

Week Ending Friday, October 16, 1998

**Statement on Senate Action on the
“International Religious Freedom
Act of 1998”**

October 9, 1998

I welcome today’s strong bipartisan Senate passage, and the anticipated passage in the House of Representatives, of the “International Religious Freedom Act of 1998.”

I have made the promotion of religious freedom a priority of my Presidency and an integral part of our foreign policy through, among other efforts, the creation of the Advisory Committee on Religious Freedom Abroad and my appointment last June of our special representative on international religious freedom.

The “International Religious Freedom Act of 1998” is a welcome and responsible addition to our ongoing efforts. Its principled, measured approach rightly emphasizes effective remedies over broad, symbolic gestures.

I also wish to applaud the bipartisan, cooperative approach that helped achieve this legislation, in particular the leadership of Senators Nickles, Lieberman, Hagel, Biden, Feinstein, and Specter and Representative Clement. I’d also like to pay tribute at this time to Representative Frank Wolf, whose longstanding and devoted advocacy for this issue has been an inspiration to those of us so determined to promote religious freedom abroad.

This legislation is not directed against any one country or religious faith. Indeed, this act will serve to promote the religious freedom of people of all backgrounds, whether Muslim, Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu, Taoist, or any other faith. I look forward to signing this act.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Proclamation 7137—National School
Lunch Week, 1998**

October 9, 1998

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

When the National School Lunch Program was established by President Truman in 1946, it built upon decades of local commitment by parents, educators, and community leaders who recognized a simple but important fact: hungry children can’t learn. Today, for millions of students, the National School Lunch Program provides nutritious meals that serve as a vital foundation for learning and growing. Many of these children receive their only nutritious meal of the day at school. Thanks to this practical and effective program, children and adolescents in school cafeterias across our country not only have the opportunity to enjoy a wholesome and balanced meal each day, but they also begin to understand the importance of making healthy eating choices.

Unfortunately, the eating habits of America’s children and adolescents often fall short. Parents, educators, school administrators, food service professionals, and community leaders must work in partnership to ensure that our youth learn the importance of good nutrition to overall good health. Learning about nutrition in school and having the daily opportunity to eat a well-balanced meal can help children develop the eating habits necessary to excel in the classroom and in life.

In recognition of the contributions of the National School Lunch Program to the health, education, and well-being of our Nation’s children, the Congress, by joint resolution of October 9, 1962 (Public Law 87–780), has designated the week beginning on the second Sunday in October of each year as