

Statement on the Appointment of Thomas H. Kean as Chairman of the
National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States
December 16, 2002

I am pleased to announce that Thomas H. Kean, former Governor of New Jersey and president of Drew University in New Jersey, will serve as Chairman of the national commission to investigate the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the events that led up to it.

Tom Kean is a leader respected for his integrity, fairness, and good judgment. I am confident he will work to make the Commission's investigation thorough. It is im-

portant that we uncover every detail and learn every lesson of September 11th.

Governor Kean served on the Advisory Board to the President's Initiative on Race from 1997 to 1998, served as Vice Chairman of the U.S. delegation to the Fourth U.N. World Conference on Women in 1995, and led the U.S. delegation to the World Conference on Education for All in Thailand in 1990.

Statement on the Resignation of Joe M. Allbaugh as Director of the
Federal Emergency Management Agency
December 16, 2002

For nearly 2 years as Director of FEMA, Joe Allbaugh has served America with ability, courage, and compassion. He will continue to shepherd FEMA through its transition into the Department of Homeland Security.

After the attacks on our country, America came to know Joe as I do: He is a steady

leader, a calm presence, and man who inspires confidence in a time of crisis. I have trusted Joe in a variety of positions throughout my public life, and he has always met the highest standards of service and integrity. Laura and I wish Joe the very best in all that he does in the future.

Joint Statement Between the United States of America and Negara Brunei
Darussalam
December 16, 2002

President Bush and His Majesty, Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah, today pledged to reinforce the friendship between the peoples of the United States and of Brunei Darussalam, and to pursue our common interests of peace, prosperity, and stability in Southeast Asia.

The two leaders recommitted themselves to the global war on terror, declaring ter-

rorism a threat to all civilized societies and the exploitation of religion to promote violence an abomination. President Bush and His Majesty reiterated the importance of strengthening international cooperation in combating terrorism in a comprehensive manner and affirmed the importance of

working with multilateral institutions, including the United Nations. The two leaders also recognized the importance of promoting tolerance and understanding amongst the diverse cultures, societies, and religions.

The President praised Brunei Darussalam's long tradition of religious tolerance and cooperation with its neighbors, friends, and partners. In the wake of the tragic Bali bombings, the President and His Majesty agreed on the need to strengthen cooperation to identify and destroy terrorist networks; exchange information and intelligence about terrorists and terrorist organizations; disrupt the movement of terrorists and the tools of terror across international borders; and cut off sources of funding for terrorist acts, especially in Southeast Asia. His Majesty welcomed President Bush's offer to assist Brunei Darussalam in building its capacity to counter terrorism.

The President welcomed the recent accession of the Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yand Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. The President and His Majesty also look forward to cooperating with other ASEAN partners in supporting the proposed regional counterterrorism center in Malaysia.

President Bush expressed appreciation for Brunei Darussalam's contribution toward the humanitarian relief efforts and reconstruction of Afghanistan. Such contributions demonstrate the compassion of the Government and people of Brunei in its commitment to build a peaceful, prosperous Afghanistan.

The President and His Majesty welcomed the growing, mutually beneficial bilateral defense relationship between the United States and Brunei Darussalam, and reaffirmed their desire to see such cooperation increase.

The two leaders agreed on the importance of a strong and united ASEAN, and President Bush offered all appropriate as-

sistance to support capacity-building within ASEAN. President Bush praised Brunei Darussalam's strong leadership role in ASEAN in recent years, and reaffirmed our commitment to expand U.S. engagement with ASEAN as a pillar of stability in Southeast Asia. The two leaders agreed on the importance of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and APEC in promoting regional stability and prosperity. The President welcomed Brunei Darussalam's support for our Secure Trade in the APEC Region, or "STAR," initiative, aimed at transforming the movement of goods and people to increase both security and economic competitiveness. The President pledged to work with the Government of Brunei Darussalam to assist Brunei Darussalam in building its own capacity to provide increased border and customs security and efficiency.

His Majesty welcomed President Bush's Enterprise for ASEAN Initiative, or "EAI," as an initiative designed to promote increased investment, economic growth, and free trade between the United States and ASEAN countries. The President and His Majesty welcomed the signing of a bilateral Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA). This TIFA will provide the foundation for increased trade and economic cooperation between Brunei Darussalam and the United States as both economies adapt to the economic challenges of the 21st century. The two sides agreed to coordinate their efforts bilaterally, regionally, and multilaterally, including working together to complete successfully the Doha Development Agenda.

To further deepen understanding between our two nations, the President and His Majesty have pledged to increase educational opportunities for Bruneian students, government officials, and other professionals to study and train in the United States. Toward this end, the President announced the establishment of a Fulbright Program in Brunei.

The President and His Majesty also reiterated their mutual commitment to advance the rule of law and to promote respect for human rights, including freedom of religion, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and cherished by

the people of both the United States and Brunei Darussalam.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks at the White House Children's Story Hour December 17, 2002

Students. Merry Christmas.

The President. Thank you. Third graders?

Students. Yes.

The President. Good. Where's your teachers? Thank you for teaching. Welcome. We're glad you're here. This is the Roosevelt Room in the White House.

The First Lady. And this painting behind us is Teddy Roosevelt, up above.

The President. He was one of our Presidents.

The First Lady. He was one of our Presidents 100 years ago—100 years ago.

The President. Where's Burnie Elementary? Welcome.

Saint Agnes? Glad you all are here. Thanks for coming.

Laura and I thought we'd read a Christmas story to you, if that's okay.

Students. Yes.

The President. Glad you accepted it. [Laughter] That's what's going to happen. Have you heard the one that starts with, "'Twas the night before Christmas"?

Students. Yes.

The President. And what comes next?

Students. I can't see it.

The President. Oh, I'm sorry. "'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house"——

The First Lady. "Not a creature was stirring"——

The President. ——"not even a mouse."

The First Lady. Mouse.

The President. Nobody was stirring. It was kind of quiet, wasn't it?

You had better read that, because I can't see it.

The First Lady. [Laughter] "The stockings were hung by the chimney with care, in hopes that Saint Nicholas soon would be there. The children were nestled all snug in their beds." Don't they look snug?

Students. Yes.

The First Lady. "While visions of sugarplums danced in their heads." What does that mean? Do you know what sugarplums are?

Students. No.

The First Lady. Candy. So they're thinking maybe their stockings will have candy in them, don't they?

The President. You can't see? You come right over here.

The First Lady. "And Ma in her kerchief and I in my cap had just settled down for a long winter's nap." Do you all want to come up closer here?

The President. It may be easier to see.

The First Lady. Yes. Come on over here so you can see. These are really beautiful pictures, if you can see close.

"When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter, I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter. Away to the window I flew like a flash, tore open the shutters, threw up the sash. The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow gave a luster of midday to the objects below. When what to my wondering eyes should appear"—do you all know?

Students. Reindeer.