

Memorandum on Designation of Officers of the Office of Science and Technology Policy To Act as Director
December 11, 2002

Memorandum for the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy

Subject: Designation of Officers of the Office of Science and Technology Policy To Act as Director

By the authority vested in me as President under the Constitution and laws of the United States of America and pursuant to 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 the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (Director) has died, resigned, or otherwise become unable to perform the functions and duties of the office of Director, the following officers of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, in the order listed, shall perform the functions and duties of the office of Director, if they are eligible to act as Director under the provisions of the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, until such time as the Director is able to perform the functions and duties of the office of Director:

Associate Director for Technology;
Associate Director for Science; and
Chief of Staff and General Counsel.

Sec. 2. Exceptions.

- (a) No individual who is serving in an office listed in section 1 in an acting capacity shall, by virtue of so serving, act as Director 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. 3345–3349d, to depart from this memorandum in designating an acting Director.

Sec. 3. Publication. You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 13. It was not received for publication in the *Federal Register*. An original was not available for verification of the content of this memorandum.

Remarks Announcing the Smallpox Vaccination Plan
December 13, 2002

Good afternoon. Since our country was attacked 15 months ago, Americans have been forced to prepare for a variety of threats we hope will never come. We have stepped up security at our ports and borders. We've expanded our ability to detect chemical and biological threats. We've increased support for first-responders. We made public—made our public health care system better able to track and treat dis-

ease. By preparing at home and by pursuing enemies abroad, we're adding to the security of our Nation. I thank the members of my team who are here who are adding to the security of our Nation.

One potential danger to America is the use of the smallpox virus as a weapon of terror. Smallpox is a deadly but preventable disease. Most Americans who are 34 or older had a smallpox vaccination when they

were children. By 1972, the risk of smallpox was so remote that routine vaccinations were discontinued in the United States. In 1980, the World Health Organization declared that smallpox had been completely eradicated, and since then, there has not been a single natural case of the disease anywhere in the world.

We know, however, that the smallpox virus still exists in laboratories, and we believe that regimes hostile to the United States may possess this dangerous virus. To protect our citizens in the aftermath of September the 11th, we are evaluating old threats in a new light. Our Government has no information that a smallpox attack is imminent. Yet it is prudent to prepare for the possibility that terrorists would kill indiscriminately—who kill indiscriminately would use diseases as a weapon.

Our public health agencies began preparations more than a year ago. Today, through the hard work of our Department of Health and Human Services, ably led by Tommy Thompson, and State and local officials, America has stockpiled enough vaccine and is now prepared to inoculate our entire population in the event of a smallpox attack. Americans and anyone who would think of harming Americans can be certain that this Nation is ready to respond quickly and effectively to a smallpox emergency or an increase in the level of threat.

Today I am directing additional steps to protect the health of our Nation. I'm ordering that the military and other personnel who serve America in high-risk parts of the world receive the smallpox vaccine. Men and women who could be on the frontlines of a biological attack must be protected.

This particular vaccine does involve a small risk of serious health considerations. As Commander in Chief, I do not believe I can ask others to accept this risk unless I am willing to do the same. Therefore I will receive the vaccine along with our military.

These vaccinations are a precaution only and not a response to any information con-

cerning imminent danger. Given the current level of threat and the inherent health risks of the vaccine, we have decided not to initiate a broader vaccination program for all Americans at this time. Neither my family nor my staff will be receiving the vaccine, because our health and national security experts do not believe vaccination is necessary for the general public.

At present, the responsible course is to make careful and thorough preparations in case a broader vaccination program should become necessary in the future. There may be some citizens, however, who insist on being vaccinated now. Our public health agencies will work to accommodate them, but that is not our recommendation at this time.

We do recommend vaccinations for one other group of Americans that could be on the frontlines of a biological attack. We will make the vaccine available on a voluntary basis to medical professionals and emergency personnel and response teams that would be the first on the scene in a smallpox emergency. These teams would immediately provide vaccine and treatment to Americans in a crisis, and to do this job effectively, members of these teams should be protected against the disease.

I understand that many first-responders will have questions before deciding whether to be vaccinated. We will make sure they have the medical advice they need to make an informed decision. Smallpox is a serious disease, and we know that our enemies are trying to inflict serious harm. Yet there's no evidence that smallpox imminently threatens this country.

We will continue taking every essential step to guard against the threats to our Nation, and I deeply appreciate the good efforts of State and local health officials who are facing difficult challenges with great skill. The actions we are taking together will help safeguard the health of our people in a measured and responsible way.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:12 p.m. in Room 450 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. The Office of the

Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on the Resignation of Henry Kissinger as Chairman of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States *December 13, 2002*

It is with regret that I accept Dr. Kissinger's decision to step down as Chairman of the national commission to investigate the events of September 11, 2001, and the years that led up to that event.

As I stated at the time of his appointment, Dr. Kissinger is one of our Nation's most accomplished and respected public servants. I thank him for his willingness to consider serving his country once again.

His chairmanship would have provided the insights and analysis the Government needs to understand the methods of our enemies and the nature of the threats we face.

My administration will work quickly to select a new Chairman whose mission will be to uncover every detail and learn every lesson of September 11, even as we act on what we have learned so far to better protect and defend America.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Northern Ireland *December 13, 2002*

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am transmitting to you a report prepared by my Administration as required by section 701(d) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 2003 (Public Law 107-228).

The enclosed report broadly addresses policing reform and human rights in Northern Ireland. It provides information on topics of interest outlined by the Congress, including details on paramilitary decommissioning, and the manner in which U.S. law

enforcement training for members of the Police Service of Northern Ireland is being administered.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Joseph R. Biden, Jr., chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, and Henry J. Hyde, chairman, House Committee on International Relations.

The President's Radio Address *December 14, 2002*

Good morning. This week I introduced new members of my economic team. For

the Secretary of the Treasury, I have submitted the name of John Snow, a respected