

that still, small voice that spoke to those six good men, that moved their souls to service and sacrifice. The still, small voice that endures through the ages, that inspires the songs and words we have all shared today, that must now carry this group of grieving families through their grief to going on.

Today we thank God for the lives our fallen firefighters lived. We hope their families can remember the good and happy times and bring some smiles through their tears. We commend their souls to God's eternal loving care, and we pray that His still, small voice will bring strength and healing to these families and to

this wonderful community who loved them so much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:50 p.m. at Worcester's Centrum Centre. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Raymond V. Mariano of Worcester; Gov. Argeo Paul Cellucci of Massachusetts; Bishop of Worcester Daniel P. Reilly; Dennis L. Budd, chief, Worcester Fire Department; Frank Raffa, president, Worcester Fire Fighters Local 1009; and Alfred K. Whitehead, general president, International Association of Fire Fighters.

Statement on Renewed Flooding in Vietnam

December 9, 1999

I was saddened to learn of renewed flooding in the central provinces of Vietnam, which were already inundated by heavy rains last month. On behalf of the American people, I extend my deepest sympathies to all those who have suffered losses and are struggling to rebuild, including the families of many Americans of Vietnamese descent.

The United States is providing emergency assistance to support flood relief efforts, just as we provided almost \$600,000 in November to deliver supplies and build flood-resistant homes. We stand ready to provide further help to meet the urgent needs of those affected by the flooding and to help the Vietnamese people better withstand future flooding.

Statement on Signing Chattahoochee River Protection Legislation

December 9, 1999

Today I have signed into law H.R. 2140, a bill that will enhance the protection of a 48-mile segment of the Chattahoochee River, a vital natural resource for the Atlanta metropolitan area and an important unit of the National Park System. This legislation ensures that the natural, scenic, recreational, and historic values of one of our Nation's great urban rivers will be preserved for the benefit of future generations.

This Act provides the foundation for a cooperative effort by the Federal Government, the State of Georgia, local governments, and private entities to link the separate units of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area through purchases of remaining open space along the Chattahoochee River corridor north of Atlanta. It gives the National Park Service

the authority to expand the land base of the recreation area from approximately 6,800 acres to 10,000 acres through a revision of the boundary, by adding undeveloped land within the 2,000-foot river bank corridors. The National Park Service also will be authorized to exclude some properties currently within the boundary that are no longer suitable for the park because they have been developed.

From the time the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area was established in 1978, the pace of residential and commercial development in the Chattahoochee River corridor has accelerated rapidly. A U.S. Census Bureau report issued earlier this year names Forsyth County, Georgia, where the recreation area boundary begins, the fastest-growing county in