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Presidential Documents

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Editor's Note: The President was at Camp David, MD, on November 23, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

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Proclamation 8206—National Family Week, 2007

November 16, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

As families gather together to celebrate Thanksgiving, we underscore the comforting and positive role they play in our society. During National Family Week, we celebrate the contributions of families everywhere.

Families strengthen our communities by teaching important values such as compassion and honesty to their children. Families also offer a supportive environment and help ensure that children grow into responsible members of society. By providing guidance and unconditional love, parents shape the character of their children.

My Administration believes that the strength of our Nation is built upon the foundation of strong families. To help support families, we have doubled the child tax credit, reduced the marriage penalty, and lowered tax rates. We are also committed to promoting positive youth development. The Helping America's Youth initiative, led by First Lady Laura Bush, supports organizations, including faith-based and community groups, that continue this important mission.

All Americans are grateful to our Nation's military families, who have stood by their loved ones in times of war and peace. Our country will always be especially thankful for the sacrifices of our military personnel and for their devotion to duty and their love of country. During National Family Week, we pray for their safe return and for the families who await them at home.

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 November 18 through November 24, 2007, as National Family Week. I invite the States, communities, and all the people of the United States to join together in observing this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities to honor our Nation's families.

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

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:06 a.m., November 20, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on November 21. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

November 17, 2007

Good morning. In a few days, our Nation will celebrate Thanksgiving. Like millions of Americans, Members of Congress will travel home for the holiday. Unfortunately, as they get to work carving their turkeys, they're leaving a lot of unfinished work back in Washington, DC. And unless they complete this work soon, middle class Americans will pay higher taxes and American troops will not receive the critical funding they need to fight and defeat our enemies.

Many middle class taxpayers will face higher tax bills unless Congress acts on the Alternative Minimum Tax, or AMT. The AMT was designed to ensure that the wealthy paid their fair share of taxes. But when Congress passed the AMT decades ago, it was not indexed for inflation. As a result, the AMT's higher tax burden is creeping up on more and more middle class families.

To deal with this problem, Congress has in recent years passed temporary legislation that prevented most middle class taxpayers from having to pay the AMT. But this year, Congress has yet to pass this legislation. A failure to do so would mean that 25 million Americans would be subject to the AMT, more than six times the number that faced the tax last year. If you are one of those 25 million, you would have to send an average of $2,000 more to the IRS next year. This is a huge tax increase that Americans do not expect and do not deserve.

The longer Congress waits to fix this problem, the worse it will get. Last month, Treasury Secretary Paulson wrote a letter to Members of Congress warning that delaying action on legislation to fix the AMT could create confusion for millions of taxpayers and delay the delivery of about $75 billion worth of tax refund checks. Congress has ignored Secretary Paulson's warnings, and we are now beginning to see the consequences. On Friday, the tax forms for 2007 had to be sent to the Government Printer. And because of Congress's refusal to act, the IRS will be forced to send out tens of millions of tax forms that will almost certainly end up being wrong, wasting your money, delaying refunds, and making it even more complicated to figure out your taxes.

It is clear that Congress's failure to adjust the AMT for inflation was a mistake. Unfortunately, Congress seems determined to compound this original mistake by making another one. Last week, the House passed a bill that provides relief from the AMT but raises other taxes. Congress should not use legislation that millions of Americans are counting on to protect them from higher taxes in one area as an excuse to raise taxes in other areas. I will veto any bill that raises taxes as a condition of fixing the AMT. Members of Congress must put political theater behind them, fix the AMT, and protect America's middle class from an unfair tax hike.

Congress is also failing to meet its responsibilities to our troops. For months, Congress has delayed action on supplemental war funding because some in Congress want to make a political statement about the war. On Wednesday, the House passed a bill that once again has Congress directing our military commanders on how to conduct the war in Iraq as a condition for funding our troops. We do not need Members of Congress telling our commanders what to do. We need Congress listening to our military commanders and giving them what they need to win the war against extremists and radicals. Congress knows I'll veto this bill. During this time of war, our troops deserve the full support of Congress, and that means giving our troops the funding they need to successfully carry out their mission. I urge Congress to work quickly and send me a clean bill, so we can fulfill our obligation to our brave men and women in uniform.

With both of these delays, congressional leaders are choosing political posturing over the priorities of the people. These choices have real-world consequences for our taxpayers and our troops. When Members of Congress return from their 2-week long Thanksgiving vacation, they will have only a few weeks left on the legislative calendar before they go home again for their Christmas break. I call on Congress to use the time that is left to do what is right and pass AMT relief and fund our troops in combat.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:50 a.m. on November 16 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 17. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 16 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at Berkeley Plantation in Charles City, Virginia

November 19, 2007

Thank you all. Thanks very much. Thanks for the warm welcome. I am proud to be back in the great State of Virginia. I particularly appreciate the chance to visit Berkeley Plantation. I thank the good people who care for this historic treasure. Over the years, Presidents have visited Berkeley. President William Henry Harrison called it home. As

a matter of fact, it was here where he composed the longest inauguration speech in history. [*Laughter*] He went on for nearly 2 hours. You don't need to worry; I'm not going to try to one-up him today. [*Laughter*]

Berkeley also claims to be the site of America's first official Thanksgiving. The good folks here say that the founders of Berkeley held their celebration before the pilgrims had even left port. As you can imagine, this version of events is not very popular up North. [*Laughter*] But even the administration of President Kennedy—a son of Massachusetts—recognized Berkeley's role in this important holiday. And so this afternoon I've come to honor Berkeley's history and to continue the great American tradition of giving thanks.

Laura sends her best. Now, most people say, "I wish she'd have come and not you." [*Laughter*] She's doing just fine, and I know she is going to be envious when I describe how beautiful this part of the country is. And I thank you for giving me a chance to come.

I want to thank my friend Tom Saunders, who is the founder of the Saunders Trust for American History at the New York Historical Society. That means he and his wife, Jordan, are raising money to make sure this site is as beautiful as it is and stays an important part of our history and legacy.

I thank Judy and Jamie Jamieson, who happen to be the owners of this beautiful site, and I appreciate your hospitality. I can't help but recognize my daughter's future father-in-law. [*Laughter*] I appreciate you coming. A lot of people think she's showed some pretty good common sense to marry somebody from Virginia. He's doing all right himself. [*Laughter*]

I appreciate the fact that the Congressman from this district, Congressman Bobby Scott, is with us. Thanks for coming, Bobby. Congressman Eric Cantor from Richmond is with us. And Congressman Randy Forbes—appreciate you coming, Randy.

I want to thank the Lieutenant Governor, Bill Bolling, for joining us. Thank you for coming, Governor. Bob McDonnell, the Attorney General—General, I appreciate you being here. I had the honor of meeting the high sheriff. Sheriff, thank you and your law enforcement officials. I'm proud to be with you. I want to thank all the local officeholders and State officeholders. And most of all, thank you for letting me come by, and I appreciate you coming.

Every November, we celebrate the traditions of Thanksgiving; we're fixing to do so again. We remember that the pilgrims gave thanks after their first harvest in New England. We remember that George Washington led his men in Thanksgiving during the American Revolution. And we remember that Abraham Lincoln revived the Thanksgiving tradition in the midst of a bloody civil war.

Yet few Americans remember much about Berkeley. They don't know the story of the Berkeley Thanksgiving. This story has its beginnings in the founding of the colony of Virginia four centuries ago. As the colony grew, settlers ventured beyond the walls of Jamestown and into the surrounding countryside. The Berkeley Company of England acquired 8,000 acres of nearby land and commissioned an expedition to settle it.

In 1619, a band of 38 settlers departed Bristol, England, for Berkeley aboard a ship like the one behind me. At the end of their long voyage, the men reviewed their orders from home. And here's what the orders said: "The day of our ship's arrival . . . shall be yearly and perpetually kept holy as a day of Thanksgiving to Almighty God." Upon hearing those orders, the men fell to their knees in prayer. And with this humble act of faith, the settlers celebrated their first Thanksgiving in the New World.

In the years that followed, the settlers at Berkeley faced many hardships. And in 1622, the settlement was destroyed. Berkeley became a successful plantation after it was rebuilt, when people returned to this site. And it is an important part of our history. And as we look back on the story of Berkeley, we remember that we live in a land of many blessings.

The story of Berkeley reminds us that we live in a land of opportunity. We remember that the settlers at Berkeley came to America with the hope of building a better life. And we remember that immigrants in every generation have followed in their footsteps. Their dreams have helped transform 13 small

Colonies into a large and growing nation of more than 300 million people.

Today, we're blessed with great prosperity. We're blessed with farmers and ranchers who provide us with abundant food. We're blessed with the world's finest workers, with entrepreneurs who create new jobs. We're blessed with devoted teachers who prepare our children for the opportunities of tomorrow. We're blessed with a system of free enterprise that makes it possible for people of all backgrounds to rise in society and realize their dreams. These blessings have helped us build a strong and growing economy, and these blessings have filled our lives full of hope.

The story of Berkeley reminds us that we live in a nation dedicated to liberty. In 1776, Berkeley's owner, Benjamin Harrison, became one of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence. In the Declaration, we see the Founders' great hope for our country, their conviction that we're all created equal, with the God-given right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

At times, America has fallen short of these ideals. We remember that the expansion of our country came at a terrible cost to Native American tribes. We remember that many people came to the New World in chains rather than by choice. For many years, slaves were held against their will here at Berkeley and other plantations, and their bondage is a shameful chapter in our Nation's history.

Today, we're grateful to live in a more perfect Union. Yet our society still faces divisions that hold us back. These divisions have roots in the bitter experiences of our past and have no place in America's future. The work of realizing the ideals of our founding continues, and we must not rest until the promise of America is real for all our citizens.

We're also grateful to live in a time when freedom is taking hold in places where liberty was once unimaginable. Since the beginning of the 1980s, the number of democracies in the world has more than doubled. From our own history, we know these young democracies will face challenges and setbacks in the journey ahead. Yet as they travel the road to freedom, they must know that they will have a constant and reliable friend in the United States of America.

The story of Berkeley reminds us to honor those who have sacrificed in the cause of freedom. During the Civil War, Union forces at Berkeley adopted a nightly bugle call that has echoed throughout the ages. The bugle call has become known as "Taps." And when we hear it play, we remember that the freedoms we enjoyed have come at a heavy price.

Today, the men and women of the United States Armed Forces are taking risks for our freedom. They're fighting on the frontlines of the war on terror, the war against extremists and radicals who would do us more harm. Many of them will spend Thanksgiving far from the comforts of home. And so we thank them for their service and sacrifice. We keep their families and loved ones in our prayers. We pray for the families who lost a loved one in this fight against the extremists and radicals, and we vow that their sacrifice will not be in vain.

This Thanksgiving, we pay tribute to all Americans who serve a cause larger than themselves. We are thankful for the police officers who patrol our streets. We're thankful for the firefighters who protect our homes and property. We're thankful for the leaders of our churches and synagogues and all faith-based organizations that call us to live lives of charity. We're thankful of the ordinary citizens who become good Samaritans in times of distress.

This Thanksgiving, we remember the many examples of the good heart of the American people that we have seen this past year. We remember the Virginia Tech professor who died blocking a gunman from entering his classroom. As a survivor of the Holocaust, Professor Liviu Librescu had seen the worst of humanity, yet through his sacrifice, he showed us the best.

We remember the Minneapolis man who was escorting a busload of children when the bridge underneath them collapsed. Jeremy Hernandez responded to this emergency with courage. He broke open the back door of the bus, and he helped lead every child on board to safety.

We remember the people in New Orleans who are rebuilding a great American city. One of them is Principal Doris Hicks. After Katrina, many said that her school could never return to its building in the Lower

Ninth Ward. But Principal Hicks had a different point of view; she had a different attitude. As a matter of fact, she had a uniquely American attitude. She had a vision for a resurgent community with a vibrant school at its heart. This summer, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School for Science and Technology became the first public school to reopen in the Lower Ninth Ward.

These stories remind us that our Nation's greatest strength is the decency and compassion of our people. As we count our many blessings, I encourage all Americans to show their thanks by giving back. You know, I just visited the Central Virginia Foodbank. If you're living in Richmond and you want to give back, help the Central Virginia Foodbank. The volunteers there help prepare thousands of meals for the poor each day. And in so doing, they make the Richmond community and our Nation a more hopeful place. And there are many ways to spread hope this holiday: Volunteer in a shelter; mentor a child; help an elderly neighbor; say thanks to one who wears our Nation's uniform.

In the four centuries since the founders of Berkeley first knelt on these grounds, our Nation has changed in many ways. Our people have prospered; our Nation has grown; our Thanksgiving traditions have evolved—after all, they didn't have football back then. [*Laughter*] Yet the source of all our blessings remains the same. We give thanks to the Author of Life who granted our forefathers safe passage to this land, who gives every man, woman, and child on the face of the Earth the gift of freedom, and who watches over our Nation every day.

I wish you all a safe and happy Thanksgiving. I offer Thanksgiving greetings to every American citizen. May God bless you, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:24 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to John H. Hager, chairman, Republican Party of Virginia.

Statement on the Resignation of Frances Fragos Townsend as Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism

November 19, 2007

Over the past 4½ years, Fran Townsend has served my administration with distinction as Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism. Fran has always provided wise counsel on how to best protect the American people from the threat of terrorism. She has been a steady leader in the effort to prevent and disrupt attacks and to better respond to natural disasters.

Fran's remarkable career as a public servant has spanned more than two decades. She has prosecuted violent crimes, narcotics offenses, mafia cases, and white collar fraud as an Assistant District Attorney in Brooklyn and as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in Manhattan. During her career, Fran worked to protect the American people as the Counsel to the Attorney General for Intelligence Policy, the Assistant Commandant for Intelligence at the U.S. Coast Guard, and as the Deputy National Security Adviser for Combating Terrorism at the National Security Council.

With her extensive experience, intellect, and candor, Fran has ably guided the Homeland Security Council. She has played an integral role in the formation of the key strategies and policies my administration has used to combat terror and protect Americans. She has traveled the world to meet with allies in the global war on terror and has partnered extensively with first-responders at the State and local level to enhance our preparedness. We are safer today because of her leadership.

Laura and I wish Fran, her husband, John, and their two sons, James and Patrick, all the best.

Executive Order 13451—Designating the ITER International Fusion Energy Organization as a Public International Organization Entitled To Enjoy Certain Privileges, Exemptions, and Immunities

November 19, 2007

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including section 1 of the International Organizations Immunities Act (22 U.S.C. 288), and finding that the United States participates in the ITER International Fusion Energy Organization under the authority of acts of Congress authorizing such participation and making an appropriation for such participation, including sections 971 and 972 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16311 and 16312) and laws making appropriations for the Department of Energy, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. *Designation*. I hereby designate the ITER International Fusion Energy Organization as a public international organization entitled to enjoy the privileges, exemptions, and immunities provided by the International Organizations Immunities Act.

Sec. 2. *Non-Abridgement*. This designation is not intended to abridge in any respect privileges, exemptions, or immunities that the ITER International Fusion Energy Organization otherwise may have acquired or may acquire by law.

George W. Bush

The White House,
November 19, 2007.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:06 a.m., November 20, 2007]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on November 21.

Remarks at the Thanksgiving Turkey Presentation Ceremony

November 20, 2007

The President. Good morning. Welcome to the Rose Garden. Thanks for coming. We're glad you're here at the White House. Each of you is taking part in a tradition that goes back to the days of Harry Truman. And to paraphrase Harry today, we have a message for our two feathered friends: You cannot take the heat, and you're definitely going to stay out of the kitchen. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank the representatives of the National Turkey Federation who have joined us—the chairman, Ted Seger. Appreciate you coming, Ted, thanks. Ted brought his mom—glad you're here—7 brothers, and over 30 family members, I think it is. No wonder there are so many people in the Rose Garden. [*Laughter*] But we're glad you're here. Welcome.

I also want to welcome President Joel Brandenberger. The turkeys in today's ceremony come from the Seger family farm in Dubois, Indiana. So I guess you can say they come with the chairman's seal of approval.

I also thank everybody who voted online to choose the names for our guests of honor. And I'm pleased to announce the winning names. They are "May" and "Flower." They're certainly better than the names the Vice President suggested, which was "Lunch" and "Dinner." [*Laughter*]

The national observation of Thanksgiving goes back to the days of our Founders. They asked Americans to give thanks for a nation that Benjamin Franklin famously compared to a rising sun. Over the years, Americans have found much to be thankful for. We still see our country the way Franklin did, or, as the poet Carl Sandburg put it, "In the crimson light of a rising sun fresh from the hand of God."

This Thanksgiving, we are grateful for a harvest big enough to feed us all and millions more. We're grateful for citizens who reach out to those who struggle and for neighbors in need—from neighbors in need to the strangers they've never met. We're grateful for working Americans who've given us the longest period of uninterrupted job creation on record and a prosperity that lifts our citizens. And we are grateful for one blessing in particular, the men and women of the United States military. They've worn proudly the uniform of our country. They have offered their lives in our defense. And each year, thousands more volunteer to join their noble ranks and to keep us safe. And so on this Thanksgiving, we keep our—we keep

their families and their loved ones in our prayers and in our thoughts.

[*At this point, the turkeys gobbled.*]

The President. Thank you. [*Laughter*]

America's children also have a special place in our thoughts during this season. Don't you agree? Today we're proud to be joined from—youngsters from the Camp Fire USA. We're glad you all are here. It's a nationwide organization that helps children become caring and confident future leaders. One of the things Laura and I have been most thankful for over the years is the chance to meet children from across the country and to hear from thousands of others. Some send photos; some offer prayers; some of them ask about Barney. A second grader from California once asked me, "Do you ever get a headache?" Not really, only when I have a press conference. [*Laughter*] Some children send letters with the same—with the simple phrase, "God bless America." Others write about relatives serving in the war, and they hope I remember them.

Earlier this year, a little girl in Oregon sent me a picture she had drawn. It's a large American flag, and it stood in the glow of bright orange sun. The spirit that inspired Franklin and Sandburg and other generations of America lives in the heart of this child. She sees America in the light of a rising sun. And so do I, and so do millions of our citizens. It's hard to be anything but grateful when you live in a country full of compassionate and decent citizens, a land our Fathers always knew was blessed by the Almighty God.

And so now I have a task, and that is to grant a full Presidential pardon to May and Flower. They'll be shortly flown to Disney World, where they will serve as honorary grand marshals for the Thanksgiving Day Parade. I hope that honor doesn't go to their head. [*Laughter*] May they live the rest of their lives in blissful gobbling. And may all Americans enjoy a holiday full of love and peace. God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:23 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Joel Brandenberger, president, National Turkey Federation.

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 17

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

November 19

In the morning, the President was briefed by Deputy Secretary of State John D. Negroponte on his trip to Pakistan and his meetings with President Pervez Musharraf. He then had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Richmond, VA, where he visited the Central Virginia Foodbank.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Charles City, VA.

In the afternoon, the President visited the Thanksgiving Shrine at Berkeley Plantation. Later, he returned to Washington, DC. While en route aboard Air Force One, he participated in an interview with syndicated columnist Kathleen Parker.

November 20

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he and Mrs. Bush traveled to Camp David, MD. They then participated in an interview with Charles Gibson of "ABC World News Tonight with Charles Gibson."

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush participated in an interview with People magazine.

November 21

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

The President announced his intention to nominate Neil Romano to be Assistant Secretary of Labor (Disability Employment Policy) and, upon confirmation, appoint him as a member of the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled.

The President announced his intention to nominate Douglas H. Shulman to be Commissioner of Internal Revenue at the Department of the Treasury.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the Advisory Council to the Board of Governors of the American Red Cross: Michael Chertoff; Robert M. Gates; Carlos M. Gutierrez; Michael O. Leavitt; Michael G. Mullen; Condoleezza Rice; and Margaret Spellings.

November 22

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had several Thanksgiving holiday telephone conversations with members of the U.S. military.

November 23

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

NOTE: No nominations were submitted to the Senate during the period covered by this issue.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released November 17 *

Transcript of a teleconference press briefing by Council on Environmental Quality Chairman James L. Connaughton, White House Office of Science and Technology Policy Associate Director Sharon L. Hays, and State Department Senior Climate Negotiator Harlan Watson on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report

Statement by the Press Secretary on Cyclone Sidr in Bangladesh

Released November 19

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Dana Perino

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S. 2206

Released November 20

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Dana Perino

Statement by the Press Secretary on advances in ethical stem cell research

Acts Approved by the President

Approved November 19

S. 2206 / Public Law 110–120
To provide technical corrections to Public Law 109–116 (2 U.S.C. 2131a note) to extend the time period for the Joint Committee on the Library to enter into an agreement to obtain a statue of Rosa Parks, and for other purposes

* The transcript of the press briefing was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 16 but was embargoed for release until November 17.