

Eagle Scout who became a distinguished naval officer and a fearless test pilot. One friend remembers Willie this way: "He was blessed, and we were blessed to know him."

Our whole Nation was blessed to have such men and women serving in our space program. Their loss is deeply felt, especially in this place, where so many of you called them friends. The people of NASA are being tested once again. In your grief, you are responding as your friends would have wished, with focus, professionalism, and unbroken faith in the mission of this agency.

Captain Brown was correct: America's space program will go on.

This cause of exploration and discovery is not an option we choose. It is a desire written in the human heart. We are that part of creation which seeks to understand all creation. We find the best among us, send them forth into unmapped darkness, and pray they will return. They go in peace for all mankind, and all mankind is in their debt.

Yet, some explorers do not return, and the loss settles unfairly on a few. The families here today shared in the courage of those they loved, but now they must face life and grief without them. The sorrow

is lonely, but you are not alone. In time, you will find comfort and the grace to see you through. And in God's own time, we can pray that the day of your reunion will come.

And to the children who miss your mom or dad so much today, you need to know they love you and that love will always be with you. They were proud of you, and you can be proud of them for the rest of your life.

The final days of their own lives were spent looking down upon this Earth. And now, on every continent, in every land they could see, the names of these astronauts are known and remembered. They will always have an honored place in the memory of this country. And today I offer the respect and gratitude of the people of the United States.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:35 p.m. in a courtyard at NASA's Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks. The related proclamation of February 1 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Benchmarks for a Sustainable Peace Process in Bosnia and Herzegovina *February 4, 2003*

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by the Levin Amendment to the 1998 Supplemental Appropriations and Rescissions Act (section 7(b) of Public Law 105-174) and section 1203(a) of the Strom Thurmond National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1999 (Public Law 105-261), I am providing a report prepared by my Administration on progress made toward achieving benchmarks for a

sustainable peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This seventh report, which also includes supplemental reporting as required by section 1203(a) of Public Law 105-261, provides an updated assessment of progress on the benchmarks covering the period January 1 to December 31, 2002.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
February 4, 2003.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Plan Colombia
February 4, 2003

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to Public Law 106–246, section 3204(e), I am providing a report prepared by my Administration detailing the progress of spending by the executive branch during

the last two quarters of Fiscal Year 2002 in support of Plan Colombia.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
February 4, 2003.

Statement on Legislation To Implement the Community and Faith-Based Initiative
February 5, 2003

I applaud the Senate Finance Committee, under the leadership of Senators Grassley and Baucus, for moving quickly on a key component of bipartisan faith-based legislation sponsored by Senators Santorum and Lieberman. Today's action brings us one step closer to creating incentives for Americans to donate more to charities, many of which are facing tough financial times. We must also work to level the

playing field for community and faith-based organizations that provide effective social services to our fellow citizens who are in need. I look forward to working closely with the Senate and House to improve the legislation to get a strong, bipartisan faith-based bill on my desk as soon as possible. Together, we can help encourage acts of compassion that can transform our Nation, one heart and one soul at a time.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Norway-United States Agreement on Social Security
February 5, 2003

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to section 233(e)(1) of the Social Security Act, as amended by the Social Security Amendments of 1977 (Public Law 95–216, 42 U.S.C. 433(e)(1)), I transmit herewith the Agreement Between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Norway on Social Security, with a related administrative agreement, both signed at

Oslo on November 30, 2001. This revised Agreement is intended to modify certain provisions of the original United States and Norwegian Agreement, which was signed in Washington on January 13, 1983, and, upon its entry into force, will replace the 1983 Agreement.

The revised United States-Norwegian Agreement is similar in objective to the