

the stage for this Presidency and other Presidencies, set a standard that we expect Government to follow.

So thanks for being here. Appreciate your time.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:10 a.m. in Room 180 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to former Senator Bob Dole and former Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna E. Shalala, Cochairs, President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors.

Remarks at a Saint Patrick's Day Shamrock Presentation Ceremony With Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland

March 16, 2007

Thank you. *Taoiseach*, good morning—or should I say, “top o’ the morning.” [*Laughter*] I’m really pleased that you came back to the White House. I’m looking forward to our discussions. And I cannot thank you enough for your strong leadership in resolving the issues of Northern Ireland, and I stand ready to help.

I gratefully accept the bowl of shamrocks. I am delighted that you have joined us, once again, to celebrate Saint Patrick’s Day. Saint Patrick’s Day is an occasion that unites two distinct groups of Americans, those who are of Irish descent and those who wish they were. [*Laughter*] Whether they’re Irish today or every day, Americans are grateful for our country’s Irish heritage and the enduring friendship that exists between Ireland and the United States is strong.

The ties that bind our two nations stretch all the way back to our country’s founding. Ireland gave us at least nine signers of the Declaration of Independence and many more who risked their lives to defend it. Irish Americans fought valiantly to preserve the Union in our Civil War. They helped turn back the totalitarian ideologies of the 20th century. And they’re fighting bravely in today’s war on terror, risking their lives to secure a future of freedom and peace for generations to come.

Many of Ireland’s sons and daughters came to our shores to escape poverty and

famine. Once here, they helped us build and strengthen this great Nation with their gifts of industry and talent and faith. Irish workers built our railroads, our cathedrals, and our cities. Irish writers and musicians have enriched our literature and our culture. Irish priests and nuns established parochial schools that have helped generations of children build lives of prosperity and purpose. And with their many contributions, Irish Americans remind us of our heritage as a nation of immigrants and our duty to remain a welcoming society.

In 1783, President George Washington—I refer to him as the first George W.—[*laughter*]—wrote to recent Irish immigrants in New York that “America is open to receive the oppressed and persecuted of all nations,” and he expressed his wish that the blessings of equal liberty and unrestrained commerce would one day prevail in Ireland.

Well, today, Ireland is a free, independent, and very prosperous nation. Ireland now has one of the fastest growing economies in Europe. And over the past decade, our two nations have enjoyed a strong and growing trade relationship. And as Ireland prospers, a land whose people came to America seeking a better life is now attracting to its own shores immigrants with those very same dreams.

It has been said that the Irish, like the presence of God, are to be found everywhere. On this Saint Patrick’s Day, we’re grateful for the presence of the Irish in our country. And we are blessed by your presence here at the White House, *Taoiseach*. I thank you for coming to help us celebrate Saint Patrick’s Day and honor the friendship between our two nations. In the words of the Irish proverb, “May the Lord keep you in His hand and never close His fist too tight.” [*Laughter*]

Thanks for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:55 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Prime Minister Ahern.

Proclamation 8113—National Poison Prevention Week, 2007

March 16, 2007

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

In the 45 years since the first National Poison Prevention Week was proclaimed by President John F. Kennedy, many lives have been saved from unintentional poisoning through awareness efforts across our country. This week, we reaffirm our commitment to the safety of our fellow citizens and to guarding against accidental poisonings.

Protecting our children is a solemn and special responsibility, and we must all continue to work to reduce the number of poison-related injuries and deaths. I encourage parents to make homes safer by keeping toxic substances sealed and out of reach and by carefully reading the labels on medicines before giving them to children and on household products before using them around children. In addition, carbon monoxide alarms can help protect against carbon monoxide poisoning, which claims the lives of hundreds of Americans each year.

If a poisoning is suspected, citizens can reach their nearest Poison Control Center 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, by calling 1-800-222-1222. This number should be called immediately at the first sign of a suspected poison emergency. The Poison Prevention Week Council website, poisonprevention.org, can provide additional information about poison prevention. By staying informed, being proactive, and remaining vigilant, we can avoid poison exposure and save more lives.

To encourage Americans to learn more about the dangers of accidental poisonings and take appropriate preventive measures, the Congress, by joint resolution approved September 26, 1961, as amended (75 Stat. 681), has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation designating the third week of March each year as “National Poison Prevention Week.”

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim March 18 through March

24, 2007, as National Poison Prevention Week. I call upon all Americans to participate in appropriate activities this week and to learn how to prevent poisonings, especially among children.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., March 20, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on March 21.

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.

March 10

In the morning, at the Radisson Montevideo Victoria Plaza Hotel in Montevideo, Uruguay, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he and Mrs. Bush met with U.S. Embassy staff and their families.

Later in the morning, the President and Mrs. Bush went to Anchorena Park where he met with President Tabare Vazquez of Uruguay.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush had lunch with President Vazquez and his wife, Maria Auxiliadora Delgado de Vazquez. They then toured Anchorena Park.

Later in the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush returned to the Radisson Montevideo Victoria Plaza Hotel. He then participated in an interview with Greta Van Susteren of FOX News for later broadcast.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush went to the U.S. Ambassador’s residence where they attended a reception for government and business leaders. Later, they