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In a compassionate society, people respect one another and take responsibility for the decisions they make. We're changing the culture of America from one that has said, "If it feels good, just go ahead and do it, and if you've got a problem, blame somebody else," to one in which each of us understands we are responsible for the decisions we make in life.

If you are fortunate enough to be a mother or a father, you are responsible for loving your child with all your heart and all your soul. If you are a—concerned about the quality of the education in the community in which you live, you're responsible for doing something about it. If you're a CEO in corporate America, you're responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees. And in the new responsibility society, each of us is responsible for loving a neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourselves.

We can see the culture of service and responsibility growing around us. I started what we call the USA Freedom Corps to encourage Americans to extend a compassionate hand to neighbors in need, and the response has been strong. And our faith-based charities are strong and vibrant all across America. Policemen and firemen and people who wear our Nation's uniform are reminding us what it means to sacrifice for something greater than yourself. Once again, the children of America believe in heroes because they see them every day.

In these challenging times, the world has seen the resolve and the courage of America. And I've been privileged to see the compassion and the character of the American people. All the tests of the last 2½ years have come to the right Nation. We're a strong country, and we use that strength to defend the peace. We're an optimistic country, confident in ourselves and in ideals bigger than ourselves.

Abroad, we seek to lift whole nations by spreading freedom. At home, we seek to lift up lives by spreading opportunity to every corner in America. This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it, and we know that for our country and for our cause, better days lie ahead.

May God continue to bless America. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:05 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the San Francisco Airport Marriott. In his remarks, he referred to Brad Freeman, California State finance chairman, Bush-Cheney campaign; Gerry Parsky, chairman, Team California, California Republican Party Board of Directors; and comedian Dennis Miller.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Medicare Reform Legislation

June 27, 2003

I applaud the House for taking a significant step to help our Nation's seniors.

This Medicare legislation broadly reflects the reforms outlined in my framework that give seniors the right to choose the health care that best meets their individual needs, including the option of staying in their traditional plan. It also modernizes Medicare so seniors will have access to the newest medical technologies and most effective medicines.

Seniors have waited too long for more choices and better benefits, including prescription drug coverage, similar to the kind now enjoyed by Federal employees and Members of the Congress. I will continue working closely with Congress during conference to make improvements and pass meaningful Medicare reform.

Statement on Senate Passage of Medicare Reform Legislation

June 27, 2003

I commend the Senate for passing legislation to strengthen and improve Medicare for America's seniors.

This legislation is largely consistent with my framework for reform that allows seniors to choose the health care that best meets their individual needs, including the option of staying in their traditional plan.

Seniors will have more choices and better benefits, including long-awaited prescription

drug coverage, under a modernized Medicare that provides seniors access to the newest and most effective medicines and treatment. I will continue working closely with the Congress to improve this legislation as we move forward.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this statement.

Statement on the Death of Strom Thurmond

June 27, 2003

Senator Strom Thurmond led an extraordinary life. He served in the Army during World War II, earning a Bronze Star for valor and landing at Normandy on D-Day. He served his country as Senator, Governor, and State legislator and was a beloved teacher, coach, husband, father, and grandfather. While campaigning across South Carolina with him in 1988, I saw firsthand the tremendous love he had for his constituents and the admiration the people of South Carolina had for him. He was also a friend, and I was honored to have hosted his 100th birthday at the White House. Laura joins me in sending our prayers and condolences to the entire Thurmond family. He will be missed.

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.

June 21

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

The President declared a major disaster in West Virginia and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, flooding, and landslides on June 11 and continuing.

June 22

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush attended a tee-ball game on the South Lawn.

June 23

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

In the afternoon, the President traveled to New York City.

In the evening, the President traveled to Camp David, MD.

June 24

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush had lunch with President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan and his wife, Begum Sehba Musharraf.

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

The President announced his intention to nominate Jeffrey A. Marcus to be Ambassador to Belgium.

The President announced his intention to nominate Deborah Ann Spagnoli to be a Commissioner of the U.S. Parole Commission.

June 25

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

Later in the morning, in the Oval Office, the President met with Prime Minister Konstandinos Simitis of Greece, in his capacity as President of the European Council, and Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission. The leaders then met in the Cabinet Room with other officials.

In the afternoon, the President had lunch with European Union leaders.

Later in the afternoon, the President met with Republican Members of Congress to discuss proposed Medicare legislation. He then met with Secretary of State Colin L. Powell.

The White House announced that the President will welcome Prime Minister Anerood Jugnauth of Mauritius to the White House on June 26.

The President announced his intention to nominate Julie L. Myers to be an Assistant