

George Washington's retirement did not last long. In the years after the Revolution, America's freedom was still far from secure. There were uprisings and revolts. States argued over their borders. And under the Articles of Confederation, the Federal Government was virtually powerless. With the United States in crisis, George Washington was called back to public life to preside over a Convention of the States. And the result was the United States Constitution and a new executive office called the Presidency.

When the American people chose Washington for the role, he reluctantly accepted. He wrote a friend, "My movement to the chair of government will be accompanied by feelings not unlike those of a culprit who is going to the place of his execution." George Washington accepted the Presidency because the office needed him, not because he needed the office.

As President, George Washington understood that his decisions would shape the future of our young Nation and set precedent. He formed the first Cabinet, appointed the first judges, and issued the first veto. He also helped oversee the construction of a new Federal city between the Northern and Southern States. The Nation's new Capital would take his name, and George Washington hoped it would inspire Americans to put the welfare of their Nation above sectional loyalties.

This son of Virginia had come to see himself first and foremost as an American, and he urged his fellow citizens to do the same. More than two centuries later, the story of George Washington continues to bring Americans together. Every year, about a million people visit Mount Vernon to learn about this good man's life. We find the best of America in his spirit and our highest hopes for ourselves in his character. His honesty and courage have become the stuff of legend. Children are taught to revere his name and leaders to look to him for strength in uncertain times.

George Washington's long struggle for freedom has also inspired generation of Americans to stand for freedom in their own time. Today, we're fighting a new war to defend our liberty and our people and our way of life. And as we work to advance the cause

of freedom around the world, we remember that the Father of our Country believed that the freedoms we secured in our Revolution were not meant for Americans alone. He once wrote, "My best wishes are irresistibly excited whensoever, in any country, I see an oppressed nation unfurl the banners of freedom."

President Washington believed that the success of our democracy would also depend on the virtue of our citizens. In his farewell address to the American people, he said, "Morality is a necessary spring of popular government." Over the centuries, America has succeeded because we have always tried to maintain the decency and the honor of our first President.

His example guided us in his time; it guides us in our time; and it will guide us for all time. Thank you for coming, and may God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:04 a.m. at the Estate Mansion.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Protocols to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region

February 15, 2007

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith, for the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (the "Protocol") to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, with Annexes, done at Oranjestad, Aruba, on October 6, 1999, and signed by the United States on that same date. The report of the Secretary of State is enclosed for the information of the Senate.

The Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (the "Cartagena Convention") is a regional framework agreement negotiated under the auspices of the Regional Seas Program of the United Nations Environment Program

(UNEP). It sets out general legal obligations to protect the marine environment of the Gulf of Mexico, Straits of Florida, Caribbean Sea, and immediately adjacent areas of the Atlantic Ocean—collectively known as the Wider Caribbean Region. The United States became a Party to the Cartagena Convention in 1984. The Cartagena Convention envisions the development of protocols to further elaborate certain of its general obligations and to facilitate its effective implementation.

Negotiated with the active participation and leadership of the United States, the Protocol addresses one of the most serious sources of marine pollution in the Wider Caribbean Region. It is estimated that 70 to 90 percent of pollution entering the marine environment emanates from land-based sources and activities. Among the principal land-based sources of marine pollution in the Caribbean are domestic wastewater and agricultural nonpoint source runoff. Such pollution contributes to the degradation of coral reefs and commercial fisheries, negatively affects regional economies, and endangers public health, recreation, and tourism throughout the region.

The Protocol and its Annexes list priority source categories, activities, and associated contaminants that affect the Wider Caribbean Region, and set forth factors that Parties will be required to apply in determining prevention, reduction, and control strategies to manage land-based sources of pollution. In particular, the Parties are required to ensure that domestic wastewater discharges meet specific effluent limitations, and to develop plans for the prevention and reduction of agricultural nonpoint source pollution. The Protocol is expected to raise standards for treating domestic wastewater throughout the region to levels close to those already in place in the United States.

The United States would be able to implement its obligations under the Protocol under existing statutory and regulatory authority.

The Protocol is the first regional agreement to establish effluent standards to protect one of our most valuable resources, the marine environment. It differs markedly from other, similar regional agreements in its conceptual approach and the specificity of its

obligations. As such, the Protocol is expected to set a new standard for regional agreements on this subject. Early ratification will demonstrate our continued commitment to global leadership and to the protection of the marine environment of the Wider Caribbean Region.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Protocol and its Annexes, with the declaration described in the accompanying report of the Secretary of State, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

George W. Bush

The White House,
February 15, 2007.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 20.

Remarks at a Swearing-In Ceremony for J. Michael McConnell as Director of National Intelligence

February 20, 2007

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks for the warm welcome. Good morning. I'm proud to be here at Bolling Air Force Base to congratulate Mike McConnell on becoming our Nation's second Director of National Intelligence. I'm really pleased that Mike's wife, Terry, his four children—Erin, Mark, Jennifer, and Christine—their grandchildren, his sister—[laughter]—and other family members have joined us. It's a big deal to watch your dad and granddad get sworn in to a position of this importance.

I appreciate members of my administration who have joined us, in particular the Secretary of Defense, Bob Gates; General Michael Hayden, Director of the CIA; Bob Mueller, Director of the FBI; and other important figures too numerous to mention. Thank you for serving our country.

I appreciate the members of the intelligence community who have joined us. Part of the reason I have come is to honor this good man, and part of the reason I have come is to honor your good work. This Nation owes you a debt of gratitude.

The Director of National Intelligence holds one of the most difficult and important