

Almost four centuries ago, the Pilgrims celebrated a harvest feast to thank God after suffering through a brutal winter. President George Washington proclaimed the first National Day of Thanksgiving in 1789, and President Lincoln revived the tradition during the Civil War, asking Americans to give thanks with “one heart and one voice.” Since then, in times of war and in times of peace, Americans have gathered with family and friends and given thanks to God for our blessings.

Thanksgiving is also a time to share our blessings with those who are less fortunate. Americans this week will gather food and clothing for neighbors in need. Many young people will give part of their holiday to volunteer at homeless shelters and food pantries. On Thanksgiving, we remember that the true strength of America lies in the hearts and souls of the American people. By seeking out those who are hurting and by lending a hand, Americans touch the lives of their fellow citizens and help make our Nation and the world a better place.

This Thanksgiving, we express our gratitude to our dedicated firefighters and police officers who help keep our homeland safe. We are grateful to the homeland security and intelligence personnel who spend long hours on faithful watch. And we give thanks for the Americans in our Armed Forces who are serving around the world to secure our country and advance the cause of freedom. These brave men and women make our entire Nation proud, and we thank them and their families for their sacrifice.

On this Thanksgiving Day, we thank God for His blessings and ask Him to continue to guide and watch over our Nation.

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 Thursday, November 25, 2004, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage all Americans to gather together in their homes and places of worship to reinforce the ties of family and community and to express gratitude for the many blessings we enjoy.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-third day of November,

in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., November 26, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on November 29. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this proclamation.

Exchange With Reporters in Crawford, Texas

November 26, 2004

The President. I just had a great Thanksgiving with our daughters and my mother and dad and my mother-in-law. It’s good to be back in Texas. I wish the Crawford Pirates all the best in their State playoff football game tonight. I know you agree with me.

I’ll take a couple of questions.

Iraq/Iran

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. If I could ask you about a couple news developments today. Seventeen political parties in Iraq demanded postponement of the January 30th elections for at least 6 months. I wonder about your reaction to that. And there’s a tentative deal on Iran’s nuclear weapons, but I wonder whether you think Iran should be trusted, given their history.

The President. First of all, I appreciate the nations of Great Britain and Germany and France who are working to try to convince Iran to honor their international treaty obligations. And the only good deal is one that’s verifiable. And I look forward to talking to the leaders of those countries, if they can get Iran to agree to a deal, to make sure that it’s verifiable. I know that the Prime Minister of Great Britain wants a verifiable deal because I’ve talked to him personally about it.

In terms of Iraq, the Iraq election commission has scheduled elections in January, and I would hope they would go forward in January.

Ukraine

Q. Mr. President, what are the consequences if Ukraine does not comply with international pressure and demands on the elections? And do you think that President Putin overstepped his bounds?

The President. There's just a lot of allegations of vote fraud that placed their election—the validity of their elections in doubt. The international community is watching very carefully. People are paying very close attention to this, and hopefully it will be resolved in a way that brings credit and confidence to the Ukrainian Government.

Yes.

White House Press Pool

Q. Mr. President—

The President. Identify yourself, please.

Q. I'm with Bloomberg News. I'm Jay Newton-Small.

The President. Thank you, welcome.

Q. Thank you.

The President. Do you know Scott [Scott Lindlaw, Associated Press]? [Laughter]

Q. Very well.

Q. We ride in a lot of vans together.

The President. You might ask him why he didn't shave. But go ahead.

Pool members. Aw-w-w!

The President. Well, I was just curious. [Laughter]

Q. Don't ask me.

The President. It looks like it's contagious, as a matter of fact.

Q. Left the razor at home.

The President. Please, sorry to interrupt.

World Trade Organization Sanctions

Q. Today the World Trade Organization finalized or approved sanctions the European Union will have against the United States, \$150 million worth of sanctions for the Byrd amendment. Do you have any comments on that?

The President. Well, we've worked hard to comply with the WTO. I think it's important that all nations comply with WTO rulings. I'll work with Congress to get into compliance. As you might remember, we worked on the FISC/ETI bill because of the WTO ruling. We expect the WTO, as well, to treat our trading partners as they treat us. And

that's why, for example, I filed complaint on the Airbus situation. We believe that the subsidies for Airbus are unfair for U.S. companies such as Boeing.

Yes, Mark [Mark Knoller, CBS Radio], hi.

Appropriations Legislation

Q. Hi. Sir, you said you're going to sign the big omnibus appropriations bill, but are you bothered by all the examples of porkbarrel spending that are in that bill?

The President. Mark, it's—first, the bill conforms to the budget that I worked out with the Congress, and I appreciate that. In other words, the size of the bill is a number that we agreed to early on—earlier this year. And I appreciate that, because part of making sure we cut the deficit in half is to work together on the overall size of our spending bills.

Now, secondly, obviously, there's going to be things in these big bills that I don't particularly care for, and that's why I've asked Congress to give me a line-item veto. And the only way a President can affect that which is inside the bill, other than vetoing the entire bill, is to be able to pick out parts of a bill and express displeasure about it through a line-item veto. I hope the Congress will give me a line-item veto.

Listen, it's great to see everybody.

Northern Ireland

Q. Anything on Northern Ireland?

The President. Well, I talked to—evidently the word's out that I made a phone call this morning, and I did so. And I was just trying to be a part of the process of getting both Ian Paisley's group—Dr. Paisley's group and Gerry Adams' group to the table to get a deal done.

Q. To get—

The President. To get a deal done. In other words, to close the agreement that they've been working on for quite a while. Hopefully it will help. Of course, the primary movers are Prime Minister Blair and Bertie Ahern of Ireland, who have been working very diligently on this. I appreciate their efforts, and anything I can do to help keep the process moving forward, I'm more than willing to do so.

Listen, I've got to go eat a burger. Thank you all.

NOTE: The exchange began at 12:30 p.m. at the Coffee Station. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; President Vladimir Putin of Russia; Ian Paisley, leader, Democratic Unionist Party; Gerry Adams, leader, Sinn Fein; and Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

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.

November 20

In the morning, in Santiago, Chile, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, at the Hyatt Regency Santiago, he had separate meetings with President Hu Jintao of China, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan, President Roh Moo-hyun of South Korea, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia, and Prime Minister Paul Martin of Canada.

In the afternoon, also at the Hyatt Regency Santiago, the President had a working lunch with President Vladimir Putin of Russia. Later, at the Espacio Riesco Convention Center, he attended the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Leaders' Meeting.

In the evening, at the Estacion Mapocho Cultural Center, the President and Mrs. Bush attended the APEC leaders' official dinner and a cultural presentation.

November 21

In the morning, at the Hyatt Regency Santiago, the President met with President Vicente Fox of Mexico. Then, at La Moneda Presidential Palace, he had separate brief meetings with Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore and President Alejandro Toledo of Peru. Later, also at La Moneda, he participated in a photo opportunity with

APEC leaders and then attended the APEC Leaders' Meeting.

In the afternoon, at the Hyatt Regency Santiago, the President greeted U.S. Embassy staff and their families.

In the evening, at La Moneda Presidential Palace, the President met with President Ricardo Lagos of Chile. Later, he and Mrs. Bush had dinner with President Lagos and his wife, Luisa Duran de Lagos.

November 22

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he and Mrs. Bush traveled to Cartagena, Colombia.

In the afternoon, at Casa de Huespedes, the President and Mrs. Bush participated in an arrival ceremony with President Alvaro Uribe of Colombia and his wife, Lina Maria Moreno de Uribe.

Later in the afternoon, also at Casa de Huespedes, the President had a meeting and a working lunch with President Uribe. Later, he participated in a photo opportunity with Major League Baseball players Edgar Renteria and Orlando Cabrera and youth from Colombian baseball camps.

Later in the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, arriving in the evening.

November 23

In the morning, the President had intelligence, national security, and FBI briefings. Later, he met with the National Security Council by video teleconference.

November 24

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

During the day, the President and Mrs. Bush welcomed King Juan Carlos I and Queen Sofia of Spain to the Bush Ranch for a private luncheon.

The White House announced that the President will welcome King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain to Washington, DC, for a working visit on November 29.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, current Chairman of the African Union, to the White House on December 2.