

as Constitution Week. I encourage Federal, State, and local officials, as well as leaders of civic, social, and educational organizations, to conduct ceremonies and programs that celebrate our Constitution and reaffirm our rights and responsibilities as citizens of our great Nation.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-first day of August, 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

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NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 22, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on August 24.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Community Leaders in Riverside, Missouri

August 22, 2007

How is everybody doing? Thank you for joining me. I'm visiting with some of the area's finest citizens. We talked about businesses and opportunities and sports and culture. It's good to be with you. Thank you. I hope you leave here with the sense that I'm upbeat about the future of this country. I believe strongly we can do anything we put our minds to do.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:06 a.m. at the Corner Cafe.

Remarks at the Veterans of Foreign Wars National Convention in Kansas City, Missouri

August 22, 2007

Thank you all. Please be seated. It's good to be with you again. I understand you haven't had much of a problem attracting speakers. [*Laughter*]

I thank you for inviting me. I can understand why people want to come here. See, it's an honor to stand with the men and women of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The VFW is one of our Nation's finest organizations. You belong to an elite group of Americans. You belong to a group of people who have defended America overseas. You have fought in places from Normandy to Iwo Jima to Pusan to Khe Sahn to Kuwait to Somalia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq. You brought security to the American people. You brought hope to millions across the world.

As members of this proud organization, you are advocates for the rights of our military veterans, a model of community service, and a strong and important voice for a strong national defense. I thank you for your service. I thank you for what you've done for the United States of America.

I stand before you as a wartime President. I wish I didn't have to say that, but an enemy that attacked us on September the 11th, 2001, declared war on the United States of America. And war is what we're engaged in. The struggle has been called a clash of civilizations. In truth, it's a struggle for civilization. We fight for a free way of life against a new barbarism, an ideology whose followers have killed thousands on American soil and seek to kill again on even a greater scale.

We fight for the possibility that decent men and women across the broader Middle East can realize their destiny and raise up societies based on freedom and justice and personal dignity. And as long as I'm Commander in Chief, we will fight to win. I'm confident that we will prevail. I'm confident we'll prevail because we have the greatest force for human liberation the world has ever known, the men and women of the United States Armed Forces.

For those of you who wear the uniform, nothing makes me more proud to say that I am your Commander in Chief. Thank you for volunteering in the service of the United States of America.

Now I know some people doubt the universal appeal of liberty or worry that the Middle East isn't ready for it. Others believe that America's presence is destabilizing and that if the United States would just leave a place