot of talk here about how we're going to impose this leader or that leader. Forget it. From day one, we have said the Iraqi people are capable of running their own country. That's what we believe. The position of the United States of America is, the Iraqis are plenty capable of running Iraq, and that's precisely what is going to happen.

Prime Minister Blair. Andy.

U.N. Role in Postwar Iraq

Q. Andrew Marr, BBC News. Picking up if I could, just on that last point for both of you, have you agreed whether the United Nations will have any role in selecting the Interim Iraqi Authority? Or will that be entirely for the coalition?

President Bush. Yes. I mean, when we say vital role for the United Nations, we mean vital role for the United Nations in all aspects of the issue, whether it be humanitarian aid or whether it be helping to stand up a Interim Authority. The Iraqi people will decide who's on the Iraqi—the Interim Authority. The Interim Authority is a transition quasi-government until the real Government shows up, until the conditions are right for the people to elect their own leadership. And the United Nations will have a vital role.

When we say vital role, that's precisely what we mean, that they will be involved, along with the coalition, in helping to stand up an Interim Authority. But the Iraqi people are responsible for who's on that Authority. And Tony can describe what's happening in Basra. He might describe some of the meetings that are taking place as leadership begins to emerge.

It is a cynical world that says it's impossible for the Iraqis to run themselves. It is a cynical world which condemns Iraq to failure. We refuse to accept that. We believe that the Iraqi people are capable, talented, and will be successful in running their own Government.

Prime Minister Blair. I agree with all that, as you would expect. And can I just make this further point to you, the one thing that is interesting is that as people in Iraq realize that Saddam and his regime are going, as they realize that, they are coming out. And it's not that they're welcoming us because they're welcoming foreign troops. They're welcoming the fact of their liberation from a regime—the more we know about it, the more brutal, repressive, tyrannical we see its character. And therefore, these people, given a chance, already now they're in discussion with our people inside Basra—people coming forward, people talking about those who have got support within the local community.

Iraq—it's not just that it's right that Iraq is run by Iraqi people; they want the chance to run their own country. They haven't wanted to be under the yoke of tyranny for all these decades. The reason you have this incredibly tyrannical, repressive security apparatus was in order to suppress the proper feelings of the people there.

Now, of course, we're going to work with everyone. We'll work with the U.N. We'll work with everyone in order to bring this about. But if I can just make this point to your point, the important thing is not to get into some battle about words of the precise role here or there, but let's all work together internationally—the coalition forces, the international community together—to do what we really should be doing, which is making sure that that will of the Iraqi people is properly expressed in institutions that in the end they own, not any outside power or authority.

And I think if we keep that vision in our minds, then we'll get this right. And rather than having a sort of, you know, endless diplomatic wrangles over it, let's all just agree that the basic things that the Iraqi people want is they want to have a country where they are able to exploit their own wealth for their own prosperity, where they have basic protection of human rights, and where they have a Government genuinely representative of Iraqi people—of the full diversity of Iraqi people.

And I think what the President's just said there is so true, that—I can't tell you how many times people have said to me in these situations, "Well, the outside world doesn't really understand. Somehow these people who are living under these types of tyrannies, really, that's the way they live." It's not the way they want to live. It's the way they're forced to live. Give them a chance to live freely, and they will live freely.

President Bush. Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

U.N. Debate on Postwar Iraq

Q. Mr. President, what is—what exactly is the vital role for the U.N. that you both mentioned? How do you explain what is a vital role? And are we going to see the same

U.N. debate over postwar Iraq that we saw before the war?

President Bush. Well, I view a vital role as a agent to help people live freely. That's a vital role. That means food; that means medicine; that means aid; that means a place where people can give their contributions; that means suggesting people for the IIA; that means being a party to the progress being made in Iraq. That's what that means. And I want to thank Kofi Annan for naming a personal representative to the process yesterday. It is a positive step.

We have said all along there needs to be a role for the United Nations. We said so in the Azores. We will keep repeating it. And evidently there's some skepticism here in Europe about whether or not I mean what I say. Saddam Hussein clearly now knows I mean what I say. And when, you know, we—and people in Iraq will know we mean what we say when we talk about freedom. And a vital role for the United Nations means a vital role for the United Nations.

Prime Minister Blair. Absolutely. And there is no reason whatever why we need to go back into the wrangles we had over, you know, the so-called second resolution. If people keep in mind the key objective, which is the well-being of the Iraqi people—whatever is—the past is the past. But this country is in the process of being liberated. If they keep in mind the well-being of the Iraqi people, then I think we all then share a responsibility to make that objective be fulfilled in terms of what the Iraqi people want, in terms of their democratic rights, in terms of their prosperity, in terms of their freedom. And with good will and common sense, I'm sure it can be done.

President Bush. Thank you. I appreciate you.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:08 a.m. in the Throne Room at Hillsborough Castle. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams; Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority; and Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Special Adviser for Iraq Rafeeuiddin Ahmed of the United Nations.

Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom on Iraq
April 8, 2003

The future of Iraq belongs to the Iraqi people. After years of dictatorship, Iraq will soon be liberated. For the first time in decades, Iraqis will soon choose their own representative government.

Coalition military operations are progressing and will succeed. We will eliminate the threat posed by Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, deliver humanitarian aid, and secure the freedom of the Iraqi people. We will create an environment where Iraqis can determine their own fate democratically and peacefully.

We are grateful to our men and women in uniform, as well as to the brave troops of Australia and Poland, and to forces contributed by other members of the Coalition. They have demonstrated enormous bravery and professionalism in the face of great danger. We mourn for the members of the Armed Forces who have sacrificed their lives, and extend our deepest sympathies to their families.

We also grieve for the loss of civilian life in Iraq. Coalition forces take great care to avoid civilian casualties. The Iraqi regime has done the opposite. It has deliberately put Iraqi civilians in harm's way, and used women and children as human shields. It has sent execution squads to kill Iraqis who choose freedom over fighting for a brutal regime. We condemn Iraqi regime forces' attacks in civilian clothing, false surrender, and mistreatment of prisoners of war. These acts are an affront to all standards of human decency and international law.

We are taking every step possible to safeguard Muslim holy sites and other protected places in Iraq that are important to the religious and cultural heritage of Islam and of Iraq. We have no confidence that the Iraqi regime has done the same, and are deeply concerned by reports that it is deliberately endangering such sites and using them for military purposes.

The Coalition is delivering food, medicine, and other humanitarian assistance to the Iraqi people. This flow will increase as more

of Iraq's territory is liberated and United Nations specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations are better able to operate. We welcome the adoption by the United Nations Security Council of Resolution 1472, which will allow shipments of humanitarian items to Iraq to resume under the Oil for Food program.

As we said at our March 16 meeting in the Azores, we will uphold our responsibility to help the people of Iraq build a nation that is whole, free and at peace with itself and its neighbors. We support the aspirations of all of Iraq's people for a united, representative government that upholds human rights and the rule of law as cornerstones of democracy. We reaffirm our commitment to protect Iraq's natural resources, as the patrimony of the people of Iraq, which should be used only for their benefit.

As the Coalition proceeds with the reconstruction of Iraq, it will work with its allies, other bilateral donors, and with the United Nations and other international institutions. The United Nations has a vital role to play in the reconstruction of Iraq. We welcome the efforts of U.N. agencies and non-governmental organizations in providing immediate assistance to the people of Iraq. As we stated in the Azores, we plan to seek the adoption of new United Nations Security Council resolutions that would affirm Iraq's territorial integrity, ensure rapid delivery of humanitarian relief, and endorse an appropriate post-conflict administration for Iraq. We welcome the appointment by the United Nations Secretary General of a Special Adviser for Iraq to work with the people of Iraq and coalition representatives.

The day when Iraqis govern themselves must come quickly. As early as possible, we support the formation of an Iraqi Interim Authority, a transitional administration, run by Iraqis, until a permanent government is established by the people of Iraq. The Interim Authority will be broad-based and fully representative, with members from all of Iraq's ethnic groups, regions and diaspora. The Interim Authority will be established first and foremost by the Iraqi people, with the help of the members of the Coalition, and working with the Secretary General of the United Nations. As coalition forces advance, civilian

Iraqi leaders will emerge who can be part of such an Interim Authority. The Interim Authority will progressively assume more of the functions of government. It will provide a means for Iraqis to participate in the economic and political reconstruction of their country from the outset.

Coalition forces will remain in Iraq as long as necessary to help the Iraqi people to build their own political institutions and reconstruct their country, but no longer. We look forward to welcoming a liberated Iraq to the international community of nations. We call upon our partners in the international community to join with us in ensuring a democratic and secure future for the Iraqi people.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom and Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland on Northern Ireland

April 8, 2003

We affirm our individual and collective commitment to the Good Friday Agreement and to its full and complete implementation. The people of Northern Ireland and their leaders have a momentous opportunity to ensure that peace is strengthened and political stability secured.

The opportunity to cement the peace is historic. The case is compelling; the cause just; the outcome must be fair, balanced, and comprehensive. The acceptance and implementation of the Governments' forthcoming proposals would promote the reconciliation that the people of Northern Ireland desire and deserve.

These proposals, built on the firm ground of the Good Friday Agreement, hold out the prospect of enormous progress. They reflect our shared view that there can be no place in Northern Ireland for paramilitary activity and capability. The break with paramilitarism in all its past forms must be complete and irrevocable. The proposals will encompass a wide range of additional issues, including normalization, the devolution of justice and

policing, sustainable political institutions, and human rights. The participation of all parties in effective community policing, a necessary key to long term stability in Northern Ireland, would constitute a significant step forward. There will be a need for a mechanism, one designed to safeguard the interests and rights of all, to verify compliance with the key undertakings. All three Governments are committed to supporting effective monitoring arrangements. Acts of completion, and a reaffirmation that political change is to come through exclusively peaceful and democratic means, will renew and expand trust and confidence.

Peace is its own dividend. At the same time, peace fosters an environment where entrepreneurship and business creativity can thrive, where jobs will be created, and where prosperity will follow. Our governments have agreed to work together to explore ways to encourage the flow of investment to Northern Ireland.

We call upon Northern Ireland's political representatives, community and business leaders, and citizens from all walks of life to respond positively to the forthcoming statements. We see no better way to fulfill the promise of the Good Friday Agreement. They have an unprecedented chance to continue their bold march from a troubled past to a future of promise and hope for generations to come. In seizing this opportunity, Northern Ireland will serve as a model to the world for dialogue and negotiation, demonstrating to all that what was once divided can be drawn together in a spirit of reconciliation and respect.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Proclamation 7660—National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day, 2003

April 8, 2003

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

America's former prisoners of war (POWs) are national heroes whose service to our

country will never be forgotten. These brave men and women who fought for America and endured cruelties and deprivation as prisoners of war helped to protect our Nation, liberated millions of people from the threats of tyranny and terror, and advanced the cause of freedom worldwide.

This year, our Nation commemorates the 50th anniversary of the signing of the armistice to end armed conflict in the Korean War. We remember Operation Little Switch, conducted April through May 1953, that freed 149 American POWs, and Operation Big Switch, conducted August through September 1953, which returned 3,597 Americans to our country. Finally, Operation Glory, conducted July through November 1954, was responsible for the return of the remains of 2,944 Americans from North Korea. During this observance, we also recognize and honor the more than 8,100 Americans still unaccounted for from the Korean War.

This year also marks the 30th anniversary of Operation Homecoming, in which 591 American POWs from Vietnam were returned. We also recognize and honor those Americans still unaccounted for from the Vietnam War.

All of these individuals are to be honored for their strength of character and for the difficulties they and their families endured. From World War II, the Korean War, and Vietnam, to the 1991 Gulf War, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and other conflicts, our service men and women have sacrificed much to secure freedom, defend the ideals of our Nation, and free the oppressed. By answering the call of duty and risking their lives to protect others, these proud patriots continue to inspire us today as we work with our allies to extend peace, liberty, and opportunity to people around the world.

As we honor our former POWs, we are reminded of our current POWs, captured in Operation Iraqi Freedom. We will work to secure their freedom, and we pray for their speedy and safe return. These brave men and women in uniform follow in the footsteps of these former POWs who placed country above self to advance peace in a troubled world.

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 April 9, 2003, as National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day. I call upon all the people of the United States to join me in remembering former American prisoners of war by honoring the memory of their sacrifices and in praying for the safe return of our POWs. I also call upon Federal, State, and local government officials and private organizations to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of April, 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, 11:02 a.m., April 10, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 11.

Statement on Senate Passage of Legislation on the Faith-Based Initiative

April 9, 2003

I commend the Senate for acting in a bipartisan way to pass legislation that will help us meet our shared goal of better serving Americans in need. This legislation contains key elements of the Faith-Based Initiative that I proposed more than 2 years ago to encourage more charitable giving and rally the armies of compassion that exist in communities all across America.

America's charities face tough times, and we can do more to support their efforts. I look forward to continuing to work with Congress to improve the CARE Act legislation, and I continue to urge Congress to take additional steps to end discrimination against faith-based organizations that have a proven record of helping people in need realize a better life.

**Proclamation 7661—National
D.A.R.E. Day, 2003**

April 9, 2003

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Drugs destroy the hopes, dreams, and the health of our children, and we must continue to work to reduce drug use among America's young people. Today we honor Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.), the most widely recognized substance abuse and violence prevention curriculum in America. As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of this important program, we recognize D.A.R.E.'s proud record of helping millions of young people lead productive, drug-free, and violence-free lives, and reaffirm our commitment to end illegal drug use among our youth.

D.A.R.E. was founded in 1983 by the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), which faced an overwhelming drug use problem among juveniles and saw the need for a program to educate children and young adults about the destructive realities of substance abuse. Teaming with the Los Angeles Unified School District, the LAPD sent specially trained police officers into classrooms to teach middle school students how to resist peer pressure and make positive decisions. Since that beginning 20 years ago, D.A.R.E. has grown to reach 36 million students in more than 300,000 classrooms in the United States and around the world. Today, D.A.R.E. programs are taught in 80 percent of our Nation's school districts.

D.A.R.E.'s in-school curriculum focuses on giving children practical skills to avoid becoming involved in drugs, gangs, and violence. D.A.R.E. officers serve as supportive role models and encourage young people to develop healthy self-esteem. D.A.R.E. also helps young people in the critical after-school hours through D.A.R.E. P.L.U.S. (Play and Learn Under Supervision), a follow-up program that serves as a safe and fun alternative to the local streets. D.A.R.E. P.L.U.S. is designed to encourage middle school students to start taking responsibility for their actions

and to engage in activities other than drug use.

One of the core principles of my National Drug Control Strategy is to stop drug use before it starts, and D.A.R.E. and D.A.R.E. P.L.U.S. play an important role in my community-based approach. Through these programs, parents, educators, law enforcement officials, and other caring citizens are joining together in a collaborative fight against illegal drugs. However, we have more to do to reduce illegal drug use among America's youth. The most effective way to reduce the supply of drugs is to reduce the demand, and I am confident that we can help accomplish this goal through a focus on effective, family-centered education and prevention.

Toward this end, I have proposed the creation of a Parents Drug Corps to educate and train parents to lead the effort in preventing drug use among children and teens. In addition, I have asked the Congress to support millions of parents and concerned citizens in communities nationwide by doubling funding for the Drug-Free Communities Support Program. These new efforts will complement our ongoing work to surround our most vulnerable children with caring adults who can offer support, guidance, and encouragement.

As we honor the dedicated individuals whose extraordinary efforts make D.A.R.E. work, we resolve to continue to help young people avoid the dangers of drug use and violence. By helping to ensure that all our children are educated and supported by positive and caring role models, we contribute to a promising future that offers hope and opportunity for all.

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 April 10, 2003, as National D.A.R.E. Day. I call upon all the people of the United States, particularly our youth, parents, and educators, to observe this day by joining the fight against drugs in our communities. I also encourage our citizens to express appreciation for the law enforcement officers, volunteers, and others who work to help young people avoid the dangers of drug use.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this ninth day of April, 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, 11:24 a.m., April 10, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 11.

Videotape Remarks to the Iraqi People

April 10, 2003

This is George W. Bush, the President of the United States. At this moment, the regime of Saddam Hussein is being removed from power, and a long era of fear and cruelty is ending. American and coalition forces are now operating inside Baghdad, and we will not stop until Saddam's corrupt gang is gone. The Government of Iraq and the future of your country will soon belong to you.

The goals of our coalition are clear and limited. We will end a brutal regime, whose aggression and weapons of mass destruction make it a unique threat to the world. Coalition forces will help maintain law and order so that Iraqis can live in security. We will respect your great religious traditions, whose principles of equality and compassion are essential to Iraq's future. We will help you build a peaceful and representative government that protects the rights of all citizens. And then our military forces will leave. Iraq will go forward as a unified, independent, and sovereign nation that has regained a respected place in the world.

The United States and its coalition partners respect the people of Iraq. We are taking unprecedented measures to spare the lives of innocent Iraqi citizens. We are beginning to deliver food and water and medicine to those in need. Our only enemy is Saddam and his brutal regime, and that regime is your enemy as well.

In the new era that is coming to Iraq, your country will no longer be held captive to the will of a cruel dictator. You will be free—free to build a better life instead of building

more palaces for Saddam and his sons, free to pursue economic prosperity without the hardship of economic sanctions, free to travel and free to speak your mind, free to join in the political affairs of Iraq. And all the people who make up your country—Kurds, Shi'a, Turkomans, Sunnis, and others—will be free of the terrible persecution that so many have endured.

The nightmare that Saddam Hussein has brought to your nation will soon be over. You are a good and gifted people, the heirs of a great civilization that contributes to all humanity. You deserve better than tyranny and corruption and torture chambers. You deserve to live as free people. And I assure every citizen of Iraq: Your nation will soon be free.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President's remarks were videotaped at 11:30 a.m. on April 8 in the small dining room at Hillsborough Castle in Northern Ireland for later broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary released the remarks on April 10 and also released an Arabic language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on Congressional Passage of Amber Alert System Legislation

April 10, 2003

I applaud the House and Senate for passing bipartisan legislation that provides us with additional tools to prevent, investigate, and prosecute violent crimes against our children. This legislation builds upon the steps my administration took last year to expand, enhance, and coordinate the successful Amber Alert system across the Nation. The bill also strengthens child pornography laws.

The safety and well-being of our children is a shared priority for all Americans and Federal, State, and local authorities. We must use every available resource to find and safely return missing children to their families and their homes, and we must use every available tool to vigorously prosecute and severely punish those who would do our children harm. I look forward to signing this important legislation into law as soon as possible.

Message to Participants in National Youth Service Day

April 10, 2003

I send greetings to those participating in National Youth Service Day.

Since our Nation's founding, volunteer service has been a vital part of the American experience. Service to others is an expression of responsible citizenship, and now more than ever is a time for our Nation's young people to be active contributors, not spectators.

I created the USA Freedom Corps and the Students in Service to America initiatives to mobilize our citizens and provide opportunities for young people to give back to their communities. As part of these initiatives, I asked all Americans to dedicate at least 4,000 hours over the rest of their lives to serving our Nation through volunteering. Since then, our citizens, and particularly our young people, have responded to my call with an outpouring of kindness that is transforming our Nation one heart and one soul at a time.

National Youth Service Day is a great example of what can happen when dedicated individuals come together to serve a cause greater than self. Across our Nation, millions of young people are participating in projects that help their neighbors in need. By using their time, talents, and compassion to make a difference in the lives of others, these young people are learning to become responsible and engaged citizens in our democratic society.

I commend participants for your energy, idealism, and willingness to serve. I also applaud the more than 60 national partner organizations working with schools, houses of worship, local governments, and community and civic organizations in all 50 states to make this day a success. Your efforts strengthen our Nation and contribute to a future of hope and promise for all.

Laura joins me in sending our best wishes for a productive and memorable day.

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Proclamation 7662—Education and Sharing Day, U.S.A., 2003

April 10, 2003

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

As a Nation, we must work to ensure that all our children have the opportunity to reach their full potential and achieve their dreams. On Education and Sharing Day, U.S.A., 2003, we renew our commitment to providing quality education and to teaching our children the values that prepare them for lives as good neighbors and citizens.

Education has always been one of our Nation's top priorities. We place great reliance and confidence in our public education system, recognizing that it is one of the most important institutions of our free society. By helping our young citizens learn and develop skills, education has spurred our progress and prosperity, driven our Nation's economy, and enriched our culture.

Over the last 2 years, my Administration has taken significant action to transform public education in America. In one of the most comprehensive reforms ever passed, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 strengthened our school systems and affirmed our fundamental belief in the promise of every child. By raising expectations and insisting on results, we can make a difference in the lives of all our children.

As part of our commitment to our children's future, we must also teach young Americans to live lives of integrity and purpose, and to realize the importance of loving others and contributing to their communities. These values are first learned within the family, but all of our citizens, and especially our teachers, can support parents in the character education of our children. By guiding young people to understand universal values such as tolerance, honesty, commitment to family, service to others, and respect for the dignity of every life, our schools and communities can help our Nation fulfill its great potential.

For the past 19 years, on the anniversary of his birth, we have recognized the contributions of the Rabbi Menachem Mendel

Schneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe who was instrumental in establishing numerous educational, social, and rehabilitative institutions. The Rebbe believed that education is critical in cultivating the moral character of students. He lived what he said: "A single good deed on your part could transform the world."

Today in the United States, there is a growing momentum of acts of kindness. Across our country, millions of Americans are helping to reinforce a culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility, and are applying the compassion of America to our biggest problems and deepest wounds. To build on these successes, we must instill these values in our next generation of leaders. Amidst a world of challenges, we can equip our children to carry our Nation into a future of promise and possibility for all.

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 April 13, 2003, as Education and Sharing Day, U.S.A. I call upon all Americans to invest in our Nation's future by helping our children understand the importance of character and provide them the knowledge and values necessary to succeed.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this tenth day of April, 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., April 14, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 11, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on April 15.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the North Atlantic Treaty Protocols on the Accession of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia

April 10, 2003

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the accession of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia. These protocols were opened for signature at Brussels on March 26, 2003, and signed that day on behalf of the United States and the other parties to the North Atlantic Treaty. I request the advice and consent of the Senate to the ratification of these documents. I also transmit for the information of the Senate a report submitted to me by the Secretary of State regarding this matter.

The end of communism and the consolidation of freedom and democracy in Central and Eastern Europe have been among the great developments of human history. NATO played a vital role in defending freedom and promoting this peaceful change for over 50 years. I am pleased that, with the advice and consent of the Senate, these new democracies can soon join us as members of this great Alliance.

As the threats to the Alliance have changed, NATO itself has adapted to face them. At the Prague Summit in November 2002, I joined the leaders of NATO not only in inviting these nations to join us as members, but also in calling for a transformation of NATO's military capabilities and structures to meet the threats of the 21st century. NATO is proceeding with that agenda. Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia are already making real contributions to the common security of the NATO Allies, including the United States, and I am firmly convinced that their full membership in NATO will strengthen our Alliance further.

I ask the Senate to join me in advancing the cause of freedom and strengthening NATO by providing its prompt advice and consent to these Protocols of Accession. My Administration stands ready to assist you as best we can in your deliberations.

George W. Bush

The White House,
April 10, 2003.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 11.

**Remarks Following a Visit With
Troops Wounded in Operation Iraqi
Freedom and an Exchange With
Reporters in Bethesda, Maryland
April 11, 2003**

The President. Laura and I just had an extraordinary experience here at Bethesda and at—initially at Walter Reed, to thank our troops who've been overseas in Iraq for their dedication and courage and their service to the country. Because of troops like them, because of coalition troops, we've had an historic week.

I don't think I'll ever forget—I'm sure a lot of other people will never forget—the statue of Saddam Hussein falling in Baghdad, and then seeing the jubilation on the faces of ordinary Iraqis as they realized that the grip of fear that had them by the throat had been released—the first signs of freedom.

I came today to thank the troops and their families and their loved ones for their sacrifice. I also want to thank the staffs of these hospitals, the leadership, the doctors and the nurses, the people who care for those who have been hurt, for their extraordinary service to their fellow Americans.

Ours is an amazing country where a young soldier can be wounded on the battlefield and 4 days later be receiving the best health care possible. This country is dedicated to our military. We try to provide the very best we can. And here at Bethesda, at Walter Reed, our troops get the very best there is.

So Laura and I were here not only to thank our soldiers, but also to thank those in the medical profession who dedicate their lives to healing the hurt and to helping the fami-

lies. And that's exactly what's happening for our soldiers here in these two fine facilities.

I'll be glad to answer a couple of questions. Yes.

POWs and MIAs/Saddam Hussein

Q. Mr. President, what progress are we making in determining the whereabouts and well-being of American POWs and MIAs in Iraq? And the same goes for Saddam Hussein. And which do you see as the greater priority right now?

The President. The priority of this campaign is to rid the Iraqi people of any vestiges of Saddam Hussein and his regime so we can not only free the people but clear that country of weapons of mass destruction. I don't know the whereabouts of Saddam Hussein. I don't know if he's dead or alive. I do know he's no longer in power.

In terms of POWs, we will use every resource we have to find any POWs that are alive. And we pray that they are alive, because if they are, we'll find them.

Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Victory Declaration/Media Coverage

Q. Why shouldn't we say that the war is over except for pockets of resistance, sir? And do you feel any certain sense of vindication after all those people questioned the war plan?

The President. I don't take anything personally. I committed our troops because I believe that Saddam Hussein and his regime posed a threat to the American people, posed a threat to anybody who loves freedom. We will achieve that objective. And at the same time, we will free the Iraqi people. And that's an important objective as well. We believe in freedom. We believe freedom is universal. We believe freedom is a gift from the Almighty God for every person, regardless of their race or their religion.

This war will end when our commanders in the field tell me that the objective has been achieved. And Tommy Franks put together a great strategy. Wonderful thing about free speech and a lot of TV stations is you get a lot of opinions. Some of them were right, and some of them were really wrong. But that's okay. That's what we—that's what we believe. We believe in free speech, believe people ought to be able to express their opinion.

Q. Sir, can you tell us, though, what you think specifically needs to happen for you to feel comfortable with the recommendation from General Franks that the war is over and victory has been achieved? Does Tikrit need to fall, the weapons of mass destruction—

The President. Hold on, I can't hear you. There's something beeping here. We've got a major beeper violation right here at Bethesda. [Laughter] Say it again, I'm—

Q. What are some of the specific things that you want to see? The weapons of mass destruction found and secured? Tikrit falling? Saddam found?

The President. The specific thing I want to hear is that our commanders say we've achieved the clear objective I set out. And that's when we will say this is over. This is a campaign that has been run on the frontlines by General Tommy Franks. And that's the way it's going to continue to be, that Tommy gets the—Tommy tells us what is necessary to achieve the objective. We gave Tommy the tools necessary to win. We agreed with his strategy, and he's running this war. And when Tommy says we've achieved our objective, that's when we've achieved our objective. I'm here in Washington, DC. He's there in Qatar, and he's got commanders in Baghdad. He's better to judge whether we've achieved the objective than I have.

Go ahead.

Q. Do you need to see the weapons of mass destruction found and secured?

The President. The war will end when Tommy Franks says we've achieved our objective.

Syria

Q. [Inaudible]—for Syria's failure to heed U.S. warnings?

The President. Syria just needs to know we expect full cooperation, and that we strongly urge them not to allow for Ba'ath Party members or Saddam's families or generals on the run to seek safe haven and find safe haven there. We expect them to do everything they can to prevent people who should be held to account from escaping in their country. And if they are in their country, we expect the Syrian authorities to turn them over to the proper folks.

President's Agenda

Q. As the war does come to an end, what domestic or foreign priorities are you going to turn your focus to quickly?

The President. That's a very speculative question about foreign priority. My priority right now is to win the war on terror. And that means we've got ongoing operations in Afghanistan. The Iraqi theater was a part of the war on terror, and we continue to fight the war on terror. So that's a major priority.

Beyond that, obviously, is the promotion of the health and well-being of citizens around the world. I'm very serious about the AIDS initiative for Africa. But we will continue to deal with it, and we will continue to deal with issues like proliferation.

At home, obviously I'm spending a lot of time on economic growth and working with Members of the United States Congress to encourage them to pass a stimulus package that will affect the economy so people can find work. I want to make sure Medicare gets done—that is, the reform of Medicare—so that seniors are able to receive the health care that they've been promised. I mean, there's a lot on my agenda.

Visits With Wounded Troops

Q. Were there any conversations, either here or at Walter Reed, that stood out to you? And what was their effect on you and Mrs. Bush?

The President. Conversations?

Q. Here or at Walter Reed that stood out.

The President. Well, I think the thing that stood out the most to me was seeing two wounded soldiers swear in as citizens of the United States, one man from Mexico, one man from the Philippines—people who had gone overseas, people who had risked their lives for peace and security and freedom—they wore the uniform of the United States military. And Laura and I got to see them sworn in as citizens. It was a very profound moment. We were both honored to witness this.

You know, we've got an amazing country, where—it's so powerful, values we believe that people would be willing to risk their own life and become a citizen after being wounded. It's an amazing moment. I'm really proud of them.

Yes, ma'am.

Morale of the Troops

Q. How was the morale of the marines and sailors?

The President. It's good. The Marines are a tough group—a tough group—as you know. And a lot of the troops wanted to get healed quickly so they could go back with their units. It's an amazing thing when you see a person wounded, sitting there in a wheelchair or bound up in bandages or these different looking metal things sticking out of them to hold them together—a young man look you in the eye and say, “I can't wait to get back to my unit. I hope I'm healed fast enough to get back to Iraq.”

It's a brave lot here in Bethesda, people who are willing to sacrifice for something greater than themselves. And I feel lucky as an American to be a part of a country where citizens are willing to do that.

I reminded them and their families that the war in Iraq is—it's really about peace, trying to make the world more peaceful. This victory in Iraq, when it happens, will make the world more peaceful. I reminded them that their sacrifices really had to do with the security of our country, that Saddam Hussein and his terrorist allies are threats to America, threats to our people because of what we believe in.

I also reminded them that their courageous sacrifice will help young Iraqis grow up in a free society, that out of the chaos that takes place there now and after the fear of a Saddam Hussein and his thugs, that the Iraqi people will run their own country, make their own decisions, choose their own leaders, and will become a country at peace with others in the neighborhood.

And so their sacrifices, as I told them, were worthwhile. And it's an honor to have spoken to them and to have been with them and their families today.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:40 p.m. in the lobby at the National Naval Medical Center. In his remarks, he referred to former President Sad-

dam Hussein of Iraq; and Gen. Tommy R. Franks, USA, combatant commander, U.S. Central Command. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on Congressional Action on the Budget Resolution

April 11, 2003

I commend House and Senate negotiators for their hard work and success in ensuring that the Congress has a budget resolution in place that reflects my priorities of winning the war against terrorism, protecting Americans at home, and strengthening economic growth. I particularly congratulate Chairmen Nickles and Nussle for their leadership, not only in accomplishing agreement but in doing so ahead of schedule. The compromise budget resolution funds our priorities, restrains spending, and provides opportunity for passage of a robust jobs-and-growth package. I commend the House for passing this measure and look forward to prompt passage in the Senate.

Statement on House of Representatives Passage of Comprehensive Energy Legislation

April 11, 2003

I commend the House for passing comprehensive and balanced energy legislation. The House legislation will increase America's energy independence by diversifying our sources of renewable energy, expanding new technology, and increasing environmentally responsible exploration. This bill is a major step forward in the effort to secure our Nation's energy future, in keeping with my National Energy Policy. I look forward to prompt Senate action and to working to ensure that fiscally responsible legislation to reduce our reliance on foreign sources of energy can be brought to my desk.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

April 5

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing at Camp David, MD.

April 6

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

April 7

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Hillsborough, Northern Ireland.

In the evening, the President had dinner with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom at Hillsborough Castle.

April 8

In the afternoon, at Hillsborough Castle, the President had lunch with Prime Minister Blair and Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland. The three leaders then met with Northern Ireland leaders to discuss the peace process in Northern Ireland.

Later in the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

April 9

In the morning, the President had breakfast with Speaker of the House of Representatives J. Dennis Hastert, House Majority Leader Tom DeLay, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, and Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle. Later, he had intelligence and FBI briefings and met in the Situation Room with the National Security Council. Then, in the Oval Office, he met with Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld.

Later in the morning, in the Oval Office, the President met with President Rudolf Schuster of Slovakia to discuss the war on terror and the situation in Iraq.

During the morning, in the Oval Office, the President watched television coverage of events in Iraq.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Roh Moo-hyun of South Korea to the White House on May 14.

The President announced his intention to nominate April H. Foley to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank of the United States.

April 10

In the morning, the President had intelligence and FBI briefings and met with the National Security Council. Later, he had separate meetings with Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and Secretary of State Colin L. Powell.

Also in the morning, the President had separate telephone conversations with President Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland and Prime Minister John Howard of Australia to discuss military operations in Iraq.

In the afternoon, the President had lunch with Vice President Dick Cheney. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with President Francisco Flores Perez of El Salvador, President Alfonso Portillo Cabrera of Guatemala, President Ricardo Maduro of Honduras, President Enrique Bolanos of Nicaragua, and President Abel Pacheco of Costa Rica to discuss negotiations for a Central American free trade agreement.

Later in the afternoon, the President met with members of the Business Roundtable to discuss his jobs-and-growth package.

The President announced his intention to nominate A. Paul Anderson to be a Commissioner of the Federal Maritime Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate David Hall to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Legal Services Corporation.

The President announced his intention to nominate David W. Fleming, Jay P. Greene, and John R. Petrocik to be members of the Board of Trustees of the James Madison Memorial Fellowship Foundation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Eric I. Cantor, Robert C. Scott, and James H. Wilkinson III as members of the

Board of Trustees of the James Madison Memorial Fellowship Foundation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Vernon B. Sauer to be U.S. Representative of the Sabine River Compact Administration.

The President declared an emergency in Colorado and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by record/near record snow on March 17–20.

April 11

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of the Philippines to discuss the situation in Iraq, military operations against terrorists in the Philippines, and her upcoming state visit. He then had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy to discuss the situation in Iraq.

Later in the morning, the President had intelligence and FBI briefings and met with the National Security Council. He also met with Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush went to Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Later, they traveled to the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, MD. At both medical centers, they visited U.S. military personnel injured in operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the President presented Purple Heart medals to some of them.

The President and Mrs. Bush then traveled to Camp David, MD.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted April 7

James Broaddus,
of Texas, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the National Institute of Building Sciences for a term expiring September 7, 2004, vice John H. Miller, term expired.

Lane Carson,
of Louisiana, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the National Institute of Building Sciences for a term expiring September 7, 2004, vice Christine M. Warnke, term expired.

Robert D. McCallum, Jr.,
of Georgia, to be Associate Attorney General, vice Jay B. Stephens, resigned.

Steven B. Nesmith,
of Pennsylvania, to be an Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, vice Melody H. Fennel.

Richard James O'Connell,
of Arkansas, to be U.S. Marshal for the Western District of Arkansas for the term of 4 years, vice Kenneth Ray McFerran.

Paul Pate,
of Iowa, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the National Institute of Building Sciences for a term expiring September 7, 2003, vice H. Terry Rasco, term expired.

Paul Pate,
of Iowa, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the National Institute of Building Sciences for a term expiring September 7, 2006 (reappointment).

Jose Teran,
of Florida, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the National Institute of Building Sciences for a term expiring September 7, 2005, vice Charles A. Gueli, term expired.

Submitted April 9

J. Ronnie Greer,
of Tennessee, to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Tennessee, vice Thomas G. Hull, retired.

Thomas M. Hardiman,
of Pennsylvania, to be U.S. District Judge for
the Western District of Pennsylvania, vice
William L. Standish, retired.

James J. Jochum,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of
Commerce, vice Faryar Shirzad.

William H. Pryor, Jr.,
of Alabama, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the
Eleventh Circuit, vice Emmett Ripley Cox,
retired.

Submitted April 10

A. Paul Anderson,
of Florida, to be a Federal Maritime Com-
missioner for the term expiring June 30,
2007, vice Delmond J. H. Won, term expired.

April H. Foley,
of New York, to be a member of the Board
of Directors of the Export-Import Bank of
the United States for a term expiring January
20, 2007, vice Dan Herman Renberg, term
expired.

David Hall,
of Massachusetts, to be a member of the
Board of Directors of the Legal Services Cor-
poration for a term expiring July 13, 2005,
vice John T. Broderick, Jr., term expired.

Peter D. Keisler,
of Maryland, to be an Assistant Attorney
General, vice Robert D. McCallum, Jr.

Robert Stanley Nichols,
of Washington, to be an Assistant Secretary
of the Treasury, vice Michele A. Davis.

C. Stewart Verdery, Jr.,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of
Homeland Security (new position).

Submitted April 11

Carlos T. Bea,
of California, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for
the Ninth Circuit, vice Charles E. Wiggins,
retired.

David Wesley Fleming,
of California, to be a member of the Board
of Trustees of the James Madison Memorial

Fellowship Foundation for a term expiring
May 29, 2007, vice Alan G. Lowy, term ex-
pired.

Jay Phillip Greene,
of Florida, to be a member of the Board of
Trustees of the James Madison Memorial
Fellowship Foundation for a term expiring
November 17, 2005, vice Louise L. Steven-
son, term expired.

John Richard Petrocik,
of Missouri, to be a member of the Board
of Trustees of the James Madison Memorial
Fellowship Foundation for a term expiring
September 27, 2008, vice Elizabeth Griffith,
term expired.

**Checklist
of White House Press Releases**

The following list contains releases of the Office
of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as
items nor covered by entries in the Digest of
Other White House Announcements.

Released April 7

Transcript of a press briefing by Secretary
of State Colin L. Powell and Press Secretary
Ari Fleischer

Released April 8

Transcript of a press briefing by National Se-
curity Adviser Condoleezza Rice and Amba-
sador Richard Haass on the President's meet-
ing with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the
United Kingdom

Released April 9

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Se-
cretary Ari Fleischer

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Se-
cretary Ari Fleischer

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit by
President Roh Moo-hyun of the Republic of
Korea

Released April 10

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Colorado

Statement by the Press Secretary on the appointment of Thomas A. Shannon as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Western Hemisphere Affairs at the National Security Council

Released April 11

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer and Rear Adm. Donald C. Arthur, USN, commander, National Naval Medical Center

Announcement: President and Mrs. Bush Release 2002 Tax Return

**Acts Approved
by the President**

NOTE: No acts approved by the President were received by the Office of the Federal Register during the period covered by this issue.