

Week Ending Friday, April 18, 2003

**Statement on Senate Action on the Budget Resolution**

*April 11, 2003*

The Senate has now completed action on the budget resolution that funds our priorities and rigorously controls spending. I look forward to working with the full Congress to provide the tax relief necessary to grow our economy and create jobs. The budget resolution provides for a jobs-and-growth package of up to \$550 billion, and we will work with the Congress to provide the greatest amount of tax relief to stimulate our economy for American workers.

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

**Proclamation 7663—Pan American Day and Pan American Week, 2003**

*April 11, 2003*

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

Our Nation takes great pride in the unity of the Pan American community. We enjoy strong bonds of friendship with our neighbors throughout the Western Hemisphere, and the almost 33 million citizens of Latin American and Caribbean descent who are a part of the rich cultural diversity of our country. Their contributions have enriched our Nation. In the Western Hemisphere, we share common commitments to overcoming poverty, achieving peace and prosperity for all, and providing safety in our hemisphere. As we observe Pan American Day and Pan American Week, we renew our dedication to working with the Pan American community of nations to protect democracy, promote economic growth, and provide for the defense and security of all our citizens.

The governments of the region continue to make important progress in advancing democracy, as demonstrated by the free, fair, and transparent elections that took place throughout the region this past year. The United States joins with our neighbors in the hemisphere in congratulating the citizens and governments of those nations on their achievements, and my Administration remains dedicated to working with the democratically elected governments of the Americas to defend freedoms whenever and wherever they are threatened. The historic Inter-American Democratic Charter, adopted on September 11, 2001, continues to guide efforts across the region to protect human rights and political freedoms, combat corruption, promote good governance, and strengthen democratic institutions.

The countries of our hemisphere have made great strides in opening their economies in recent decades, and we must continue to work towards open exchanges of ideas and goods throughout Pan America. To promote these goals, we must welcome the expansion of economic integration and renew our dedication to creating a Free Trade Area of the Americas.

Ensuring hemispheric security remains one of our most important common objectives. Today and in the future, we will continue our efforts to safeguard our citizens and to ensure that individuals throughout our hemisphere enjoy the full benefits of freedom. By working together, we can achieve the Pan American goals of protecting democracy and human rights, defeating tyranny, and overcoming poverty and lawlessness.

**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 April 14, 2003, as Pan American Day, and April 13 through April 19, 2003, as Pan American Week. I encourage the Governors of the 50 States, the

Governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the officials of other areas under the flag of the United States of America to honor these observances with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

**In Witness Whereof**, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-seventh.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:18 a.m., April 15, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 16. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

### **The President's Radio Address**

*April 12, 2003*

Good morning. Over the last several days, the world has watched as the regime of Saddam Hussein began passing into history. We will always remember the first images of a nation released from decades of tyranny and fear. The conflict continues in Iraq, and our military may still face hard fighting. Yet the statues of the dictator and all the works of his terror regime are falling away.

From the beginning and to this very hour, members of the American and coalition forces have conducted themselves with all the skill and honor we expect of them. Our enemies have seen their valor. The people of Iraq are seeing their compassion as our military provides food, water, and medical treatment to all in need, including captured Iraqi soldiers. As Army Master Sergeant Howard Kutcher of Delaware said of his service in the Middle East, "I am not here to conquer. I am here to help."

In one city, American soldiers encountered a crowd of Iraqi citizens who thought our troops were about to storm a nearby mosque. Just then, Lieutenant Colonel Chris Hughes ordered his men to get down on one knee and point their weapons to the ground. This gesture of respect helped defuse a dan-

gerous situation and made our peaceful intentions clear.

Coalition forces have also come upon scenes that explain why fear runs so deep among the Iraqi people. In Baghdad on Tuesday, U.S. marines helped to free more than 100 children who, according to one report, had been jailed for refusing to join the dictator's Ba'ath Party youth organization. Malnourished and wearing rags, the children were overjoyed to see their parents and our liberating forces. In the words of Lieutenant Colonel Fred Padilla, commander of the 1st Battalion 5th Marines, "The children just streamed out of the gates, and their parents just started to embrace us." "Hundreds of kids," he said, "were swarming us and kissing us."

As Saddam's regime of fear is brought to an end, the people of Iraq are revealing the true hopes they have always held. It should surprise no one that Iraqis, like all people, resent oppression and welcome their own freedom. It should surprise no one that in every nation and every culture, the human heart desires the same good things, dignity, liberty, and a chance to build a better life.

As people throughout Iraq celebrate the arrival of freedom, America celebrates with them. We know that freedom is the gift of God to all mankind, and we rejoice when others can share it.

On Wednesday in central Baghdad, one of the Iraqi men who took a sledgehammer to the pedestal of the giant statue of Saddam had this to say: "I'm 49, but I never lived a single day. Only now will I start living."

Millions of Iraqis feel the same as their country is finally returned to them. The nightmare of Saddam Hussein's rule in Iraq is ending. Soon, the good and gifted people of Iraq will be free to choose their leaders who respect their rights and reflect their character. In all that is to come, they will have the good will of the entire world. And they will have the friendship of the people of the United States.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:12 a.m. on April 11 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 12. The transcript was made available by the Office