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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.

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Week Ending Friday, April 25, 2003

The President's Radio Address

April 19, 2003

Good morning. This weekend, families across America will come together to celebrate Easter and continue the observance of Passover. This holy season reminds us of the value of freedom and the power of a love stronger than death.

This year, Easter and Passover have special meaning for the families of our men and women in uniform who feel so intensely the absence of their loved ones during these days. More than 250,000 American troops are serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom to protect our security and to free an oppressed people. Their families await their safe return, and our grateful Nation remembers them in prayer.

Our whole Nation has also shared in the happiness of learning that seven American prisoners of war were rescued in northern Iraq earlier this week and are now safe. Thanks to the courage of our marines and the help of Iraqis, their families have even more reason to celebrate this weekend.

After hearing the good news, the parents of rescued helicopter pilot Ronald Young, Jr., of Georgia thanked people from across America and as far away as Australia and Japan for their cards and flowers and prayers. Kaye Young, Ronald's mother, said, "You can't believe the blessings that have come out of this. Even as sad as we were, as upset as we were to think that he was being held, there have been so many blessings." Mrs. Young continued, "All over this country, people cared so much about us and about our son."

As a nation, we continue to pray for all who serve in our military and those who remain in harm's way. We also pray for those who have lost people they love in this war. I have met with some of these grieving families, and I have seen their sorrow and their strength.

Corporal Henry Brown, a 22-year-old soldier from Natchez, Mississippi, was lost in battle earlier this month. After the news arrived, his best friend, Frank Woods, Jr., said this about Henry: "He believed God was working through him, and he was part of the plan. I guess part of the plan now is God calling his soldier home."

America mourns those who have been called home, and we pray that their families will find God's comfort and God's grace. His purposes are not always clear to us, yet this season brings a promise that good can come out of evil, that hope can arise from despair, and that all our grief will someday turn to joy, a joy that can never be taken away.

Laura and I wish you all a happy Easter and a blessed Passover. Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:05 a.m. on April 16 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 19. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 18 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters at Fort Hood, Texas

April 20, 2003

The President. We just had a great church service. Like thousands of our fellow citizens, we celebrated Easter. We celebrated with our family, but we also celebrated with members of the 4th Infantry Division military families. The 4th Infantry Division is in Iraq.

We also were with two of—brave Americans, two warrant officers, chopper pilots who were captured in Iraq and recently returned to their families. They were celebrating Easter with their loved ones, moms,

dads, wives, brothers, and sisters from around our country. So it was a glorious day.

We prayed for peace and for strength, for the many blessings. I am particularly grateful that these two men were with us today. I thank God for their lives. I hope all our fellow Americans realize that we live in a great country, full of great people. And today is a day to give blessings for America as well as an Almighty and gracious God.

I'd be glad to answer a few questions.

Timetable for Ending Operation Iraqi Freedom

Q. Mr. President, you said you prayed for peace this morning. How soon can you tell the American people that this operation will be complete?

The President. When Tommy Franks says it's complete. I'll tell you this, though, the liberation of Iraq will make the world more peaceful.

Democracy in Iraq

Q. Mr. President, there have been some anti-U.S. demonstrations stirred up by religious leaders in Iraq. Are you worried that's going to hurt the rebuilding effort?

The President. I'm not worried. Freedom is beautiful, and when people are free, they express their opinions. You know, they couldn't express their opinions before we came; now they can. I've always said democracy is going to be hard. It's not easy to go from being enslaved to being free. But it's going to happen, because the basic instincts of mankind is to be free. They want to be free. And so, sure, there's going to be people expressing their opinions, and we welcome that, just like here in America people can express their opinion.

Stretch [Richard Keil, Bloomberg News].

Saddam Hussein

Q. Mr. President, what is the latest that you have on the status of Saddam Hussein? And if he is not killed or captured——

The President. That Saddam Hussein is no longer in power. That's for certain. He was in power, and now he is not. And therefore, the Iraqi people's lives will be much better off. But other than that, I don't—Stretch, we'll just have to see.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—sir, any kind of a threat if he is not killed or captured?

The President. If he is alive, I would suggest he not pop his head up.

President's Agenda

Q. Sir, do you expect to return more to a domestic agenda now that the war is winding down?

The President. I will continue to promote an international agenda of peace and freedom, and I will continue doing what I have been doing, is working on our economy and working to modernize the Medicare system. I have always been involved with the domestic policy. I somehow get somewhat taken aback when I hear stories that assume I can only do one thing. I am concerned when people in our society can't find work.

And so I've been constantly promoting an aggressive jobs-and-growth program. I believe our Medicare system needs to be modernized. I've consistently talked about that. I look forward to working with Congress to see that that's done.

Then I will continue to work to make the world a more peaceful place. The United States is a powerful country, and one of the things we ought to do is use our power to make the world more peaceful and more free. And I intend to continue to do that.

Yes.

North Korea

Q. Sir, will talks with North Korea go ahead? And do you expect any breakthrough?

The President. Well, the key thing on the North Korea agenda is that China is assuming a very important responsibility, and that is that they will confirm that which—work toward that which Jiang Zemin told me in Crawford, right around the corner here, that China's policy is for a nuclear-weapons-free Peninsula. And now that they're engaged in the process, it makes it more likely that's going to occur. You've got the United States adhering to that posture. You've got China adhering to that posture. South Korea believes that the Peninsula ought to be nuclear-weapons-free. Japan strongly believes that. And I believe that all four of us, working together, have a good chance of convincing

North Korea to abandon her ambitions to develop nuclear arsenals.

How are you, sir? Good to see you again.

Q. We've been wondering about your words of encouragement to the returnees.

The President. Well, you know, they were—first of all, they were the encouraging people. They were the ones who offered encouragement. I was, believe this or not, somewhat taken aback when I was in their presence. And these guys were so uplifting and so positive and so obviously thrilled to be here. They got in last night at midnight. They can speak for themselves. I think you can speak for yourselves. At least you did in my presence.

President's Visit to the Ranch

Q. Sir, what are you doing this weekend around the ranch?

The President. Yes.

Q. What have you been doing at the ranch this weekend?

The President. Exactly. [*Laughter*] I'm enjoying myself.

Q. Someone said home projects.

The President. Yes, home projects, a little fishing. Nothing better than fishing with your dad and Barney.

Q. What did Barney catch?

The President. Well, Barney only caught that which I caught. [*Laughter*] But worked a little brush cutting, keeping that ranch—keeping those cedars away from those good hardwoods, letting that—conserving my property; a little exercise, spent some time with my family and am really glad I had some time here in Crawford.

Visit With Former Prisoners of War

Q. Did you have a chance to visit with the two pilots in the church?

The President. I did, yes. And you can visit with them too.

Q. And their families as well?

The President. Well, we did. We visited with their families, and I had a good talk with them. They're good, strong men. It's an amazing experience, when you think about it. Here we are, Easter, the great—one of the great religious holidays, and these guys arrived last night—might have actually arrived Easter day. I don't know if it was exactly midnight or a little after midnight.

Chief Warrant Officer Young. It was a little before midnight.

The President. A little before midnight. Well, Easter eve. I was trying to make the story a little more dramatic than it really was.

Q. I wondered if either of the two pilots could tell, share their experience——

The President. Yes, they can. Sure, they can. That's up to them. They don't have to. I have to speak to the press. They don't have to. But it's not that bad an experience. This guy's getting ready—I'll tell you one thing about this guy, Hillman [G. Robert Hillman, Dallas Morning News]. He is going to go see his children for the first time since he was captured. He hasn't even seen his children. So if you ask him questions, don't make it long, because, see, we're holding a dad up from hugging two children.

Q. Could you tell us a bit about your meeting with the President inside the church?

Chief Warrant Officer Williams. It was an absolute honor, sir, an absolute honor.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—Officer Young? Chief Warrant Officer Young.

Chief Warrant Officer Young. We stand 100 percent behind whatever our President decides to do. We're honored to serve him, and this is definitely one of the highlights of my life, absolutely.

Syria

Q. Mr. President, are you getting any signs of cooperation from Syria yet?

The President. There's some positive signs. They're getting the message that they should not harbor Ba'ath Party officials, high ranking Iraqi officials. A lot of other countries have also sent that message. As you know, Secretary Powell will be going to visit with the Syrians. It seems like they're beginning to get the message. And when we think there is somebody there or know somebody is there, we of course will pass on the name and fully expect the Syrian Government to hand the person over.

Q. How many are there, do you have any idea, Iraqi leaders?

The President. Well, obviously we felt some were there; otherwise we wouldn't have spoken out. But probably the best diplomacy

is that not through the Associated Press or Reuters or Dallas Morning News or Houston Chronicle or any—let's see, who else—Bloomberg. But the best diplomacy is the diplomacy of having our friends, as well as ourselves, send clear messages. And we're doing that. And I'm confident the Syrian Government has heard us, and I believe it when they say they want to cooperate with us.

Listen, have a wonderful day.

Q. Thank you.

The President. Thank you all.

The First Lady. Bye, happy Easter.

Visit With Other Former Prisoners of War

Q. Are you going to visit with the other POWs?

The President. Today? I don't think so, Bennett [Bennett Roth, Houston Chronicle]. I think I'm going to head back over to the ranch. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:06 a.m. at the 4th Infantry Division Memorial Chapel. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Tommy R. Franks, USA, combatant commander, U.S. Central Command; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and former President Jiang Zemin of China. Chief Warrant Officer Ronald D. Young, Jr., USA, and Chief Warrant Officer David S. Williams, USA, pilots of an Apache Longbow helicopter, were shot down and captured in central Iraq on March 23. They were rescued by U.S. Marines on April 13. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Presidential Determination Under the Sudan Peace Act

April 21, 2003

Presidential Determination No. 2003–21

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Presidential Determination Under the Sudan Peace Act

Pursuant to section 6(b)(1)(A) of the Sudan Peace Act (Public Law 107–245), I hereby determine and certify that the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement are negotiating in good faith and that negotiations should continue.

You are authorized and directed to notify the Congress of this determination and to arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register.*

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., April 24, 2003]

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 22, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on April 25.

Statement on the Peace Process in Sudan

April 22, 2003

Today I informed Congress, consistent with the Sudan Peace Act, that the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) are negotiating in good faith and that negotiations should continue.

Both sides have made significant progress negotiating a just and comprehensive peace for the people of Sudan. There is still much work remaining. Sporadic military activities, primarily but not exclusively by the Government, have hindered these efforts and must stop. Despite these challenges, negotiators are advancing toward peace, and I believe that the current process presents the best prospects for peace.

It is now time to move the peace process to a new level where the actions of both parties replace promises as the measure of their commitment to peace. President Bashir and Chairman Garang must demonstrate the leadership necessary to ensure that their respective sides: 1) refrain from any hostile or provocative action; 2) complete negotiations on outstanding issues; and 3) sign and implement a comprehensive agreement.

The United States fully supports the invaluable mediation efforts of the Government of Kenya. We stand ready with other members of the international community to support the implementation of a comprehensive agreement when it is finalized this June.

NOTE: In the statement, the President referred to President Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir of Sudan, and Chairman John Garang de Mabior, Sudan People's Liberation Movement.

Excerpt From a Roundtable Interview With Personal Finance Columnists and Economic Journalists

April 22, 2003

Federal Reserve Board Chairman

Q. Greenspan done a good enough job to get another term?

The President. Yes. I think Alan Greenspan should get another term.

NOTE: The interview began at 10 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. Participants in the interview were: Amy Feldman, Money Magazine; Knight Kiplinger, Kiplinger's Personal Finance; Lauren Young, Smart Money; John Parker, The Economist; Patricia Guadalupe, Hispanic Business; John Maggs, National Journal; Daniel Kadlec, Time; Matthew Benjamin, U.S. News & World Report; James Cramer, Kudlow & Cramer, CNBC; Susie Gharib, Nightly Business Report, PBS; and Michael Hirsh, Newsweek. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on Earth Day

April 22, 2003

Earth Day encourages and celebrates countless acts of stewardship by individuals that improve the quality of our communities, parks, rivers, lakes, and private and public lands. The Government also has an important role to play in protecting our environment.

Three decades after the first Earth Day, our air is cleaner; our water is purer; and our lands and natural resources are better protected.

My administration is building on these accomplishments through new and innovative policies. We will reduce powerplant pollution by 70 percent. We will restore forest health, preventing catastrophic wildfires that devastate communities, wildlife habitat, and the landscape. And we will promote energy efficiency and security and improve and protect water quality, while encouraging economic growth. To help accomplish these goals, I have proposed legislation—Clear Skies, Healthy Forests, and the Hydrogen Fuel Initiative—which I call on Congress to pass this year.

Please join me in celebrating the 34th annual Earth Day by becoming a partner in service. I invite you to visit the USA Freedom Corps web site and EarthDay.gov to find environmental stewardship opportunities in your community. America's citizen conservation efforts play a vital role in preserving our Nation's natural resources, on Earth Day and throughout the year.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus

April 22, 2003

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

In accordance with section 620C(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, I am providing a report prepared by my Administration on progress toward a negotiated solution of the Cyprus question covering the period February 1, 2003, through March 31, 2003. The previous submission covered events from December 1, 2002, through January 31, 2003.

As in the past, U.S. officials including Secretary of State Colin Powell, Under Secretary of State Marc Grossman, Special Cyprus Coordinator Thomas G. Weston, and Ambassador to Cyprus Michael Klosson joined me in providing intensive diplomatic support to the efforts of United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan to foster a settlement to the longstanding division of the island. We hoped that the Secretary General's meetings with the two Cypriot leaders in The Hague on March 10–11, 2003, would lead to a breakthrough on the basis of the Secretary General's fair and balanced settlement plan. Unfortunately, that meeting did not result in an agreement. Despite this setback, the United States remains committed to finding a just and lasting settlement for Cyprus.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard G. Lugar, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on United States Individuals Involved in the Antinarcotics Campaign in Colombia

April 22, 2003

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

Pursuant to section 3204(f), title III, chapter 2 of the Emergency Supplemental Act, 2000 (the "Act"), as enacted in the Military Construction Appropriations Act, 2001, Public Law 106–246, I am providing a report prepared by my Administration that provides "the aggregate number, locations, activities, and lengths of assignment for all temporary and permanent U.S. military personnel and U.S. individual civilians retained as contractors involved in the antinarcotics campaign in Colombia."

This report is classified because of force protection considerations and the high level of terrorist threat in Colombia. However, the aggregate numbers given below are unclassified.

The report indicates that as of March 13, 2003, the end of this reporting period, there were 347 temporary and permanent U.S. military personnel and 324 U.S. civilians retained as individual contractors in Colombia involved in supporting Plan Colombia. This report further indicates that during January, February, and March 2003, these figures never exceeded the ceilings established in section 3204(b) of the Act, as amended.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate.

Statement on Signing the Postal Civil Service Retirement System Funding Reform Act of 2003

April 23, 2003

Today I have signed into law S. 380, the Postal Civil Service Retirement System Funding Reform Act of 2003. The Act reforms the funding of benefits under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) for employees of the United States Postal Service.

Under the Appointments Clause of the Constitution, including as construed by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1997 in *Edmond* v. *United States*, statutory authority to make decisions for the United States that are final must be exercised by, or subject to the control of, a principal officer of the United States. Sections 2(c) and 3(b) of the Act vest in certain circumstances in the CSRS Board of Actuaries (Board) authority to reconsider, review, and make adjustments with finality in certain determinations, redeterminations, and computations made by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). Yet, Board members are not principal officers because they have not been appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, as the Appointments Clause requires. They have instead been appointed by the Director of OPM in accordance with law. Moreover, the Board is not subject to the control of a principal officer in conducting the review, reconsideration, and adjustments for which sections 2(c) and 3(b) of the Act provide, because those sections make such Board action final. Accordingly, to the extent that sections 2(c) and 3(b) make the actions of the Board under those sections final, they are inconsistent with the Appointments Clause.

The Director of OPM shall prepare forthwith for submission to the Congress recommended legislation to conform statutes related to the CSRS Board of Actuaries to the Appointments Clause. While awaiting enactment of corrective legislation, I instruct the Director of OPM, who is a principal officer, to receive any results of reconsideration, review, or adjustments by the Board under sections 2(c) and 3(b) of the Act as advice and opinion for the Director's approval, modification, or disapproval. This instruction gives the fullest effect to the Act that is consistent with the Appointments Clause.

Sections 2(e)(1), 3(e)(1), and 3(f)(1)(B) of the Act purport to require officials in the executive branch to submit recommendations to the Congress or an agent of the Congress. The executive branch shall construe such provisions in a manner consistent with the constitutional authority of the President to submit for the consideration of the Congress

such measures as the President judges necessary and expedient.

George W. Bush

The White House,
April 23, 2003.

NOTE: S. 380, approved April 23, was assigned Public Law No. 108–18.

Executive Order 13297—Applying the Federal Physicians Comparability Allowance Amendments of 2000 to Participants in the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System, the Foreign Service Pension System, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System

April 23, 2003

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including section 827 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4067), section 292 of the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement Act of 1964 (50 U.S.C. 2141), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, and in order to conform the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System, the Foreign Service Pension System, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System to the Civil Service Retirement System, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. *Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System.* (a) The following provisions of the Federal Physicians Comparability Allowance Amendments of 2000 (Public Law 106–571) shall apply to the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System, subchapter I of chapter 8 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended:

(i) Section 3(a) of Public Law 106–571 to provide that any amount received under section 5948 of title 5, United States Code (physicians comparability allowance), be included in the definition of basic pay; and

(ii) Section 3(b) of Public Law 106–571 to provide for the inclusion of the physicians comparability allowance in the computation of an annuity under the same rules that apply with respect to the Civil Service Retirement System.

(b) The Secretary of State shall issue regulations that reflect the application of sections 3(a) and 3(b) of Public Law 106–571 to the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System. Such regulations shall provide that the foregoing provisions be retroactive to December 28, 2000.

Sec. 2. *Foreign Service Pension System.* (a) The following provisions of the Federal Physicians Comparability Allowance Amendments of 2000 (Public Law 106–571) shall apply to the Foreign Service Pension System, subchapter II of chapter 8 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended:

(i) Section 3(a) of Public Law 106–571 to provide that any amount received under section 5948 of title 5, United States Code (physicians comparability allowance), be included in the definition of basic pay; and

(ii) Section 3(c) of Public Law 106–571 to provide for the inclusion of the physicians comparability allowance in the computation of an annuity under the same rules that apply with respect to the Federal Employees Retirement System.

(b) The Secretary of State shall issue regulations that reflect the application of sections 3(a) and 3(c) of Public Law 106–571 to the Foreign Service Pension System. Such regulations shall provide that the foregoing provisions be retroactive to December 28, 2000.

Sec. 3. *Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System.*

(a) The following provisions of the Federal Physicians Comparability Allowance Amendments of 2000 (Public Law 106–571) shall apply to the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, title II of the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement Act of 1964, as amended:

(i) Section 3(a) of Public Law 106–571 to provide that any amount received under section 5948 of title 5, United States Code (physicians comparability allowance), be included in the definition of basic pay; and

(ii) Section 3(b) of Public Law 106–571 to provide for the inclusion of the physicians comparability allowance in the computation of an annuity under the same rules that apply with respect to the Civil Service Retirement System.

(b) The Director of Central Intelligence shall issue regulations to reflect the application of sections 3(a) and 3(b) of Public Law 106–571 to the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System. Such regulations shall provide that the foregoing provisions be retroactive to December 28, 2000.

Sec. 4. *Judicial Review.* This order is not intended to create, nor does it create any right, benefit, or privilege, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law by a party against the United States, its agencies, its officers, employees, or any other person.

George W. Bush

The White House,
April 23, 2003.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:42 a.m., April 25, 2003]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on April 28.

Remarks to Employees at The Timken Company in Canton, Ohio

April 24, 2003

Thanks for the warm welcome. I appreciate you letting me come by to say hello. [*Laughter*] I'm honored to be in Canton, and I'm honored to be here at The Timken Company.

Tim was telling me that you all have been in business since 1899. Turns out that's when William McKinley of Canton slept in the same room I'm sleeping in. [*Laughter*] Tim told me that this is a company—they say, "We are a roll-up-your-sleeves company," a can—it is a can-do environment, which is one of the reasons I've got so much optimism about the future of our economy—because of the roll-up-your-sleeves attitude by thousands of our fellow Americans, because of the business sense of "we can do whatever it takes to overcome the obstacles in our way." I know you're optimistic about the future of this company. I'm optimistic about the future of our country. It's important that Washington, however, respond to some of the problems we face.

One of the problems we face is not enough of our fellow Americans can find work. There's too much economic uncertainty today. And so 3 months ago, I sent Congress a package that would promote job growth and economic vitality. For the sake of our country, for the sake of the workers of America, Congress needs to pass this jobs growth package soon.

And that's why I thank you for letting me come and talk to you about some of the problems that we face here in America. I appreciate the Timken family for their leadership, their concern about their fellow associates. They're working hard to make sure the future of this company is bright, and therefore, the future of employment is bright for the families that work here, that work to put food on the table for their children.

I appreciate so very much Jim Griffith, the CEO of the company, for setting up this wonderful setting for a speech. I want thank you all for taking time out of your work to come and let me share some thoughts with you. I want to thank you for loving your country.

I appreciate Hector Barreto, who is the Administrator of the Small Business Association. He's traveling with me today. And I named a good man to run what they call the General Services Administration, a fellow named Steve Perry, who learned how to be a—he's making sure that we spend your money wisely. And he cut his teeth right here in The Timken Company, and he's really a good man. He's doing a fine job.

I appreciate the Governor of the State of Ohio for joining us today. Governor Taft, I'm honored you're here with us. And we've got Senator Mike DeWine with us as well. Mike, thank you for coming; Congressman LaTourette—Steve LaTourette—and Ralph Regula as well, from the Ohio delegation. We got members of the State senate. We got members of the State house. We got members of the city council. We got the mayor. We got a lot of people showing up today. [*Laughter*] And I'm glad they're here. Thank you all for taking time out of your schedules to come.

I've just come from an interesting discussion with some of our fellow citizens who have joined me on the stage, the Freelands, who are retired citizens. They are anxious about their future. They want to make sure they got enough money to live out their final

years. We talked about some of the tax relief package and what it means to their lives. Extra money in their pocket means that they're likely to have retirement security, which is something we're all concerned about.

I met with Brenda James from Stockport, Ohio. She told me Stockport had 500 people, counting all the cats. [*Laughter*] And I said, "Well, that's 200 less than Crawford—[*laughter*]—counting all the cows." [*Laughter*] But Brenda is a—owns her own insurance company. She is a small-business owner. She is a representative of thousands and thousands of people who own their own business, part of the small-business sector, which is an incredibly important part of our economy.

As well, Mike Kovach is here. He's from Youngstown, Ohio. Mike started his own business. It grew from 2 people to 70 employees. A small-business owner is an integral part of the backbone of the U.S. economy. If you're interested in jobs and job creation, you better be worried about the small-business sector of America, and the plan I'm about to talk about addresses the needs of the small-business owner.

We got Charles Parker and his wife here, Linda. Charles is a farmer; that's a small-business owner. Linda works right here for The Timken Company, as does Pat Williams. I'll talk about Pat a little bit later and what this plan means for her and her family.

Finally, Bryan Rice, of Rice's Nursery, right here in Canton. If you're interested in buying a plant, as the weather gets better and you want to improve your garden, Bryan said he's got some for sale. [*Laughter*]

Today I had the honor of meeting Anson Park. Anson, you need to step out here so people can see you. Come over here. Anson is not hard to miss. [*Laughter*] I want to tell you why I want to introduce Anson. You know a lot of focus on America these days is on our military, how strong we are, how mighty we are, how powerful we are. And that's—it's been helpful to be mighty and powerful. But in the midst of the discussion of our military might, oftentimes we overlook the true strength of our country. And the true strength of America is the hearts of our fellow citizens. That's the strength of America, the compassion of neighbor loving neighbor.

Anson Park is an employee of Enterprise. He's a volunteer in what they call the ASSET program with Akron Urban League, which is a mentoring program, a program designed to make sure that every child has a chance to succeed in America, a program that understands that if you're a fortunate soul, if you're somebody with talents to give, you're called upon to lend those talents to help somebody in need. Whether you become involved in mentoring or in your church or synagogue, in helping somebody in need, the definition of patriotism is to help somebody. And my call to our fellow Americans is, our might is more than our military; our might is our compassion for our fellow citizens. And I want to thank you, Anson, and thank thousands across America and the hundreds in this room who are serving your country by teaching a child to read or making sure a shut-in gets loved or helping a boy or a girl at a Boys and Girls Clubs. The strength of America is the compassion of America, and I'm honored you're here, Anson. Thank you.

In January of this year, I defined two great priorities for this Nation, priorities for my administration. First, we will confront and defeat threats to America wherever they gather. We have made very clear that we would hunt down terrorists who hate us and who want to harm us. And we made very clear that we would deal with the growing danger of Saddam Hussein and his brutal regime. The world now knows we keep our word.

Our men in uniform have made us all proud; the women in uniform have made us all proud because they've showed incredible skill and bravery and decency. They have fought the enemy with fierce courage. They treated the innocent with compassion and respect, and they are working to make sure the Iraqi people are free.

You see, the values of America understand and say clearly that freedom is not America's gift to the world. Freedom is God's gift to each and every person of the world, no matter where they live. And it was with that value that our soldiers are now acting in Iraq. And we're working to make sure America is more secure, but we're also making sure that the Iraqi people can be free, can run their own

country, can decide their own fate. I know that some of you here today have a loved one serving in the Armed Forces. You tell them the United States of America is proud of your loved one's service.

We learned a good lesson on September the 11th, 2001—I say a good lesson. It better be a good lesson. It was a sad day, but we learned a lesson, and that is that oceans will no longer protect us from the threats of a new era. We must have a—there's a new reality in the world today. We learned that lesson, but the world has also learned that this Nation is resolute, that we're determined. And the terrorists are learning that they are not safe anywhere on this Earth from the justice of the United States of America. Our coalition of 90 nations is still intact. We're still working hard. We're waging the war on terror every single day, and we're winning.

And here at home, we have another great priority. We will work for a vigorous and healthy and growing economy so that every American who wants to work can find a job.

This Nation and this economy has been through a lot. We have come through a recession. The first three quarters of the year 2001 were recessionary. They were negative-growth. We had to deal with some major corporate scandals. Some of our citizens forgot to tell the truth. They thought they could cook the books. It affected the psychology that—their behavior affected the psychology of this country. They will be dealt with. Americans now know that if you try to lie, cheat, or steal from employees or shareholders, you will be dealt with.

We've also seen a slowdown in the global economy. Other countries around the world aren't growing. We've been attacked. We fought a war in Afghanistan, and now we have finished a war—in the process of finishing a war in Iraq. And yet, in spite of those obstacles and difficulties, this economy is growing. As a matter of fact, we are growing faster than most of the industrialized world.

In other words, we've overcome some obstacles because there are great strengths in this economy. Interest rates are low, and that helps people, for example, who are trying to buy a home or refinance a home. Inflation is low. Oil and gas prices are coming down, which helps the consumer. It puts more money in your pocket. The entrepreneurial spirit in America is healthy. It's a great strength of our country. If you feel like you've got what it takes to start a business, if you want to go out on your own, you think you've got a good product, this country says, we welcome you to do so. This is an entrepreneurial heaven here in America, and that's positive for our country.

But the greatest strength of the American economy is found right here, right in this room, found in the pride and skill of the American workforce. Last year, productivity growth in America was 4.8 percent. That is the best annual increase since 1980. Here at Timken last year, productivity rose 10 percent. Which means that America can compete with any nation in the world because we got the finest workers in the world.

The high productivity that comes from steady innovation and skilled workers gives our economy a tremendous edge. In the mid-1980s, it took Timken an average of 14 worker-hours to produce a ton of alloy steel. Today it takes less than 4 hours. Over the long run, this kind of productivity makes American products more competitive, and it raises the standard of living for the American people. The true strength of the country is the fact that we're a productive nation.

And as a result of the strengths, we're growing. But this economy has got unmet potential. We know this economy can grow faster, and as it grows faster, it will create more jobs. And we also know that the right policies coming out of Washington can unleash the great strengths of the economy and create the right conditions for growth and prosperity. And that's what I want to talk to you today about, what Washington can do.

Sometimes when you hear, "Don't worry, we're from the Federal Government; we're here to help," it makes people a little nervous. [*Laughter*] The role of Government is to create an environment in which capital moves freely, in which the entrepreneurial spirit is strong, create the conditions so that people feel comfortable about investing and, therefore, create the conditions for job growth.

We're making some progress in Washington. We've got a consensus on an important principle: Members of both political parties now support tax relief. Both sides agree. Both sides understand that if people have more money in their pocket, they will likely spend it or invest it, which is good for job growth. They also understand that the money we're talking about in Washington is not the Government's money. It's your money. It's the people's money.

And when you have more of it, it drives up demand for goods and services. And that's important, given the productivity increases of today. You see, there's pressure on employment. The more productive the workforce becomes—if productivity arises—rises like it's doing now, it means a worker can produce more. And unless there are folks willing to buy more goods and services, a company is not likely to hire. Productivity increases mean you can get by with less workers. And so the only way to create the conditions necessary for additional job expansion is to increase demand for goods and services. And the best way to create demand for goods and services is to let people have more of their own money. And that's why tax relief is important in the year 2003.

The debate over whether we ought to have tax relief is over. That's positive. Now we're talking about how big the package ought to be and what it ought to look like. And I've got some ideas about how big it ought to be and what it ought to look like. The package ought to be least $550 billion in size over a 10-year period in order to make sure that the economy grows. The package needs to be robust, so that we can create more than a million new jobs by the end of 2004. That's not my projection. That's the projection of a lot of smart economists who've analyzed the package. They believe that if the package is implemented by the United States Congress, of at least $550 billion, more than a million new jobs will be created by the end of '04. And that's good for the American worker. And that's what the whole purpose of the package is, to create the conditions for job growth, so people can find work.

Some in Congress say the plan is too big. Well, it seems like to me they might have some explaining to do. If they agree that tax relief creates jobs, then why are they for a little bitty tax relief package? If they believe tax relief is important for job creation, they ought to join us and join this administration and join many in Congress and have a robust package that creates enough work for the American people.

When I was campaigning and first got into office, the country's economy was slowing down. And then, as I say, the minute I got sworn in, we were in a recession. And that's why I went to Congress for a tax package. I said, "We got to get the people more money so that we keep demand alive." And Congress responded, but the problem is they responded with a phased-in program. They said tax relief was important, and tax relief should be robust, but they phased it in over a period of years, 3 years in some cases, 5 years in others, and 7 years. Listen, all I'm asking Congress to do is to take the tax relief package they've already passed, accelerate it to this year so that we can get this economy started and people can find work.

If the economy needs help now, why wait? Instead of slowly raising the child credit from $600 to $1,000 per child, let's do it this year and send the $400 for every child to the American family now. Instead of gradually reducing the marriage penalty, we ought to do it now. Congress ought to respond to the conditions of the day. They shouldn't play politics with job creation.

So I hear a lot of talk in Washington about what this means. I'll just tell you—let me just give you the facts, and you can decide whether this plan is fair. If you're a family of four making $40,000 a year, this tax plan will reduce your taxes from $1,178 to $45—a family of four, $40,000.

Pat Williams works right here for The Timken Company. She's a single mom. She's got the toughest job in America, being a single mom. [*Laughter*] She's got two children. Sheree is in college; Danielle is in high school. Under the plan I've just described and submitted to the United States Congress, her yearly tax bill would fall by nearly $1,000—every year. It's not $1,000 just this year. It's $1,000 every year. It's a thousand more dollars of her own money in her pocket. She says this: "This will give me a little more

breathing room so that I can assist my children as they go off and do better and bigger things." It's a beautiful statement by a mom who is working hard for her children.

There are Pats all over this country who will benefit from the tax plan, people who are struggling to make sure their kids can go to college, people who want to save, people who—that thousand dollars a year will mean a lot. Tax relief is good for the average citizen.

An economic plan that makes sense also must focus on small businesses. Small businesses create most of the new jobs in America. If you're interested in economic vitality like I am and like you are, there needs to a vibrant component of any tax plan that affects small business. A majority of small firms pay business taxes at the individual tax rate. Most small businesses pay individual tax rates. A lot of people assume, "Well, they pay corporate rates." That's just not true. Most small businesses are sole proprietorships, limited partnerships, or Subchapter S's. So when you hear me talk about reducing income tax rates, you're really hearing me talk about more capital in the hands of small-business owners. Reducing income tax rates is money injected into the small-business sector of the American economy, that sector which creates most of the new jobs in America.

Under this plan, 23 million small businesses will see their revenues increase because of tax relief, which means more money for investment, more money for growth, and more money for jobs. That's what that means.

And the Tax Code ought to encourage small-business investment. Today, a small business can deduct a maximum of only $25,000 in the year in which they buy equipment. The proposal I submitted to the United States Congress says we need to triple that amount to $75,000 a year and index that amount to inflation. When a small business buys new machinery, not only does it help that small business become more productive and more competitive and more likely to hire somebody, it also means that the person who built the machine is more likely to hire somebody. It will have a ripple effect. The purchase of a machine has a ripple effect throughout our economy. It makes sense to encourage investment, particularly in the small-business sector.

Mike Kovach knows that. He's from Youngstown, Ohio. He runs City Machine Technologies. I told you he started his business in 1985, and he had two employees, and now there's 70. That's a pretty good record. He not only survived; he thrived. And as a result, 68 more people work, have got jobs. He pays taxes on his business at the individual-rate level. And he wants to make new investments. The proposal I've just outlined to you will save this good man's company $15,000 a year. And he says—let me tell you what he says the tax relief will mean. He says, "That extra money helps put an entry-level man on my shop floor." And the horizons for this fella are limitless, is what he says. That's Mike's words, not mine. That's what he thinks. And since he's a decisionmaker, I take him for his word. The $15,000 a year means that Mike is more likely to hire one extra person. And if that happens all across the country, we've taken a big step toward making sure that people who are looking for work can find a job.

He also understands better than some of us in Washington do about how this economy grows. "Any time you can improve the bottom line of Main Street business"—this is Mike's words—"it's good for the city; it's good for the State; it's great for the Nation. It all trickles up, instead of trickling down." Now, he may not have a Ph.D. in economics, but he's got a Ph.D. in commonsense economics. And this tax plan helps people like Mike, and it's needed. And Congress needs to move.

We can also promote economic growth and job creation by treating investors fairly. Stock dividends are often the mark of a solid and respectable firm and where you know the profits are real because you see them in cash. If you pay a dividend, the check actually shows up in somebody's mailbox. It means you're not a pie-in-the-sky company. You're not making hopeful projections, and maybe they happen, and maybe they don't. If you pay a dividend and you tell people you're going to pay a dividend, you got to deliver the dividend.

Timken is a dividend-paying company. I say it's a dividend-paying company; after all,

Timken has paid a dividend for the last 324 consecutive quarters. That's a solid record. It says to me the people who run Timken care a lot about their shareholders and the employees. After all, there are 44,000 Timken shareholders, employees, retirees, teacher retirement funds, college endowments, a lot of ordinary investors here in Canton who take great pride in owning stock in a local company.

Right now, dividends are taxed twice. When the company makes a profit, the dividend—the profits are taxed, and that's good. That's the way it should be. However, when the shareholder receives his or her part of the profits, it's taxed again, and that doesn't make sense to me. Taxing something twice is not good public policy, particularly when you're worried about investment and job creation and when you're worried about shareholders and their ability to save and invest, and when you worry about retirement citizens who rely upon dividend income. The double taxation of dividends is bad for the citizens of this country, and we need to eliminate it.

Ending the double taxation of dividends, according to many economists, will help the stock market. It'll create value in the stock market. And that's positive. After all, we're becoming an ownership society. Whether it be in your pension plan or directly, you own stock. And when the market's strong, it creates a sense of optimism. It gives you a sense of security. If getting rid of the double taxation of dividends increases the markets, it'll be good for millions of investors all across America. It'll be good for our economy, and it will reduce the cost of capital, which means companies like Timken have got a better capacity to expand, which means jobs.

Ending the double taxation of dividends would be good for our seniors who receive half of all taxable dividend income. And that's important. The Freelands here—I mentioned they're retired; they receive dividend income. It would be helpful to the Freelands in their retirement to not have their dividends taxed twice.

Ending the double taxation of dividends will be good for Timken workers. And that's important for you to understand. Last year, this company paid out more than $30 million in dividends, and a lot of that went to Timken employees. So when you hear politicians say the tax cut is only for the rich, they're talking about you. When you have more money to save and invest, it's good for your future. It's good for this economy.

Economists estimate that ending the double taxation of dividend would create more than 400,000 new jobs by the end of the year 2004. And sooner the Congress gets this done, the sooner we'll see new jobs for the American people.

When we put the job-and-growth package together, I didn't set arbitrary limits on tax relief. Instead, I asked, "What does the economy need? How do we stimulate work? What do we need to do for small businesses? What will create the most jobs?" And I concluded that of all the proposals that I laid out, lower taxes for families, lower taxes for small businesses, ending the double taxation of dividends to the tune of at least $550 billion, is the best way to make sure this economy grows.

Now, you hear talk about deficits, and I'm concerned about deficits. I'm sure you are as well. But this Nation has got a deficit because we have been through a war. And I told the American people we would spend what is necessary to win the war. We weren't going to hold back so our soldiers were—didn't have the right equipment and the best training and the best possible pay.

And we had an emergency and a recession, which affected the revenue growth of the U.S. Treasury. I mean, the stock market went down. Some of the pie-in-the-sky projections didn't make it, and the investors said, "Oops. The numbers weren't real." The investors said, "Well, it looks like the days of everything is going up may end." And so people started selling, and the markets went down. That affected the revenues coming into the U.S. Treasury. Recession, negative growth means less revenues. And so, of course, we've got a deficit, but I know we can grow out of the deficit with wise policy.

And the best way to deal with the deficit is to address the two things that affect the deficit. First, increase revenues to the Treasury through economic growth and vitality. And that's what we discussed here today. And

second, make sure Congress does not overspend your money. Make sure it focuses on the things that we need and doesn't spend beyond the things that we need. The best way to solve the deficit is to grow the revenues coming into the Treasury through economic vitality and have fiscal sanity in Washington, DC.

And with people looking for work here in America, we have a responsibility to help those people find jobs. So I've asked the Congress to help create what we call Personal Reemployment Accounts. It's an innovative way to make sure that workers are helped, that they can help themselves. Under this program, Americans who face the greatest difficulties in finding work will receive up to $3,000 to use in their job search. And they would have flexibility in how to use that money. A person with a reemployment account would be able to decide whether to use the funds for job training or childcare or transportation or to cover the costs of moving to another city. If the job is attained quickly, within 13 weeks, the worker would be able to keep the cash balance that exists in the reemployment account. To strengthen the economy, you not only need good tax policy, but we need to help American workers find work and the dignity that comes with holding a job.

The last few months have been a time of challenge for this country, no question about it. The resolve of this Nation has been tested, yet we have great resources of national character and national strength to overcome any challenge that we face. Our confidence and our optimism have never wavered. We're defending the peace of this world. We love peace. We use our might to make the world more peaceful. We're bringing freedom to corners of the world that haven't seen freedom in generations. We stand strong on the principle that freedom belongs to everybody, no matter the color of their skin, no matter what their religion, no matter where they live. We're building prosperity for this country. It's a unique moment in our history, and you're living through it. And as importantly, the American people are rising to meet it.

I want to thank each of you for your strength. I want to thank you for your love of your country. I want to thank you for the work you do every day. Thanks for letting me come.

May God bless you, and may God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:56 a.m. in the Development Laboratory. In his remarks, he referred to W.R. "Tim" Timken, Jr., chairman of the board, and James W. Griffith, president and chief executive officer, The Timken Co.; Gov. Bob Taft of Ohio; Mayor Richard D. Watkins of Canton; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks to Employees at the Army Tank Plant in Lima, Ohio

April 24, 2003

Thank you for the warm welcome. It's great to be in Lima. It is great to be with the hardworking people, the incredibly skilled workers of the Lima Army Tank Plant.

I want to thank you for greeting me. I want to thank you for giving me a chance to come and talk to you about two things that are on my mind. The first thing I want to talk about is making sure that people in this country who want to work can find a job.

We've been through some tough times here in America. We've had a recession, and then we had an enemy attack us. Then we attacked back. There's been the uncertainty, uncertainty of war hanging over our heads. Then we had some of our corporate citizens forget what it means to be a responsible citizen, and they didn't tell the truth to employees and shareholders. And we had to deal with the corporate scandals that rocked the confidence of America.

But in spite of that, our economy is growing. In spite of that, we're the best economy in the industrialized world. But we're not growing fast enough. I don't like it when I hear stories about our fellow Americans looking for work and can't find a job. And therefore, I sent the Congress a package that will encourage economic vitality and job growth, a package that starts with this concept, that we need more demand for goods and services so our people can find work. And the best way to encourage demand for goods and

services is, let the people keep their hard-earned money in the first place.

I put out a plan that says that a family of four making $40,000 a year will have their taxes reduced from about $1,100 to $50. That's 1,000 more dollars in their pocket every year, so they can spend; they can save; they can invest the way they see fit.

I start with understanding whose money we're talking about. We're not talking about the Government's money in Washington, DC, we're talking about your money. And the best way to get this economy started, the best way to make sure people can find work is have an economic stimulus package that focuses on jobs. And that's what I've sent to Congress. And for the sake of the American workers, Congress, when they get back from that Easter break, needs to pass a robust jobs-creation program.

But I've also come here to talk about peace and security and freedom. And this is a good place to talk about it. This is a fine place, right here in Ohio, to talk about peace and security, because after all, it is in this facility that has provided the American military with the most effective armored vehicle in the history of warfare, the mighty Abrams tank.

I'm here to thank you all for your service to our country and thank you for the vital contribution you have made to peace and freedom. You see, we're determined in this country to overcome the threat to our country, wherever they may gather. And each of you have had a part in this mission. Each of you are a part to making sure this country is strong enough to keep the peace.

In the liberation of Iraq, we've applied powerful weapons, like the tank you build here, to strike our enemy with speed and precision. In the use of the Abrams tank, we have got a vehicle that is the most safe vehicle for our fighting personnel, precise enough to protect innocent life.

Work is not done. There's still dangers and challenges to remain. But one thing is certain: Saddam Hussein is no longer in power. And thanks to the courage and might of our military, America is more secure today. And thanks to the courage and might of our military, the Iraqi people are free.

I appreciate Lieutenant Colonel Walsh for letting me come. [*Laughter*] He didn't have any choice. [*Laughter*] I want to thank General Thompson. I want to thank your plant manager, Gary King. I want to thank the UAW local president, Jeff Monroe. I want to thank all the workers who are here.

I want to thank you for bringing your families. I thank you for showing your families what you have done to help make history, to help make the world more peaceful. You tell your children, when they see the images of war on their TV sets, that we take the action we take and you build the products you build because we believe in peace in America. We understand we have an obligation to keep our nation secure. You build the weapons you build here because we love freedom in this country.

I want to thank some elected officials who have come, your Governor and your Senator DeWine and Congressman Oxley. Remember I talked about how we had some citizens who forgot to be responsible citizens when it came to whether or not they told the truth on the books. We passed a bill called Sarbanes-Oxley that said, if you cook the books, you're going to be held to account. The Oxley of Sarbanes-Oxley is with us today. And I want to thank Mike Oxley for his good work on behalf of honest government.

And Congressman Turner is with us and Congressman Gillmor and your mayor—your mayor, as well as local officials. Thank you all for coming. I'm honored to be here.

You see, it's a chance for me to remind the people of this country that we're witnessing historic days in the cause of freedom. This is an historic moment. Just over a month ago, not all that long ago, a cruel dictator ruled a country, ruled Iraq by torture and fear. His regime was allied with terrorists, and the regime was armed with weapons of mass destruction. Today, that regime is no more.

We have applied our might in the name of peace and in the name of freedom. That's why we applied our might. We gave our word that the threat from Iraq would be ended. And with the support of allies and because of the bravery of our Armed Forces, we have kept our word.

Last year, one of the first preparations for possible war, one of the first parts of our planning for war, came when General

Tommy Franks—from Midland, Texas, I want you to know—went to the same high school as First Lady Laura Bush did—who, by the way, sends her love and her best. Tommy Franks asked—one of the first requests in preparation for possible war was that we send 1,200 Abrams tanks to the theater. That was one of the first decisions that Tommy made. And when the war came, in the initial stages of that war, units equipped with Abrams tanks and Bradley fighting vehicles led the charge, were first in as we crossed into Iraq to free the people of that country.

When our coalition met fierce resistance in An Nasiriyah and on the way up, south to north, our armored forces answered decisively. The tanks built right here in Lima, Ohio, charged through elements of the dictator's Republican Guards, led the forces of a liberation into the heart of Iraq, and rolled all the way into downtown Baghdad. Throughout the campaign, our enemy learned that when Abrams tanks are on the battlefield, America means business.

Our edge in warfare comes, in part, from the American spirit of enterprise—no question about that—from great companies and great workers like you all. During the fighting in Iraq, tank commanders sent word that they needed better ways to protect the Abrams exhaust systems from enemy fire. During the battle, word came back from Iraq, right here to Lima. And so engineers and machinists, pipefitters and welders and packers and transportation specialists of this plant went straight to work. Within a week, you had a new part designed and manufactured, and the first kits to deal with that problem shipped to Iraq. When our soldiers and marines needed you most, when the pressure was on, you came through, and America is grateful.

I understand that one welder here, Mark Springer, had a especially strong interest in completing the project, to making sure the Abrams were able to fulfill their mission. You see, his son Joshua is serving in Iraq as an Abrams tank commander. I thank Mark for his service. And the next time, Mark, you communicate with Josh, you tell him the Commander in Chief came to Lima to say how proud I am of his service and the others' service to our country.

I've seen buttons with pictures of troops on the shirts of moms and dads and loved ones. I want to thank you all for your prayers for the safety of our troops. I want to thank you for your love of your children. They need to know, over there in combat, that people here at home love them. I want to thank you for your patience and just let you know they'll be home when the mission is complete.

The mission is not complete. Our forces still face danger in Iraq. Our enemy is scattered, but they're still capable of doing harm. But we're not going to lose our focus. We're going to press on until the mission is complete.

In any conflict, America's greatest single asset is the character of the men and women who wear our uniform. In Iraq, they have shown us once again that powerful weapons are a great advantage in modern warfare, but courage is still decisive. Some of the bravest have been lost to us and to their families. Some of the best have not returned home, and we will never forget their sacrifice.

In Iraq, we are defending this Nation's security. After the attacks of September the 11th, 2001, we will not allow grave threats to go unopposed. We are now working to locate and destroy Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

Iraqis with firsthand knowledge of these programs, including several top officials who have come forward recently, some voluntarily—[*laughter*]—others not—[*laughter*]—are beginning to cooperate, are beginning to let us know what the facts were on the ground. And that's important because the regime of Saddam Hussein spent years hiding and disguising his weapons. He tried to fool the United Nations, and did for 12 years, by hiding these weapons. And so it's going to take time to find them. But we know he had them. And whether he destroyed them, moved them, or hid them, we're going to find out the truth. And one thing is for certain: Saddam Hussein no longer threatens America with weapons of mass destruction.

We're not only in Iraq to protect our security; we're also showing that we value the lives and the liberty of the Iraqi people. We're pressing forward with the critical work

of relief and reconstruction in that country. And the work will be difficult. You see, Iraq is recovering not just from weeks of conflict but from decades of totalitarian rule. The dictator built palaces in a country that needed hospitals. He spent money on illegal weapons, not on the education of the Iraqi children or food for the Iraqi people. Statues of the man have been pulled down, but the fear and suspicion he instilled in the people will take longer to pass away.

Yet I have faith in the Iraqi people. They have the resources, the talent, and the desire to live in peace and freedom. And in the hard work of building a free Iraq, they will have a consistent friend in the United States of America.

We have sent teams of people over to Iraq to make sure that they have adequate food. We're restoring electricity. We're making sure the hospitals are full of medicine and staffed with people to help the people of that country.

I've sent a good man to help the Iraqi people, retired General Jay Garner—sent him to Iraq, and he arrived in Baghdad just this week. You see, it wasn't all that long ago that our tanks were in Baghdad. It may seem like a lot of time—there's a lot on our TV screens—but it wasn't all that long ago that the people got the first whiff of freedom. And now we've followed up with a team of people, headed by this man Garner who's got one overriding goal, to leave a free nation in the hands of a free people. That is our goal in Iraq.

Our mission—besides removing the regime that threatened us, besides ending a place where the terrorists could find a friend, besides getting rid of weapons of mass destruction—our mission has been to bring a humanitarian aid and restore basic services and put this country Iraq on the road to self-government. And we'll stay as long as it takes to complete our mission. And then all our forces are going to leave Iraq and come home.

And we're making progress. There's tangible, visible progress on the ground there in Iraq. Step by step, the citizens of that country are reclaiming their own country. They're identifying former officials who are guilty of crimes. That deck of cards seems to be getting complete over time. [*Laughter*] They're volunteering for citizens patrols to provide security in the cities. They're beginning to understand that they need to step up and be responsible citizens if they want to live in peace and a free society.

Many Iraqis are now reviving religious rituals which were forbidden by the old regime. See, a free society honors religion. A free society is a society which believes in the freedom of religion. And many Iraqis are now speaking their mind in public. That's a good sign. [*Laughter*] That means a new day has come in Iraq. When Saddam was the dictator and you spoke your mind, he would cut out your tongue and leave you to bleed to death in a town square. No fooling. That's how he dealt with dissidents.

Today in Iraq, there's discussion, debate, protest, all the hallmarks of liberty. [*Laughter*] The path to freedom may not always be neat and orderly, but it is the right of every person and every nation. This country believes that freedom is God's gift to every individual on the face of the Earth.

Last week there was an historic gathering that occurred in the city of Al Nasiriyah, where Iraqis met openly and freely to discuss the future of their country. And out of that meeting came this declaration by the Iraqis that were there: Iraq must be democratic. And that's the goal, the commitment of the United States and our coalition partners: Iraq must be democratic. And as new Iraqi leaders begin to emerge, we'll work with them. One thing is certain: We will not impose a government on Iraq. We will help that nation build a government of, by, and for the Iraqi people.

Our country and our good allies are working to create the conditions for lasting peace. We're aiding the advance of peace by seeking the advance of freedom. Free societies do not nurture bitterness or the ideologies of terror and murder. Free societies are founded on the belief that every life has equal value. Free societies—free societies turn creative gifts of men and women toward progress and the betterment of their own lives. American interests and American founding beliefs lead in the same direction. We stand for human liberty.

This past month has been a time of testing for our country. And the American people have responded with resolve and strength and optimism. Whatever challenges may come, we can be confident our Nation is strong; our purpose is firm; and our cause is just.

Thank you for coming. May God bless you, and may God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:13 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Lt. Col. Damon T. Walsh, USA, Army plant commander, and Gary King, plant manager, Lima Army Tank Plant; Maj. Gen. N. Ross Thompson III, USA, commander, U.S. Army Tank-Automotive and Armaments Command; Jeff Monroe, president, UAW local 2075; Gov. Bob Taft of Ohio; Mayor David J. Berger of Lima; Gen. Tommy R. Franks, USA, combatant commander, U.S. Central Command; and Lt. Gen. Jay Garner, USA (Ret.), Director, Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance for Postwar Iraq, Department of Defense.

Interview With Tom Brokaw of NBC News

April 24, 2003

Preemptive Strike Against Saddam Hussein

Mr. Brokaw. Mr. President, there's no tougher decision any President makes than to commit the Nation to war. Let's talk about that first night, when you surprised us all by launching the preemptive strike against the residence of Saddam Hussein.

The President. Well, they started in the Situation Room, and we had Tommy Franks on the screen with a commander—I think out of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait City and out of—and a CENTCOM commander out of Tampa Bay, along with their British and Australian counterparts.

And then we had the national security team aligned on the table there, and I went around to each of the commanders and said, "Are you happy with the strategy? Do you have what it takes to win the war?" They all answered affirmatively.

I then gave the instructions to Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld that Operation Iraqi Freedom would commence at a time of Tommy Franks' choosing, told Tommy, you know, for the sake of peace and security and the freedom of the Iraqi people that he's got the orders to proceed. I asked God's blessing on him and the troops. He saluted. I saluted back and left the room.

It was a—it was an emotional moment for me because I had obviously made up my mind that if we needed to, we would use troops to get rid of weapons of mass destruction to free the Iraqi people. But the actual moment of making that decision was a heavy moment. I then went outside and walked around the grounds, just to get a little air and collect my thoughts.

And I thought I was pretty well through with the day until 3:40 that afternoon, when I got a call from Secretary Rumsfeld that said, "Mr. President, the plans have changed." He said, "I would like to change the plans. I need your permission to change the plans. Can I come over?" He didn't say the plans had changed, but I knew what he'd told me on the phone, it would mean the plans would have changed. And that is, we had a shot at Saddam Hussein, they thought.

So I assembled the national security team of the Vice President, Colin Powell, Rumsfeld, Myers, CIA Tenet, Condi Rice, Andy Card, and some other CIA agents there—some guys I hadn't seen before came in the Oval. And the reason why they were there is they had a source on the ground that was convinced that not only would Saddam Hussein be in the complex, but Uday and Qusay, his two sons, would be there as well. And they explained why this was the case. And basically they were asking permission from me to launch an airstrike.

I was hesitant at first, to be frank with you, because I was worried that the first pictures coming out of Iraq would be a wounded grandchild of Saddam Hussein—but Saddam Hussein, who was not there at the time we started making the decision, would never show up—that the first images of the American attack would be death to young children.

And this is an interesting moment, because as time went on during the day, that evening, the intelligence got richer and richer. In other words, the guy on the ground was calling in to the CENTCOM headquarters, who was immediately calling in to the White

House—more and more information. For example, he discovered that there was a bunker 100 feet away from one of the houses, a bunker that had so much concrete and was likely to house Saddam when he arrived and his kids, his boys.

And as the intelligence got richer, I got more confidence with the notion that Saddam would, in fact, be there. And at 7:15 that evening, I gave the order for Tommy to proceed with an attack on the farms, but changed—they had an ordnance package of 30 cruise missiles. But because of the bunker, they had to change the timing of the attack so that the stealth bomber went in first, unloaded his ordnance, and then the TLAMs or the cruise missiles would follow in behind, which means they had to reprogram all these missiles. And they didn't have much time to do it because the flight time of the missiles from their particular launch sites was about 2 hours.

This other thing that bothered me during the decisionmaking was that the stealth would go in unescorted. There would have been no air suppression on enemy defenses prior to him going in, in order to keep the element of surprise alive. So the day changed, and it was a dramatic several hours because we really changed the battle plan.

Mr. Brokaw. Did you watch that on television, when the bombs began to land?

The President. Yes, I did. I did. Actually, they began to hit, and then I went in and shortly thereafter addressed the Nation—so I was getting makeup and talking about the—you know, figuring out the words in the speech. I did. And it was about 9:30 p.m., as I recall, and then I spoke to the country about 10:15 p.m.

But what was interesting, Tom—I don't think many people know this—is that the game plan was to move Special Ops forces early, at noon that day. And we would have explained to the country, as kind of creating the conditions for the battlefield, so that when our troops moved significantly, their conditions would be ripe for success.

At Friday, at noon, I was going to address the Nation about the air campaign, and the ground campaign would follow shortly thereafter. Turns out that because we conducted the air raid, I had to speak that night to the country. And then Tommy said he was going to move the ground force movement up early to secure oilfields and to move as quickly as possible into Iraq, which really says that he had the ability and the authority and the flexibility necessary to change a war plan to meet the needs on the ground.

Mr. Brokaw. That human intelligence that we had on the ground, did you hear back from him, I presume?

The President. We did.

Mr. Brokaw. And did he——

The President. He felt like we got Saddam.

Mr. Brokaw. He did?

The President. He felt like that, yes. And we're trying, of course, to verify. And before there's any declaration, of course, there will be a lot of evidence.

Mr. Brokaw. Did you see that famous television video of Saddam the next day, in the glasses, reading awkwardly from the notepad and so on?

The President. Well, yes. I was amused by that, almost as amused by that as I was his PR man—it was one of the classics—probably helping NBC Saturday Night Live out mightily, but through his—it was just unbelievable what he was saying.

But you know, the people that wonder if Saddam Hussein is dead or not, there's some evidence that says that he—suggests he might be. We would never make that declaration until we were more certain. But the person that helped direct the attacks believes that Saddam, at the very minimum, was severely wounded.

Mr. Brokaw. That night?

The President. That night, yes. And it explains—again, there will be a lot of speculation until the truth is known, but it explains why, for example, one reason why dams weren't blown up or oilfields weren't destroyed, even though we found them to be wired with—potentially to be blown up.

Shock and Awe/Iraqi Resistance

Mr. Brokaw. Now, the air campaign is underway, and troops are moving across the border——

The President. That would be a day and a half later.

Mr. Brokaw. A day and a half later.

The President. But troops were moving across the border earlier.

Mr. Brokaw. "Shock and awe" was the phrase that was heard so much before it all began. It didn't have exactly the effect I think that a lot of people expected, because resistance down south was—from the militia, at least—a little tougher than a lot of people anticipated.

The President. Yes, I think it's true. I think that's an accurate look back. "Shock and awe" said to many people that all we've got to do is unleash some might and people will crumble. It turns out the fighters were a lot fiercer than we thought. Because, for example, we didn't come north from Turkey, Saddam Hussein was able to move a lot of special Republican Guard units and fighters from north to south. So the resistance for our troops moving south and north was significant resistance. On the other hand, our troops handled it—we handled that resistance quite well.

President's National Security Team

Mr. Brokaw. Did that give you a pause for a while?

The President. Well, first of all, I had confidence in the plan, because I've got confidence in my national security team. Remember, my advisers are people such as Dick Cheney, who had been through the war before as the Secretary of Defense; Colin Powell, who's not only an Army general but also had been through a war before; Don Rumsfeld, who's a very successful man in the private sector but also has got great judgment when it comes to the military; Tommy Franks—I really trust Tommy; we speak the same language; after all, Tommy went to Midland Lee High School, graduated in 1963, one year ahead of Laura—Condi, and—I mean, I get good, solid advice from people who analyzed this war plan, analyzed the strategy, looked at it in depth, had looked at it for quite a bit of time and convinced me that it would lead to victory.

So I've never doubted the plan. Obviously, I was concerned when we lost life, or concerned that day when some of our prisoners, the people were captured. But I had confidence in the plan because I had confidence in the team.

U.S. Prisoners of War

Mr. Brokaw. Let me ask you about that day that the prisoners were captured. Everything played out on television. There's been probably no more televised event in the history of mankind. Suddenly you look on the screen, and from Iraqi television there are five American prisoners of war, including a woman who was a cook, Shoshana Johnson.

The President. Well, I believe that was a Sunday. And it was a tough day. It was a tough day for America. It was a tough day for the Commander in Chief, who committed these young soldiers into battle in the first place, which made their release even more joyous. But war is—it's tough.

Mr. Brokaw. Did you make some calls?

The President. No, I didn't. I've written a lot of letters, but I didn't call any parents then. I prayed for them, but I didn't call.

Mr. Brokaw. Did you talk to Laura about it?

The President. I did. I talked to Laura a lot during this period of time. She's been a steady source of strength and inspiration and love. And you know, there's—any time there's war and a lot of action, a lot of movement of troops and equipment, people are—there's going to be death. And it's the hardest aspect of this job, frankly, is to know that those lives were lost because of orders I gave.

On the other hand, I firmly believe, and history will prove, that decisions that I made and the actions that our country took will make the world more peaceful, will help secure the United States, and as importantly, give the Iraqi people freedom, let them be free, free from the clutches of one of the most barbaric regimes in the history of mankind.

Rescue of Jessica Lynch

Mr. Brokaw. The flip side of all that was the rescue of Jessica Lynch.

The President. It was.

Mr. Brokaw. Did you get advance notice that that operation was going down?

The President. I did. I did. Secretary Rumsfeld told me that—not to get my hopes up, but there was going to be a very sensitive operation into a hospital where he thought that there would be an American POW. And that's all he said. He was very circumspect,

as he should be, to a lot of people, because he didn't want any information to get out that might have jeopardized the operation. But he gave me a heads-up. And then when we heard that she had been rescued, it was a joyous moment.

Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction

Mr. Brokaw. Let me ask you about some of the larger policy questions. Before we went to war against Iraq, one of the reasons that you justified this war was that he posed a real threat to the United States. If he couldn't defend his own country—and we have not yet been able to find the weapons of mass destruction, which were not even launched in defense of Iraq—was that threat overstated?

The President. No, not at all. As a matter of fact, I think time and investigation will prove a couple of points: One, that he did have terrorist connections; and secondly, that he had a weapons of mass destruction program. We know he had a weapons of mass destruction program. We now know he's not going to use them. So we've accomplished one objective, and that is that Saddam Hussein will not hurt the United States or friends or our allies with weapons of mass destruction.

Secondly, we are learning more as we interrogate or have discussions with Iraqi scientists and people within the Iraqi structure, that perhaps he destroyed some, perhaps he dispersed some. We also know there are hundreds and hundreds of sites available for hiding the weapons, which he did effectively for 10 years from the—over 10 years from the United Nations, and that we've only looked at about 90 of those sites so far—I mean, literally hundreds of sites.

And so we will find them. It's going to take time to find them. And the best way to find them is to continue to collect information from the humans, the Iraqis who were involved with hiding them.

Mr. Brokaw. As you know, there's still a lot of skepticism around the world about American motives in Iraq.

The President. Right.

Mr. Brokaw. Why not fold in some of the U.N. inspectors to this effort, not turn it over to them but make them a part of it? Would that help with the credibility, do you think?

The President. I think there's going to be skepticism until people find out there was, in fact, a weapons of mass destruction program. One thing there can't be skepticism about is the fact that this guy was torturous and brutal on the Iraqi people. I mean, he brutalized them; he tortured them; he destroyed them; he cut out their tongues when they dissented. And now the people are beginning to see what freedom means within Iraq. Look at the Shi'a marches or the Shi'a pilgrimages that are taking place.

The world will see that the United States is interested in peace, is interested in security, and interested in freedom.

Mr. Brokaw. But it is important to find the weapons of mass destruction, or the evidence that he had a massive program underway, isn't it?

The President. Yes. I think we will. I'm pretty confident we will.

Postwar Iraq/New Iraqi Regime

Mr. Brokaw. Your old family friend Brent Scowcroft, who had some differences with the policies here, says one of the things that he's worried about is that there's no tradition of democracy there, that people will just seize power wherever they can. It seems to a lot of people that that is playing out in the south, especially where the Shi'a are saying, "Look, we're going to run things here. We'd like to have an Islamic government." Isn't that a serious concern?

The President. Well, first of all, we just started. The country isn't secure yet. I mean, the first things that we're worried about is making sure that the militia units of the old Fedayeen Saddam aren't out killing people. So our troops are working with coalition forces to make the country more secure.

Secondly, we're worried about making sure there are—you know, there's the presence of a police force in these different cities to maintain order. We are just beginning to move our teams in place to help the Iraqi bureaucracies get up and running.

I was pleased to see that the Doctors Without Borders organization said that they went into Iraq and found no grave humanitarian crisis. In other words, the food is getting to

the people; medicines are getting to the people. They did say there is a shortage of personnel, professionally—not a shortage of medicine but a shortage of professionals necessary to deliver the aid, and we'll help the Iraqi people address that problem.

My point to you is that we have an orderly process to bring stability and food and health to the Iraqi people so life can begin to return to normal. And then I'm confident that a government will emerge. I dismiss the critics who say that democracy can't flourish in Iraq. It may not look like America. You know, Thomas Jefferson may not emerge. But nevertheless, I do believe there can be a representative government and all factions can be represented.

Mr. Brokaw. But if it becomes an Islamic government with a 60 percent Shiite majority, it could very well become that—would that be acceptable to you?

The President. What I would like to see is a government where church and state are separated. And I believe there's enough people within Iraq that would like that kind of—there may be a nationalist government, a government that really honors the Iraqi history and the Iraqi traditions and Iraq, itself. But it must be a government that is going to, you know, represents all the people, and I believe that can happen.

Looting by Iraqi Citizens

Mr. Brokaw. Were you surprised by the degree of looting that occurred almost instantly?

The President. No, I wasn't surprised at all.

Mr. Brokaw. You were not? Why?

The President. I mean, these were people that hated the regime under which they lived.

Mr. Brokaw. But they went after hospitals and museums and——

The President. I don't like that part. And that was the—you know, the hospitals and museum were the absolute worst part. The good news is, is that the hospitals are now up and running. They've got enough medical supplies to take care of the people that need help. That museum was a terrible incident. I couldn't agree more with people who say we're sorry that happened. We are, by the way, helping find treasure, restore treasure, and we'll provide all the expertise and help they need to get that museum up and running again.

But I wasn't surprised. It was vengeance, because it's like uncorking a bottle of frustration. These are people whose relatives were beaten, tortured, shocked, killed because they spoke out, because they disagreed with Saddam Hussein. And history is going to show how brutal this man and his sons and his regime really, really was. And therefore, it did not surprise me when people took vengeance on police stations or took, you know, went out into Government buildings and destroyed them.

I'm also pleased by the fact that that level of—those riots or whatever you want to call them, released some steam, and now life is returning to normal. Things have settled down inside the country.

Mr. Brokaw. There's still a lot of nationalism, though. I mean, it's a very strong strain there, and in fact, some people are taking control of their neighborhoods or whole sectors of Baghdad——

The President. Yes, like the guy, the self-proclaimed mayor.

Mr. Brokaw. Right.

The President. This is all—a reasonable government will evolve. We just started. It wasn't but 2 weeks ago yesterday that the statue fell down. There have been 20-plus years of tyranny. And it's hard to believe that in 20 days democracy will emerge. But the point we're making is, is that the foundation for democracy is now being laid. And by the way, there's nothing wrong with nationalism within Iraq. People say the United States should leave, and we want to leave, as soon as we've accomplished our mission.

Timing of U.S. Withdrawal

Mr. Brokaw. How long will that take?

The President. Somebody asked me the other day, how long is it going to take to get rid of Saddam Hussein's regime? My answer is, as long as necessary.

Mr. Brokaw. But it may take as long as 2 years——

The President. It could. It could, or less. Who knows? But the point I'm making is, is that we are there to promote security, to

make sure life returns back to normal, and to help the Iraqi people establish a government, because we believe that democracy can work within Iraq. And nationalism, by the way, you know, means it's more likely that a government will evolve that is focused on Iraq, its traditions, and its history, as opposed to focusing on a particular religion.

Iran/Syria

Mr. Brokaw. Is Iran trying to take root in southern Iraq, in your judgment?

The President. Well, you know, you hear a lot of reports about the vacuums being filled by Iranian agents. We certainly hope that Iraq—Iran will allow Iraq to develop into a stable and peaceful society. We have sent the word to the Iranians that that's what we expect. I talk to Tony Blair and Jose Maria Aznar on a regular basis—talked to them yesterday—and this subject came up. And both of them have got contacts with the Iranian Government, and they will send the same message, similar to what we did to Syria, that we expect there to be cooperation and——

Mr. Brokaw. And if there is not, is Iran next?

The President. No, we just expect them to cooperate, and we will work with the world to encourage them to cooperate. We have no military plans. Just like I said about Syria. I mean, listen, the world, a lot of the—frankly, the left wing critics of our policy have said, "You know, these people are so militaristic, they're getting ready to invade Syria." That was the line of the day. We made it clear to the Syrians we expect them to cooperate.

Mr. Brokaw. And are they responding?

The President. Yes, I think they are. They're doing a better job. The borders look like they're tighter. As we find people that have escaped into Syria, we're giving the Syrian Government the names of the people, and they appear to want to be helpful.

United Nations

Mr. Brokaw. Let me ask you about the future of some other relationships that we have, with the United Nations, for example. There are two people who admire you very much and are powerful pundits in Washington. George Will and Bill Kristol have said of the U.N., George Will saying, "If it's not the end as we know it, it should be." And Bill Kristol has said, "The U.N. I used to think was just useless, now I think is harmful."

The President. Well, I would hope that the U.N. would be useful. I would hope that the U.N. would be an effective body at helping deal with the new threats of the 21st century, dealing with terror and terrorist states and proliferation of weapons.

And I can understand why some are frustrated with the United Nations, because the United Nations looked like it was not willing to join in the cause of freedom. And it was frustrating to Americans that it looked like the United Nations might hold up U.S. foreign policy that was being conducted in the name of peace and security.

On the other hand, I was the person that went to the United Nations in the first place. It was my decision to go give the speech on September 12, 2002, that called the United Nations to account. The United Nations will have a useful role in the reconstruction of Iraq, for example, because a lot of nations won't be able give reconstruction money without a U.N. conduit.

And there is a role in this case for the United Nations. I hope as threats emerge, the United Nations will be more responsive to those threats.

Visit by Australian Prime Minister John Howard

Mr. Brokaw. Are you going to invite French President Chirac to the ranch in Crawford?

The President. Well, my first guest will be John Howard—well, first guest from this moment forward will be John Howard, and he's coming——

Mr. Brokaw. The Prime Minister of Australia.

The President. The Prime Minister of Australia, he's a great friend and a wonderful ally, will be coming a week from Friday.

French President Jacques Chirac/NATO

Mr. Brokaw. Well, what about President Chirac, though?

The President. You really—you're really trying to get me to comment. I doubt he'll be coming to the ranch any time soon. On

the other hand, you know, there are some strains in the relationship, obviously, because of—it appeared to some in our administration and our country that the French position was anti-American. And my concern about the French position is it would weaken—the position they took could weaken the NATO Alliance. NATO is a very important alliance. It's something that we've not only worked to modernize—I've worked to expand NATO, and it's very important that Europe not become fractured to the point where the United States won't have relations with a united Europe whole, free, and at peace.

And hopefully, the past tensions will subside, and the French won't be using their position within Europe to create alliances against the United States or Britain or Spain or any of the new countries that are the new democracies in Europe.

Bush Doctrine

Mr. Brokaw. We've talked about this before. Now that the war in Iraq is effectively over, have you thought about a Bush doctrine that is a comprehensive structure of some kind, on a global basis, for dealing with weapons of mass destruction and the need, even, of preemptive strikes against rogue nations?

The President. Well, the Bush doctrine is actually being defined by action, as opposed to by words. Although, I think if you compile a lot of the speeches I've given, you could come up with the Bush doctrine.

The way I view the post-Saddam Iraq opportunities are these: one, that we can deal more effectively with weapons of mass destruction, that we made it clear that people who harbor weapons of mass destruction will be dealt with. Hopefully, most of it can be done diplomatically. And you'll see us—see me as well as members of my administration begin to push for new international protocols that will make international organizations more effective at stopping the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

I also believe that reform in the Middle East as well as Middle East peace is an initiative that we will continue to—that I will push and push, particularly in the Middle East peace process. I will work hard to achieve the two-state solution. And we have a good opportunity to do so.

There are other parts of the Bush doctrine, if you want to call it that, that are equally important. One, the AIDS initiative in Africa is an incredibly important initiative, and I intend to call upon Europe, particularly the wealthier nations in Europe, to join us in providing the medicines, the anti-retroviral drugs, and the strategies necessary to start saving lives, more lives on the continent of Africa.

There's a lot of things where we can work together, is my point, to overcome any differences that might have existed on the Iraq policy.

Arab-U.S. Relations

Mr. Brokaw. Before the war began, we were told by any number of people in your administration that a lot of the leaders of the Middle East were privately saying, "We hope that you get rid of Saddam Hussein." But once the war was over, they did not go public with praise for the United States—Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, our best friends in that region. While on the Arab street, there continued to be very strong criticism to what we were doing.

The President. Yes, I can understand that. I mean, these guys—first of all, the thing that was important with those countries is they provided us help when we asked for help. We needed basing help in certain countries, and they provided it. That was one of the reasons why were successful against Saddam Hussein. We asked, and they delivered.

Part of the frustrations that exist in the Middle East—and I recognize this—is the fact that there is no movement toward peace with the Palestinians. Part of the frustration in the Middle East is also the fact that some of these governments need to enact reforms, and that's why both reform and working on the Middle Eastern peace will be priorities of mine.

Middle East Peace Process

Mr. Brokaw. Is the Middle East peace process going to accelerate greatly now that Arafat has accepted a Prime Minister? And has Arafat been removed effectively from the equation?

The President. I think it will accelerate and, hopefully, greatly. I'm not so sure what

that exactly means, but it will certainly accelerate from where we are today.

The selection of Abu Mazen as the Prime Minister is very positive, primarily because Abu Mazen has stated publicly that he is against terror and will use whatever powers he has to fight off the terrorist activities that have really prevented peace from moving forward.

In my June 24th speech I laid out——

Mr. Brokaw. Will you have him to the White House without Arafat, for example?

The President. I will one of these days, yes.

Mr. Brokaw. Without Arafat?

The President. Yes, absolutely. Listen, I always felt—first of all, I looked at the history of Mr. Arafat. Now, I saw what he did to President Clinton. There was no need to spend capital, unless you had an interlocutor who could deliver the Palestinian people toward peace. And I believe Abu Mazen is a man dedicated to peace, and I look forward to working with him for the two-state solution. My view is, is that the only way for there to be peace and for the survival of Israel and for the hope of the Palestinian people is for two states living side by side in peace. And I've laid out a plan to achieve that, a plan that calls upon actions by the Israelis, by the Palestinians, as well as by the Arab nations surrounding that troubled part of the world.

Military Speed and Flexibility/ David Bloom

Mr. Brokaw. There used to be an American doctrine about when we go to war it's overwhelming force. Now it's speed and flexibility, based on Iraq, and instant communication, not only behind the scenes, but everybody gets to look in on the battlefield.

The President. Well, the instant communications part was one of the reasons why I was comfortable in giving Tommy Franks and the commanders in the field the go-ahead to take the shot at Saddam Hussein on the first day. Because there in the Oval Office, we were getting near-instant feedback from eyes on the ground, what he was seeing, what he felt the conditions were like. It was an amazing moment to think that a person risking his life, viewing the farms, watching the entries, seeing, observing what was taking place inside one of Saddam's most guarded facilities, was able to pick up a device, call CENTCOM, and CENTCOM would call us in near real-time.

The ability to communicate has changed the nature of warfare. It allows for more interoperability, more ability for the Navy and the Air Force and the Special Ops and the Army and the Marines to work side by side in a coordinated basis, which makes it easier to fight a war with flexibility and speed and precision. So the doctrine really has changed.

As well, it's an amazing concept when you think about real-time TV focusing on war. And by the way, I express—Laura and I express our deepest sympathies to David Bloom's wife and his family. I knew him well during the campaign. He was a great journalist and really a good fellow, loved his family a lot. But you know, to think that David was there——

Mr. Brokaw. Rocketing across the desert.

The President. ——rocketing across the desert. It's an amazing feeling.

Mr. Brokaw. I don't want you to give up sources and methods, but the guy who called in the first time—still with us?

The President. Yes, he is. He is with us. Thank God. A brave soul.

Mr. Brokaw. That's great.

[*At this point, the first part of the interview concluded. After leaving Air Force One, the interview resumed at 2:45 p.m. in Lima, OH.*]

Economic Stimulus Plan

Mr. Brokaw. Listen, now that the war in Iraq is over, the whole country is turning its attention back to the economy, and there's—on the Hill, in your own party, there's a lot of skepticism about whether or not the tax cuts can get the job done. You started at $750 billion. You've now been talking about $550 billion. The Senate is talking about $350 billion. Would you take $350 billion?

The President. Well, I think it ought to be—actually, I think it ought to be more robust, and the reason why is because a lot of economists have told me that the tax cut needs to be sizeable enough to affect demand—job creation. And that's why I'm pushing what I'm pushing, and I'm not going

to quit pushing until they end up voting. I believe it's the right thing.

The American people need to know that last January I put out a job plan, and the Congress has been debating it, talking about it. And it was important in January. It's important now, and I expect them to get a good jobs bill out.

Mr. Brokaw. The Congressional Budget Office, however, says, you know, they've looked at it with three or four different models, and it's just going to be too small in terms of the impact on the overall economy.

The President. Well, I disagree with that. I would like—I would hope that they would argue the case on the floor of the Senate and the floor of the House, but the skeptics said it needs to be bigger. One of the things they also said was it's very important to hold the line on spending—that's another thing, that we accomplished something in the budget, discretionary spending is being held to about 4 percent. On the spending side, we've got restraint. We just need to make sure the package is robust enough to create new jobs so people can find work.

Mr. Brokaw. It's tough to come out here to Ohio, though. You've got a Republican Governor who went in at a very high number, and now he's down to around 42 percent in terms of approval rating. He's having to raise taxes, cut services. Wouldn't it be better to defer a little bit, get him off the hook? And these are important services that he's talking about. It's about Medicaid and——

The President. No, not at all. Actually, what's important is—and this is the reason to come to Ohio. It's a place where people are looking for work. And I feel so strongly that my job package will work, I'm willing to come to a place where people need work and say, let's get this done in the Congress. And this is the perfect place to bring a message of job creation, because there are people here that—in the manufacturing sector, in particular—that are looking for work.

Energy Policy

Mr. Brokaw. Mr. President, I've been struck by the fact that you now have the country's attention, and there's been almost no discussion about the need for conservation on energy and finding renewable sources and making that the highest of the high priorities. I think the country is ready to make a sacrifice, to do something.

The President. Well, actually, there's been a significant discussion about new sources of energy. I was the guy that stood in front of Congress and asked Congress to appropriate $1.2 billion to advance the hydrogen automobile. In other words—as well as ask Congress to appropriate monies to explore the opportunities for nuclear fusion.

And I believe that instead of getting mired in this talk about command and control and lawsuits and regulations, that we ought to use our technological capabilities to leapfrog the status quo and lead the world to a more energy efficient society.

Mr. Brokaw. But should we also assume that we can burn at the same rate that we have been? And you know, there's just no question about it, we've been on an energy consumption binge.

The President. Yes, that's right. And I think that that's why we need new technologies to help us go from one era, a hydrocarbon era, to a technologically driven era. And I believe we can get there. We've got energy for, you know, a decade or two, without the consumer suffering badly. But now is the time to move on new technologies. This is precisely the initiative I laid out for Congress.

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Mr. Brokaw. You're not going to get the Arctic Wildlife Refuge this time, though, do you think?

The President. Well, it's foolish not to, in my judgment. There's a lot of natural gas up there. And the reason we need natural gas here in America is so—places like California built a lot of electrical plants that run on natural gas. We've got to get it from somewhere, and I believe we can explore in the Arctic Wildlife in an environmentally sensitive way—and so do a lot of other people.

But it's become such a political issue. Washington, you know, is a town that—you know this better than me, I mean——

Mr. Brokaw. No, I don't know it better than you. You're in the cockpit. [*Laughter*]

The President. Well, you've been there longer than me. You're much older than I

am. [*Laughter*] But they take an issue and turn it into such high politics. Really, the Arctic Wildlife Refuge is a classic example of an issue that's been over-politicized, where the science never is allowed to emerge. We can drill for natural gas, which we need to do, in an environmentally safe way.

President's Spirituality and Decisionmaking

Mr. Brokaw. Let me ask you about the war and your attitudes about it. It's well known that you're a man of very strong faith. You have political and national security responsibilities as well. Was there a time when it was difficult to reconcile those two roles, your political and national security responsibility and your own spiritual obligation?

The President. Well, listen, any time you think about committing someone into combat is an emotional moment. You can't be detached from the human life involved with war. And I genuinely feel that the decision I made will make America more secure. And I felt like the risks of doing nothing, the risk of taking no action far exceeded the risks of combat, particularly since I knew our plan was geared toward minimizing life—minimizing loss of life—not only minimizing loss of life on our side but on the side of the innocent Iraqis.

I don't bring God into my life to be a political person. I ask God for strength and guidance. I ask God to help me be a better person. But the decision about war and peace was a decision I made based upon what I thought were the best interests of the American people. I was able to step back from religion, because I have a job to do. And I, on bended knee to the good Lord, asked Him to help me to do my job in a way that that's wise.

Casualties of War

Mr. Brokaw. I had a difficult moment on the air when the mother of a marine who got killed called in and wanted to talk about her son and said, "You know, I like what the networks are doing, but all those graphics and all that fancy coverage, for those of us who are out here with children in harm's way, it's murderous, Mr. Brokaw." And it put it all in perspective. Did you have a moment like that?

The President. Oh, I think, yes, maybe about the day the prisoners, the people took the wrong turn, the kids, the cooks, and the people like that from El Paso, Fort Bliss, went the wrong way. That was a tough day. And it's got to be—listen, I went down to Camp Lejeune and met with family of—who've lost their lives. I met a young lieutenant's wife with a young baby, and it's tough.

The amazing thing is, of course—I shouldn't say "of course"—but the amazing thing about meeting those people is they gave me great strength. They were proud of their loved ones' sacrifice. They understood why we were there, and they were strong, really strong.

Mr. Brokaw. There was a young marine who was killed, whose father in Baltimore held up his picture and said, "I want the President to see this. It's my only son, and I want the President to see this picture."

He was opposed to the war. Did you see it?

The President. No, I didn't see that, but I'm sure I can understand why a dad would feel that way. I would feel the same way if I were a dad about how miserable I felt if I lost my son.

Politics of War

Mr. Brokaw. Can you imagine being FDR and running World War II all those years—Truman, Korea? All the years that Vietnam went on and 57,000 lives were lost.

The President. I know.

Mr. Brokaw. Now that you've had your own——

The President. One month.

Mr. Brokaw. ——one month, but your own time on the crucible, to know what the country would go through?

The President. It's a very interesting question, because—yes, I know, I can't imagine what it would be like to have been through the Vietnam war as the President of the United States. I hope I would have done it differently. I hope I would have had a clearer mission and given the militaries the tools and their strategy necessary to achieve a mission, as opposed to politicizing the war

the way they did. But you're right, it's a strain on the country.

On the other hand, the coverage was a little different.

Mr. Brokaw. It was.

The President. The perpetual moves 24 hours a day.

Mr. Brokaw. And part of that was, by the way, that it became very emotional very quickly. One of the things that you said was that you wanted to liberate the Iraqi people so they could speak their minds. But in this country, when some people spoke their minds and it happened to be in opposition of the war, they got jumped on by a lot of folks.

The President. Oh, I don't think so.

Mr. Brokaw. Well, the Dixie Chicks, for example. Would you have them come to the White House?

The President. I mean, the Dixie Chicks are free to speak their mind. They can say what they want to say. And just because—they shouldn't have their feelings hurt just because some people don't want to buy their records when they speak out. You know, freedom is a two-way street. But I have—don't really care what the Dixie Chicks said. I want to do what I think is right for the American people, and if some singers or Hollywood stars feel like speaking out, that's fine. That's the great thing about America. It stands in stark contrast to Iraq, by the way.

First Lady's Role

Mr. Brokaw. What did you and Laura talk about at the end of the day? During Usama bin Laden, she was counseling you on your language—[*laughter*]—saying——

The President. It wasn't so every day. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Brokaw. ——"Georgie, you don't have to say, wanted dead or alive."

The President. Well, she counsels me on a lot of things. Most of the time it's—but who's going to listen. She understood all along why I was making decisions I was making. She understood the threat that Iraq posed. She understood that Iraq was a part of the war on terror. And she doesn't—she's like a lot of people; she was nervous about war.

Former President Bush

Mr. Brokaw. So was your dad, by the way.

The President. I'm sure he was. Nobody likes wars.

Mr. Brokaw. Did your dad talk to you every day?

The President. No. I check in with him on occasion, but now we don't talk every day.

Mr. Brokaw. How about Barbara? What does she have to say, your mother?

The President. She's as feisty as ever. She's doing well. She doesn't follow everything in the news and the opinion like Dad does. He's an every-word man.

Mr. Brokaw. Do you seek his counsel? It's a little tricky. Here's your father, somebody that you revered and love, and he's been there before. But at the same time, you're now the President. How do you work that out?

The President. Well, I really don't spend a lot of time hashing over policy with him. He knows that I am much better informed than he could possibly be. He gives me—our relationship is more of—and our conversations are more along the line of a dad and a son, a dad conveying to his son how much he loves him, which is important. Even at the age of 56 years old, it's important.

Toppling the Baghdad Statue

Mr. Brokaw. Did you call him the day the statue came down of Saddam Hussein?

The President. I can't remember.

Mr. Brokaw. Because that was a memorable day.

The President. It was. It was.

Mr. Brokaw. Did you watch all that?

The President. I watched some of it. As you know, I've got a schedule to keep. I don't have time to sit around watching TV all day long. But somebody—I think the—Ashley or Blake said, the statue, they're about to get it down. They had a guy hammering on it for a while, and I watched the hammering——

Mr. Brokaw. It took a while to pull it down.

The President. I watched them hammer. And then they said, "They're hooking it up, and they've got the crane out there." And I said, "Well, let me know." They said, "Well,

it's about to come down." So I hustled and then watched it.

Iraqi Information Minister

Mr. Brokaw. What about the Iraqi information minister, who to the very end—[*laughter*]——

The President. He's my man. He was great. [*Laughter*] Somebody accused us of hiring him and putting him there. He was a classic.

Mr. Brokaw. Al-Sahhaf.

The President. Al-Sahhaf.

Mr. Brokaw. He said, "We are repulsing them at the airport. This war is just about over." [*Laughter*]

The President. He was great. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Brokaw. Did you watch him actually? [*Laughter*]

The President. I did watch some of his clips. You know, a lot of the stuff I get, people come in and report to me—did you hear what so-and-so said, or, did you see that? So I get a lot of things secondhand.

But in the case of the statue or Sahhaf, somebody would say, "He's getting ready to speak," and I'd pop out of a meeting or turn and watch the TV.

Saddam Hussein

Mr. Brokaw. And did they tell you when Saddam made those bizarre video appearances very late in the war, when he was said to be walking around the neighborhood——

The President. Yes, I saw some of that. Like, Condi will come in and say—I'll pick up the phone; I've got direct link now—I'll say, "Well, Condi, what is this business about, what does the Agency say about this latest videotape?" She'll pop in and say, "You know, I talked to Tenet, and Tenet says our analysts can't imagine that the guy could possibly be alive, walking around Baghdad the same day the statue came down."

You know, as I told you, we had some evidence early on that strikes from the first day may have gotten him. I say "may" because we don't have the DNA in hand to prove, and people really don't want to be in a position, Tom, where you make—broadcasting success and then all of a sudden Saddam Hussein shows up somewhere. According to this one eyewitness, he's not going to show up anywhere.

Al Qaida and North Korea

Mr. Brokaw. Final question. You still have two big issues out there on the horizon, Al Qaida and North Korea. North Korea today saying that it's reprocessed 8,000 plutonium rods, and if you don't start talking to them, they're willing to sell them.

The President. Yes. See, they're back to the old blackmail game. One of our goals and objectives must be to strengthen the nonproliferation regimes and get the whole world focused on the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction or the materials for weapons of mass destruction. And North Korea is making my case that we've got to come together.

And we started that process in the North Korean Peninsula that is coming together. The Chinese now, for the first time, are partners at the table. I look forward to hearing what the Chinese say about being rebuffed by the North Koreans because they, too, believe that the Peninsula ought to be nuclear-weapons-free. This will give us an opportunity to say to the North Koreans and the world, we're not going to be threatened. On the other hand we, the world, must come together to make sure institutions like the IAEA are effective at stopping proliferation.

It's another reason, by the way, for us to also advance the missile defense systems, because the missile defense system will make it less likely that a nuclear country could blackmail us or Japan or any one of our friends.

Mr. Brokaw. And Al Qaida?

The President. Yes, we're on the hunt on Al Qaida.

Mr. Brokaw. Has it diminished 50 percent, 70 percent?

The President. I can't give you a number, but it's certainly diminished. And Khalid Sheik Mohammed's arrest, right before the Iraqi war, was a blow to the Al Qaida network. They're still moving around. And we're watching. And we're moving. We're cutting off money. There are some parts of Afghanistan where we think some are hiding, and we've got—we're on their trail.

The other day, for example, in the Situation Room, we had Tommy up, and he gave us a briefing on Iraq. He's the CENTCOM commander, as you know, also responsible for Afghanistan, and then the general in place in Afghanistan came up. So we split the briefing between Iraq and Afghanistan. And it was an important briefing because he was telling us troop strength and troop strategies as well as how well the country is beginning to get on its feet.

But the point I'm trying to make is, is that we are constantly moving against Al Qaida in Afghanistan as we speak or as we conduct the Iraq theater.

Mr. Brokaw. Mr. President, thank you very much for your time today. We really appreciate it.

The President. I enjoyed it.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 11:14 a.m. aboard Air Force One for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to former President Saddam Hussein and former Information Minister Muhammad Said Kazim al-Sahhaf of Iraq; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; President Jose Maria Aznar of Spain; former National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft; journalists George Will and Bill Kristol; Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; NBC journalist David Bloom, who died of natural causes in Operation Iraqi Freedom; country music group the Dixie Chicks; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; and Khalid Sheik Muhammed, senior Al Qaida leader responsible for planning the September 11 attack, who was captured in Pakistan on March 1. A portion of this interview could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Message on the Observance of Armenian Remembrance Day, 2003

April 24, 2003

Today marks the anniversary of a horrible tragedy, the mass killings and forced exile of countless Armenians in the final days of the Ottoman Empire. Many Armenians refer to these appalling events as the "great calamity," reflecting a deep sorrow that continues to haunt them and their neighbors, the Turkish people. The suffering that befell the Armenian people in 1915 is a tragedy for all humanity, which the world should not forget. I join the Armenian-American community and Armenians around the world in mourning the horrendous loss of life.

I also salute our wise and bold friends from Armenia and Turkey who are coming together in a spirit of reconciliation to consider these events and their significance. I applaud them for rising above bitterness, and taking action to create a better future. I wish them success, building on their recent and significant achievements, as they work together in a spirit of hope and understanding.

As we remember those who perished and suffered, we salute the nation of Armenia, and Armenians everywhere. The United States is grateful for the contributions of Armenian Americans to our national life. Generations of Armenians have employed wisdom, courage, and centuries-old traditions to overcome great suffering and enrich their adopted American homeland.

The United States is proud to be a friend of Armenia, a young state with an ancient heritage. We are deepening our partnership to help achieve a secure, prosperous, and dignified future for the citizens of Armenia. The United States is committed to achieving a just and lasting settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. We will also continue to help Armenia as it strives to strengthen its democracy and market economy.

On behalf of the American people, I send solemn wishes to the Armenian people on this day of remembrance. Our nations stand together, determined to create a future of peace, prosperity, and freedom for the citizens of our countries, for our regions, and for the world.

George W. Bush

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

Proclamation 7666—National Charter Schools Week, 2003

April 25, 2003

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Charter schools provide many children with a first-class education, and they have gained national recognition for their accountability standards, innovative programs, and success with young people. The high expectations they set and the opportunities for development they create help students attending charter schools realize their potential and achieve their dreams.

Charter schools are held to the same standards, including curriculum standards, as traditional schools, and are also accountable to students, parents, and community leaders for producing results and improving achievement. By defining expected goals and offering options for children trapped in low-performing schools, charter schools help improve the overall quality of education in America.

The success of charter schools is evident in the achievements of the children who attend those schools and in the positive response from the communities they serve. In little more than a decade, 2,700 charter schools have opened in 36 States and the District of Columbia, and nearly two-thirds of these schools have waiting lists. Forty States and the District of Columbia have enacted charter school laws, and this year four additional States began considering charter school laws. To help State and local districts provide parents with more quality education alternatives, I have proposed increased funding for charter schools so that more of our children can receive the gift of a good education.

The accomplishments of charter schools prove that we can improve our public education system by replacing low expectations with a culture of achievement that rewards success and does not tolerate failure. Over the last 2 years, my Administration has taken steps to realize this vision by supporting accountability for results, expanded parental choice, increased local flexibility, and a focus on what works. With the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, we continue to build a stronger educational foundation for America's children. States are now responsible for improving student achievement in public schools by maintaining tough academic standards and setting annual progress goals. The law further requires regular testing to ensure all students are proficient in reading and math and to help identify learning problems.

My Administration is working to provide the resources schools need to fund education reform and achieve these high standards. We have increased funding for elementary and secondary education by 36 percent in the last 2 years, and the Federal Government will spend nearly $24 billion on these programs this year. Through the new Reading First program, over $500 million has been distributed to 29 States to assist with reading programs that help ensure that our children will know how to read by the third grade. Expansions of our charter schools, and reforms in traditional public schools, are helping build the mind and character of our future leaders.

During National Charter Schools Week, we renew our commitment to our children and their education. I urge every American to visit a charter school and learn about its efforts to help children in their community. Charter schools are just one of many successful alternatives that ensure that no child is left behind. By raising expectations and fostering hope, we can help build a future of promise for our next generation of Americans.

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 27 through May 3, 2003, as National Charter Schools Week. I commend the States with charter schools, and I call on parents of charter school children to share their success stories with others so that all Americans may understand more about the important work of charter schools.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fifth 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 29, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on April 30.

Proclamation 7667—National Volunteer Week, 2003

April 25, 2003

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Volunteering is central to the American character and is a fundamental expression of responsible citizenship. From our Nation's earliest days, people came together to do whatever was needed for the public good—from raising barns and providing mutual security to organizing educational activities and caring for their neighbors. Though our country has changed dramatically since its founding, the need for service has not. During National Volunteer Week, we recognize our proud legacy of volunteer service and resolve to encourage more Americans to continue strengthening our country by helping others.

This is a time for all Americans to be active citizens, not spectators. For that reason, I have created the USA Freedom Corps to mobilize our citizens and provide opportunities for individuals and organizations to contribute to important causes. As part of this initiative, I have asked all Americans to dedicate at least 4,000 hours over the rest of their lives to serving their neighbors and their Nation. Since that call to service, our citizens have responded with an outpouring of kindness that is transforming our country, one heart and one soul at a time. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than 59 million Americans volunteered last year through charitable organizations.

These individuals served in a variety of ways—mentoring and tutoring children, providing companionship to the elderly, running community theaters and arts programs, cleaning highways and parks, staffing essential community organizations, and offering physical and spiritual aid to the hungry and homeless. In addition, citizen volunteers have contributed to the ongoing war on terror by helping families and communities prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies. Across our Nation, our citizens are recognizing that everyone can do something to help and that serving those in need benefits the volunteer also.

My Administration has taken several steps to build on this progress and continue the momentum created by these millions of acts of service. Most recently, I formed the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation, and charged them with creating a nationwide recognition program called the President's Volunteer Service Awards. These awards will be given to individuals and organizations engaged in a variety of volunteer services who have made a sustained commitment to service over the course of 1 year, and enhance our ability to pay tribute to volunteers and the impact their service has on our communities and our country.

National Volunteer Week offers each of us the opportunity to recognize one of the true strengths of our Nation—the compassionate spirit of our citizens. I urge all Americans to continue to uphold this spirit and answer the call to service to help ensure that all our citizens realize the promise of America. Together, we can achieve a hopeful future 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 27 through May 3, 2003, as National Volunteer Week. I call on all Americans to join together to celebrate the invaluable work that volunteers perform every day across our country, and to commit themselves to do more for their neighbors in need through the many volunteer programs available in their communities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fifth 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 29, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on April 30.

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 19

In the morning, at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, the President had an intelligence briefing.

April 20

In the morning, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Fort Hood, TX, and later returned to the Bush Ranch in Crawford.

April 21

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush returned to Washington, DC.

April 22

In the morning, the President had intelligence and FBI briefings.

In the afternoon, the President had lunch with Vice President Dick Cheney. Later, he met with Secretary of State Colin L. Powell.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with former Gov. Jim Edgar of Illinois to discuss Edgar's possible candidacy for Senate in 2004.

The President announced the recess appointment of Peter Eide as General Counsel of the Federal Labor Relations Authority.

The President announced the recess appointment of R. Bruce Matthews as a member of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board.

The President announced the recess appointment of Naomi Churchill Earp as a member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and her designation as Vice Chairman.

The President announced the recess appointment of Neil McPhie as a member of the Merit Systems Protection Board.

The President announced the recess appointment of William A. Schambra as a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The President announced the recess appointment of Donna N. Williams as a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The President announced the recess appointment of April H. Foley as a member of the Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank of the United States.

The President announced the recess appointment of Stanley C. Suboleski as a member of the Federal Mine Health and Safety Review Commission.

The President announced the recess appointment of Lillian R. BeVier as a member of the Board of Directors of the Legal Services Corporation.

The President announced the recess appointment of Thomas A. Fuentes as a member of the Board of Directors of the Legal Services Corporation.

The President announced the recess appointment of James C. Miller III as a Governor of the Board of Governors of the U.S. Postal Service.

April 23

In the morning, the President had intelligence and FBI briefings and met with the National Security Council. Later, he had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey to discuss the situation in Iraq, Turkey's economic reforms, and U.S. aid to Turkey.

Later in the morning, in the Oval Office, the President met with President Jorge Batlle of Uruguay to discuss the situation in Iraq, the war against terror, and economic recovery efforts and U.S. trade and investment in Uruguay.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President presented the Harry Yount National Park Service Ranger of the Year Award to Duncan Hollar.

During the day, the President met with Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld.

April 24

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Canton, OH, where he met with small-business owners and employees at The Timken Co.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Dayton, OH, where upon his arrival at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, he greeted Senator George V. Voinovich of Ohio. He then traveled to Lima, OH, where he toured the Lima Army Tank Plant. Later, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate Harvey S. Rosen to be a member of the Council of Economic Advisers.

The President announced his intention to nominate Rick A. Dearborn to be Assistant Secretary of Energy for Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs.

The President announced his intention to appoint Glenn Dale Steil as a member of the National Selective Service Appeal Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the President's National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee: James F. Albaugh, Frank Ianna, Richard C. Notebaert, Hector de Jesus Ruiz, Patricia F. Russo, Stratton D. Sclavos, Susan Spradley, and John W. Stanton.

The President announced his intention to designate Kathryn Donaldson Baker, W. Ronald Evans, and Joseph Reyes as members of the Board of Directors of the National Capital Revitalization Corporation.

The President declared a major disaster in Mississippi and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding on April 6–14.

April 25

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

The President announced his intention to nominate Jack L. Goldsmith III to be Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legal Counsel, at the Department of Justice.

The President announced his intention to nominate Paul M. Longsworth to be Deputy Administrator for Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation at the National Nuclear Security Administration, Department of Defense.

The President announced his intention to nominate Christopher A. Wray to be Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division, at the Department of Justice.

The President declared a major disaster in Florida and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and tornadoes on March 27.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

NOTE: No nominations were submitted to the Senate during the period covered by this issue.

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 21

Transcript of a press gaggle by Deputy Press Secretary Claire Buchan

Fact sheet: White House 2003 Easter Egg Roll: Frequently Asked Questions

Released April 22

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 397 and H.R. 672

Released April 23

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 145, H.R. 258, H.R. 273, and H.R. 1505

Released April 24

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer

Fact sheet: Taking Action To Strengthen the Economy

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Mississippi

Released April 25

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Florida

Acts Approved by the President

Approved April 22

H.R. 397 / Public Law 108–12
To reinstate and extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project in the State of Illinois

H.R. 672 / Public Law 108–13
To rename the Guam South Elementary/Middle School of the Department of Defense Domestic Dependents Elementary and Secondary Schools System in honor of Navy Commander William "Willie" McCool, who was the pilot of the Space Shuttle Columbia when it was tragically lost on February 1, 2003

Approved April 23

H.R. 145 / Public Law 108–14
To designate the Federal building located at 290 Broadway in New York, New York, as the "Ted Weiss Federal Building"

H.R. 258 / Public Law 108–15
American 5-Cent Coin Design Continuity Act of 2003

H.R. 273 / Public Law 108–16
Nutria Eradication and Control Act of 2003

H.R. 1505 / Public Law 108–17
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2127 Beatties Ford Road in Charlotte, North Carolina, as the "Jim Richardson Post Office"

S. 380 / Public Law 108–18
Postal Civil Service Retirement System Funding Reform Act of 2003

Approved April 25

H.R. 1584 / Public Law 108–19
Clean Diamond Trade Act