

Memorandum on Designation of Officers of the Social Security Administration
March 19, 2002

Memorandum for the Commissioner of Social Security

Subject: Designation of Officers of the Social Security Administration

By the authority vested in me as President under the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, 5 U.S.C. 3345 *et seq.*, I hereby order that:

Section 1. Order of Succession.

During any period when both the Commissioner of Social Security (Commissioner) and the Deputy Commissioner of Social Security (Deputy Commissioner) have died, resigned, or otherwise become unable to perform the functions and duties of the office of Commissioner, the following officers of the Social Security Administration, in the order listed, shall perform the functions and duties of the office of Commissioner, if they are eligible to act as Commissioner under the provisions of the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, until such time as the Commissioner or Deputy

Commissioner is able to perform the functions and duties of the office of Commissioner:

Chief of Staff;

Deputy Commissioner for Operations;
and

Regional Commissioner, Philadelphia.

Sec. 2. Exceptions.

(a) No individual who is serving in an office listed in section 1 in an acting capacity, by virtue of so serving, shall act as Commissioner pursuant to this memorandum.

(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of this memorandum, the President retains discretion, to the extent permitted by the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, 5 U.S.C. 3345 *et seq.*, to depart from this memorandum in designating an acting Commissioner.

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 9.

Remarks in a Tribute to Milton Friedman
May 9, 2002

Well, thank you all very much. It's an honor for me to be here to pay tribute to a hero of freedom, Milton Friedman. He has used a brilliant mind to advance a moral vision: The vision of a society where men and women are free, free to choose, but where government is not as free to override their decisions.

That vision has changed America, and it is changing the world. All of us owe a tremendous debt to this man's towering intellect and his devotion to liberty. So it's

my honor to welcome you all to the White House. Thank you for coming. I'm looking forward to having lunch. [*Laughter*]

I appreciate Larry Lindsey, and I want to thank him for his leadership and his friendship. I, of course, want to welcome Rose Friedman as well. I'm so honored that the Secretary of Defense, Don Rumsfeld, has joined us as well as the Deputy Secretary of Defense, Paul Wolfowitz. I want to thank the Chairman for being here. Chairman Greenspan is a steady influence

on our country, and I appreciate your leadership. I want to welcome Dr. Gary Becker, professor at the University of Chicago, who mentored Milton Friedman—[laughter]—a Nobel Prize winner. And I want to thank Guity for coming as well. Welcome. And I appreciate Ed Meese being here as well. It's great to see you, General.

Milton Friedman has shown us that when government attempts to substitute its own judgments for the judgments of free people, the results are usually disastrous. In contrast to the free market's invisible hand, which improves the lives of people, the government's invisible foot tramples on people's hopes and destroys their dreams.

He has never claimed that free markets are perfect. Yet he has demonstrated that even an imperfect market produces better results than arrogant experts and grasping bureaucrats. But Milton Friedman does not object to government controls solely because they are ineffective. His deeper objectives flow from a moral framework. He has taught us that a free market system's main justification is its moral strength. Human freedom serves the cause of human dignity. Freedom rewards creativity and work, and you cannot reduce freedom in our economy without reducing freedom in our lives.

As Milton Friedman has written, "I know of no society that has been marked by a large measure of political freedom and that has not also used something comparable to a free market to organize the bulk of economic activity." This viewpoint was once controversial, as was Milton Friedman, himself.

When he began his work, the conventional wisdom held that capitalism's days were numbered. Free market systems were thought to be unsuited to modern problems. Today, we recognize that free markets are the great engines of economic development. They are the source of wealth and the hope of a world weary of poverty and weary of oppression.

We have seen Milton Friedman's ideas at work in Chile, where a group of economists called the "Chicago Boys" brought inflation under control and laid the groundwork for economic success. We have seen them at work in Russia, where the Government recently adopted a 13 percent flat tax with impressive results. We have seen them at work in Sweden, which has adopted personal retirement accounts. We have seen them even at work in China, where the Government conceded long ago that Marxism was, in their words, "no longer suited" to China's problems. These are extraordinary developments. They demonstrate that the rest of the world is finally catching up with Milton Friedman. [Laughter]

Yet Milton Friedman has done more than defend freedom as an abstract ideal. He has creatively applied the power of freedom to the problems of our own country, and in the process he has become an influential social reformer.

Milton has shown us how freedom can enhance our national security. He is the intellectual godfather of our all-volunteer army. He argued that America could rely on the dedication of soldiers who serve in armed forces of their own free will, and he was right. We have recently seen the quality and idealism and skill of the all-volunteer army. Those who serve our country by choice are serving it with honor.

Milton Friedman has also shown us how freedom can foster educational reform. For many years, he has been a tireless advocate of school choice as a way of empowering parents and improving the performance of our schools. Educational reform advances when parents have the information and the authority to push for reform. And there is no greater authority than a good alternative. Poor children in America need better options when they're trapped in schools that will not teach and will not change.

In all of these issues and debates, Milton Friedman has argued with consistency and courage and trademark bluntness. His ideas

have influence around the world. And by his strength of conviction, he has served his country with distinction. And it has been recognized as such: After all, he received the 1976 Nobel Prize for Economics, and in 1988 he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

In 1938, Milton Friedman married Rose Director, an outstanding economist in her own right, and the only person known to have ever won an argument with Milton. [Laughter] Half a century later, Milton and Rose Friedman published a joint memoir called “Two Lucky People.” There’s no doubt that Milton and Rose Friedman have been lucky, but not as lucky as America. We’re lucky that their parents chose to emigrate from Europe. We’re lucky they gave them the love and encouragement

they needed to be bold and to succeed. We’re lucky that Milton Friedman flunked some of his qualifying exams to become an actuary—[laughter]—and became an economist, instead. [Laughter] We’re thankful for those tough exams—[laughter]—but not nearly as thankful as we are for the lives and talents and intellect of Milton and Rose Friedman.

May God bless them both, and welcome.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:37 a.m. in Room 450 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Gary S. Becker, professor of economics and sociology at the University of Chicago, and his wife, Guity; and former Attorney General Edwin Meese.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters May 9, 2002

Nominations to the Federal Judiciary

The President. I want to thank the Senators for being here today; we’re talking about a—judges. We have a vacancy crisis in America. There are too many seats that aren’t filled with judges, and therefore, America hurts, America is not getting the justice it needs.

Ours is a system that relies upon an independent court system, and when there is vacancies, the American people suffer. And I call upon the Senate to approve—at least give hearings to people we’ve sent up to the Senate. There are 30 circuit court vacancies in America, and they’ve approved 7. This is a bad record, and it’s a record that’s bad for the country.

Over a year ago I submitted the names of 11 qualified, well-qualified Americans, and the Senate has only dealt on 3 of them. These Senators here bring stories about circuit courts in their own States, in their

own districts, that because of vacancies, good, honest Americans aren’t getting their hearings. And this isn’t right.

For the good of the country, the Senate needs to act and act expeditiously on the nominees I’ve sent up. It’s important that our judiciary be full.

I’ll be glad to answer a couple of questions.

Arshad [Arshad Mohammed, Reuters].

Q. Mr. President—

The President. You’re second, Sonya [Sonya Ross, Associated Press].

Q. Mr. President, do you think this is just—do you think this is just raw politics on the part of the Democrats?

The President. Well, you can ask the Senators here. But yes, I do. I think it’s bad politics. These are well-qualified—you know, they’ve relied upon the American Bar Association in the past. These nominees have been given well-qualified or