

our land. Among our guests tonight is the first Italian American Speaker of the House, and first woman, Nancy Pelosi. And we're also honored to be joined by the first Italian American Justices of the United States Supreme Court, Antonin Scalia and Samuel Alito.

The ties between the people of America and the people of Italy run deep, and the friendship between our countries has never been stronger. The United States and Italy are standing together against the forces of tyranny and terror. We're partnering to meet the challenges in our economies and expand trade and prosperity. And we share a vision of a future of freedom and hope for all the people.

Mr. Prime Minister, you're a strong leader. I admire your enterprising spirit, your visionary leadership, and your commitment to your word. I've enjoyed serving with you on the world stage. I'm honored to call you a close friend.

And it is now my privilege to offer a toast to the Prime Minister of Italy, Silvio Berlusconi.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:06 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Prime Minister Berlusconi.

Proclamation 8307—White Cane Safety Day, 2008

October 13, 2008

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Compassion is one of our Nation's defining values, and we must work to ensure that all Americans are able to participate fully in society. The white cane allows many of our citizens who are blind or visually impaired to enjoy increased mobility. On White Cane Safety Day, we celebrate the symbolism of the white cane and highlight the importance of ensuring that individuals who are blind or visually impaired can live independently and realize their full potential.

Through the New Freedom Initiative, my Administration has put into action our strong commitment to helping more individuals with disabilities participate in all aspects of life. Since 2001, this initiative has built on the progress of the Americans with Disabilities Act and helped create greater access to schools, the workplace, and community life. These efforts are helping to remove barriers and enabling more Americans to live with greater dignity and freedom.

The Congress, by joint resolution approved on October 6, 1964 (Public Law 88-628), as amended, has designated October 15 of each year as "White Cane Safety Day."

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 15, 2008, as White Cane Safety Day. I call upon public officials, business leaders, educators, librarians, and all the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this thirteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 1:15 p.m., October 15, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 14, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on October 17.

Remarks on the National Economy

October 14, 2008

Good morning. I just completed a meeting with my Working Group on Financial Markets. We discussed the unprecedented and aggressive steps the Federal Government is taking to address the financial crisis. Over the past few weeks, my administration has worked with both parties in Congress to pass a financial rescue plan. Federal agencies have moved decisively to shore up struggling institutions and stabilize our markets, and the United States has worked with partners