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Week Ending Friday, January 12, 2007

Statement on United States Military Personnel Recommendations From Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates

January 5, 2007

I am pleased to accept the recommendations of Secretary Gates for several key positions in our Nation's Armed Forces. These leaders are accomplished military professionals whose experience, skill, and dedication will enable them to successfully lead our troops as they protect our country.

General George Casey has been a strong and effective commander of the Multi-National Force in Iraq. I have come to depend on his wise counsel and solid judgment in our efforts to protect the American people in the war on terror. I look forward to working with him in his new role as Chief of Staff of the United States Army. General Casey will succeed General Peter Schoomaker, who has done an outstanding job in helping transform the U.S. Army to confront the challenges of the 21st century. I wish General Schoomaker all the best as he retires from active duty after a distinguished career.

Lieutenant General Dave Petraeus will succeed General Casey. General Petraeus is a soldier of vision and determination. His service in Iraq has equipped him with expertise in irregular warfare and stability operations and an understanding of the enemy we face. I am confident that General Petraeus has the right experience, leadership skills, and judgment to be an outstanding commander of MNF–I.

Admiral William J. Fallon, currently the commander of U.S. Pacific Command, has earned a reputation as one of our country's foremost military strategists. His experience and leadership will be critical to helping our country achieve victory over the radicals and extremists who threaten freedom. He will be an excellent commander of U.S. Central Command.

Admiral Fallon will succeed General John Abizaid, who has overseen some of our military's most extraordinary efforts to spread freedom and democracy. He has earned the respect and admiration of a grateful nation, and his service is a model for those who wear our country's uniform. As he retires, I express my deep appreciation for all he has done for America.

NOTE: In his statement, the President referred to Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Memorandum on Assignment of Functions Regarding the Citizens Health Care Working Group

January 5, 2007

Memorandum for the Secretary of Health and Human Services

Subject: Assignment of Functions Regarding the Citizens Health Care Working Group

By virtue of authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and laws of the United States, including section 301 of title 3 of the United States Code, the functions of the President under section 1014(o)(1) of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 (Public Law 108–173) are assigned to the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

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

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:11 a.m., January 8, 2007]

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