

grown; our Thanksgiving traditions have evolved—after all, they didn’t have football back then. [Laughter] Yet the source of all our blessings remains the same. We give thanks to the Author of Life who granted our forefathers safe passage to this land, who gives every man, woman, and child on the face of the Earth the gift of freedom, and who watches over our Nation every day.

I wish you all a safe and happy Thanksgiving. I offer Thanksgiving greetings to

every American citizen. May God bless you, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:24 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to John H. Hager, chairman, Republican Party of Virginia; and Beverly A. Washington, sheriff, Charles City County, Virginia. The related Thanksgiving Day proclamation of November 15 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Resignation of Frances Fragos Townsend as Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism *November 19, 2007*

Over the past 4½ years, Fran Townsend has served my administration with distinction as Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism. Fran has always provided wise counsel on how to best protect the American people from the threat of terrorism. She has been a steady leader in the effort to prevent and disrupt attacks and to better respond to natural disasters.

Fran’s remarkable career as a public servant has spanned more than two decades. She has prosecuted violent crimes, narcotics offenses, mafia cases, and white collar fraud as an assistant district attorney in Brooklyn and as an assistant U.S. attorney in Manhattan. During her career, Fran worked to protect the American people as the Counsel to the Attorney General for Intelligence Policy, the Assistant Com-

mandant for Intelligence at the U.S. Coast Guard, and as the Deputy National Security Adviser for Combating Terrorism at the National Security Council.

With her extensive experience, intellect, and candor, Fran has ably guided the Homeland Security Council. She has played an integral role in the formation of the key strategies and policies my administration has used to combat terror and protect Americans. She has traveled the world to meet with allies in the global war on terror and has partnered extensively with first-responders at the State and local level to enhance our preparedness. We are safer today because of her leadership.

Laura and I wish Fran, her husband John, and their two sons James and Patrick, all the best.

Remarks at the Thanksgiving Turkey Presentation Ceremony *November 20, 2007*

The President. Good morning. Welcome to the Rose Garden. Thanks for coming.

We’re glad you’re here at the White House. Each of you is taking part in a tradition

that goes back to the days of Harry Truman. And to paraphrase Harry today, we have a message for our two feathered friends: You cannot take the heat, and you're definitely going to stay out of the kitchen. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank the representatives of the National Turkey Federation who have joined us—the chairman, Ted Seger. Appreciate you coming, Ted, thanks. Ted brought his mom—glad you're here—7 brothers, and over 30 family members, I think it is. No wonder there are so many people in the Rose Garden. *[Laughter]* But we're glad you're here. Welcome.

I also want to welcome President Joel Brandenberger. The turkeys in today's ceremony come from the Seger family farm in Dubois, Indiana. So I guess you can say they come with the chairman's seal of approval.

I also thank everybody who voted online to choose the names for our guests of honor. And I'm pleased to announce the winning names. They are "May" and "Flower." They're certainly better than the names the Vice President suggested, which was "Lunch" and "Dinner." *[Laughter]*

The national observation of Thanksgiving goes back to the days of our Founders. They asked Americans to give thanks for a nation that Benjamin Franklin famously compared to a rising sun. Over the years, Americans have found much to be thankful for. We still see our country the way Franklin did, or as the poet Carl Sandburg put it: "In the crimson light of a rising sun fresh from the hand of God."

This Thanksgiving, we are grateful for a harvest big enough to feed us all and millions more. We're grateful for citizens who reach out to those who struggle and for neighbors in need—from neighbors in need to the strangers they've never met. We're grateful for working Americans who've given us the longest period of uninterrupted job creation on record and a prosperity that lifts our citizens. And we are grateful for one blessing in particular:

the men and women of the United States military. They've worn proudly the uniform of our country. They have offered their lives in our defense. And each year, thousands more volunteer to join their noble ranks and to keep us safe. And so on this Thanksgiving, we keep our—we keep their families and their loved ones in our prayers and in our thoughts.

[At this point, the turkeys gobbled.]

The President. Thank you. *[Laughter]*

America's children also have a special place in our thoughts during this season. Don't you agree? Today we're proud to be joined from—youngsters from the Camp Fire USA. We're glad you all are here. It's a nationwide organization that helps children become caring and confident future leaders. One of the things Laura and I have been most thankful for over the years is the chance to meet children from across the country and to hear from thousands of others. Some send photos; some offer prayers; some of them ask about Barney. A second grader from California once asked me, "Do you ever get a headache?" Not really, only when I have a press conference. *[Laughter]* Some children send letters with the same—with the simple phrase, "God bless America." Others write about relatives serving in the war, and they hope I remember them.

Earlier this year, a little girl in Oregon sent me a picture she had drawn. It's a large American flag, and it stood in the glow of bright orange sun. The spirit that inspired Franklin and Sandburg and other generations of America lives in the heart of this child. She sees America in the light of a rising sun. And so do I, and so do millions of our citizens. It's hard to be anything but grateful when you live in a country full of compassionate and decent citizens, a land our Fathers always knew was blessed by the Almighty God.

And so now I have a task, and that is to grant a full Presidential pardon to May

and Flower. They'll be shortly flown to Disney World, where they will serve as honorary grand marshals for the Thanksgiving Day Parade. I hope that honor doesn't go to their head. [*Laughter*] May they live the rest of their lives in blissful gobbling. And may all Americans enjoy a holiday full of love and peace. God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:23 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Joel Brandenberger, president, National Turkey Federation. The related Thanksgiving Day proclamation of November 15 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

The President's Radio Address *November 24, 2007*

Good morning. This week, our Nation celebrated Thanksgiving. American families and friends gathered together to express gratitude for all that we have been given. We give thanks for the freedoms we enjoy. We give thanks for the loved ones who enrich our lives. And we give thanks for the many gifts that come from this prosperous land. Thanksgiving is a time when we acknowledge that all of these things, and life itself, come not from the hand of man, but from Almighty God.

Earlier this week, I visited Berkeley Plantation in Virginia. The story of this historic setting goes back nearly four centuries to another day of thanks. In 1619, a band of 38 settlers departed Bristol, England, for Berkeley. At the end of their long voyage, the men reviewed their orders from home. The orders said, quote, "The day of our ship's arrival . . . shall be yearly and perpetually kept holy as a day of thanksgiving to Almighty God." In response, the men fell to their knees in prayer. And with this humble act of faith, the settlers celebrated their first Thanksgiving in the New World.

Berkeley's settlers remind us that giving thanks has been an American tradition from the beginning. At this time of year, we also remember the Pilgrims at Plymouth who gave thanks after their first harvest in New England. We remember George Washington, who led his men in Thanksgiving during the American Revolution. We re-

member Abraham Lincoln, who revived the Thanksgiving tradition in the midst of a terrible civil war.

Throughout our history, Americans have always taken time to give thanks for all those whose sacrifices protect and strengthen our Nation. We continue that tradition today, and we give thanks for a new generation of patriots who are defending our liberty around the world. We are grateful to all our men and women in uniform who are spending this holiday weekend far from their families. We keep them in our thoughts and prayers. And we especially remember those who have given their lives in our Nation's defense.

One of these brave Americans was Lieutenant Michael Murphy. In June 2005, this officer gave his life in defense of his fellow Navy SEALs. Michael was conducting surveillance on a mountain ridge in Afghanistan, when his four-man SEAL team was surrounded by a much larger enemy force. Their only escape was down the side of the mountain. The SEALs launched a valiant counterattack while cascading from cliff to cliff. But as the enemy closed in, Michael recognized that the survival of his men depended on calling back to base for reinforcements.

With complete disregard for his own life, Michael Murphy moved into a clearing where he could get a signal. As he made the call, Michael fell under heavy fire.