

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., December 13, 2004]

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 9, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on December 14.

### **Memorandum on Delegation of Certain Reporting Authority**

*December 8, 2004*

*Memorandum for the Chairperson of the National Endowment for the Humanities*

*Subject: Delegation of Certain Reporting Authority*

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 301 of title 3, United States Code, I hereby delegate to you the functions conferred upon the President in the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 959(d)) to provide the specified report relating to the National Endowment for the Humanities to the Congress.

You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

**George W. Bush**

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### **Remarks on the Nomination of Jim Nicholson To Be Secretary of Veterans Affairs**

*December 9, 2004*

**The President.** Thank you all. Please be seated. Good morning. I'm pleased to announce my nomination of Ambassador Jim Nicholson to the—to be the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Jim Nicholson is a patriot, a man of deep conviction who has answered his country's call many times. As a young man from Iowa, raised in modest circumstances, he became

a cadet at West Point in the late 1950s and went on to become an Army Ranger and paratrooper. As a Ranger, he fought in Vietnam, where he won multiple decorations for bravery in combat, including the Bronze Star and the Combat Infantry Badge. After 8 years on active duty, he joined the Army Reserves, where he served for 22 more years before retiring as a full colonel.

Throughout his career, Jim has shown the same honor, integrity, and commitment to service that defined his life as a military officer. He and his wife, Suzanne, have given back generously to their community and have been leaders in numerous volunteer causes in their home State of Colorado. He was a respected chairman of the Republican National Committee. And for the past 3 years, he has served as the United States Ambassador to the Vatican. Jim has worked with the Vatican to advance many vital foreign policy goals, including fighting poverty, hunger, AIDS, expanding religious liberty around the world, and ending the brutal practice of human trafficking.

I'm grateful to Jim for his superb work as our Ambassador, and I now have asked him to accept a new assignment, to serve his country and his fellow veterans.

As Secretary of Veterans Affairs, he will lead a department of more than 230,000 employees responsible for ensuring our Nation's—that our Nation's veterans receive the health care and other benefits our country has promised them. Twenty-five million Americans are military veterans who stepped forward to serve when the Nation needed them. The Nation owes them in return a VA that is dedicated to effective, prompt attention to their needs. That has been a commitment of my administration for the last 4 years, and it will remain a commitment for the next 4 years.

When confirmed by the Senate, Jim Nicholson will succeed Tony Principi, who has been a fine member of my Cabinet. Secretary Principi is a man who insists on results, and he has gotten results. Thanks to his leadership, veterans and their families have seen many improvements in VA services. They're receiving better care, and their claims are processed more quickly. Tony Principi has made it the Department's highest priority to