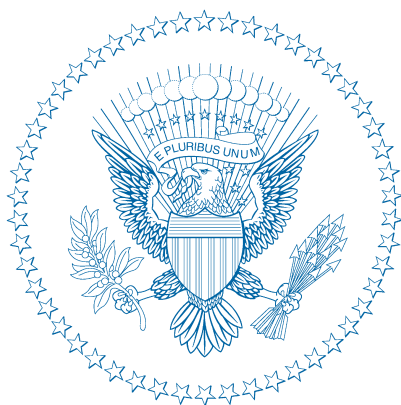


PUBLIC PAPERS OF THE PRESIDENTS
OF THE
UNITED STATES

PUBLIC PAPERS OF THE PRESIDENTS
OF THE
UNITED STATES

George W. Bush



2008–2009

(IN TWO BOOKS)

BOOK I—JANUARY 1 TO JUNE 30, 2008



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Foreword

This volume collects my speeches and papers from the first half of 2008, the last year of my Presidency.

As the year began, I appeared before Congress to deliver my final State of the Union message. I said, “Seven years have passed since I first stood before you at this rostrum. In that time, our country has been tested in ways none of us could have imagined. We faced hard decisions about peace and war, rising competition in the world economy, and the health and welfare of our citizens. These issues call for vigorous debate, and I think it’s fair to say we’ve answered the call. Yet history will record that amid our differences, we acted with purpose. And together, we showed the world the power and resilience of American self-government.”

This resilience was tested in the early days of 2008, when the Nation’s 52 consecutive months of job creation—the longest such period on record—came to an end. As our economy began to slow, my Administration took action to ease the burden on the American people. We implemented a bipartisan stimulus plan that provided tax rebates for nearly 120 million American households. We continued to push for Congressional approval of free trade agreements with Colombia, Panama, and South Korea—agreements that would open up new opportunities for American workers, business owners, farmers, and ranchers. And we worked to keep more Americans in their homes during a time of increasing foreclosures.

This was also an important period in the war on terror. On the domestic front, I urged Congress to modernize the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act to address the dangers of the 21st century. Internationally, we saw important gains in Iraq. In April, General David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker reported to Congress on the dramatic reductions in violence that had occurred in the wake of the troop surge that began in 2007. Because of the effectiveness of this strategy, the five brigades that had been added to our forces in Iraq began returning home on success—and the Iraqi people grew increasingly confident in their democracy.

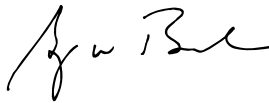
These months also saw some of the most intensive international travel of my Presidency. In January, I toured the Middle East, visiting Israel, the West Bank, Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt. In February, Laura and I took a moving trip to Africa, where we saw firsthand the gratitude of those who had been helped by America’s efforts to fight disease and support development and social justice on that continent. During the course of a week, we traveled to Benin, Tanzania, Rwanda, Ghana, and Liberia. In April, I was in Romania to attend the 2008 NATO summit, a trip that also included stops in Ukraine, Croatia, and Russia. In May, I traveled to the Middle East once more, commemorating the 60th anniversary of the state of Israel with a speech in Jerusalem and visiting Egypt and

Saudi Arabia. And In June, I made my final trip to Europe as President, with stops in Slovenia, Germany, Italy, the Holy See, France, and the United Kingdom.

Notwithstanding the extensive travel schedule Laura and I were keeping, two of the most meaningful events of this period took place here at home. In April, Pope Benedict XVI visited the White House. The arrival ceremony, which took place on the Pope's 81st birthday, drew more than 13,000 well-wishers to the South Lawn. And in May, Laura and I made an emotional trip to Texas for the wedding of our daughter Jenna and Henry Hager. The couple had a beautiful ceremony at our ranch in Crawford. And I was proud to give my daughter away on what was one of the most important days of her life.

Finally, this period saw two new cabinet secretaries join my Administration. In February, Ed Schafer was sworn in as the Secretary of Agriculture, and in June, Steve Preston took the oath of office as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

In the days to follow, the election season would hit full stride and the end of my term would draw near. I pledged to serve out my time in office with as much energy as I had brought to my earliest days in the White House. And in the coming months, my Administration would make good on this promise to sprint to the finish.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "G. W. Bush". The signature is written in dark ink on a white background.

Preface

This book contains the papers and speeches of the 43d President of the United States that were issued by the Office of the Press Secretary during the period January 1–June 30, 2008. The material has been compiled and published by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration.

The material is presented in chronological order, and the dates shown in the headings are the dates of the documents or events. In instances when the release date differs from the date of the document itself, that fact is shown in the textnote. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy: Remarks are checked against a tape recording, and signed documents are checked against the original. Textnotes and cross references have been provided by the editors for purposes of identification or clarity. At the request of the Office of the Press Secretary, the Bush property known as Prairie Chapel Ranch in Crawford, Texas, is referred to simply as the Bush Ranch. Speeches were delivered in Washington, DC, unless indicated. The times noted are local times. All materials that are printed full-text in the book have been indexed in the subject and name indexes, and listed in the document categories list.

The Public Papers of the Presidents series was begun in 1957 in response to a recommendation of the National Historical Publications Commission. An extensive compilation of messages and papers of the Presidents covering the period 1789 to 1897 was assembled by James D. Richardson and published under congressional authority between 1896 and 1899. Since then, various private compilations have been issued, but there was no uniform publication comparable to the Congressional Record or the United States Supreme Court Reports. Many Presidential papers could be found only in the form of mimeographed White House releases or as reported in the press. The Commission therefore recommended the establishment of an official series in which Presidential writings, addresses, and remarks of a public nature could be made available.

The Commission's recommendation was incorporated in regulations of the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, issued under section 6 of the Federal Register Act (44 U.S.C. 1506), which may be found in title 1, part 10, of the Code of Federal Regulations.

A companion publication to the Public Papers series, the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, was begun in 1965 to provide a broader range of Presidential materials on a more timely basis to meet the needs of the contemporary reader. Beginning with the administration of Jimmy Carter, the Public Papers series expanded its coverage to include additional material as printed in the Weekly Compilation. That coverage provides a listing of the President's daily schedule and meetings, when announced, and other items of general interest issued by the Office of

the Press Secretary. Also included are lists of the President's nominations submitted to the Senate, materials released by the Office of the Press Secretary that are not printed full-text in the book, and proclamations, Executive orders, and other Presidential documents released by the Office of the Press Secretary and published in the *Federal Register*. This information appears in the appendixes at the end of the book.

Volumes covering the administrations of Presidents Herbert Hoover, Harry S. Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard Nixon, Gerald R. Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George Bush, and William J. Clinton are also included in the Public Papers series.

The Public Papers of the Presidents publication program is under the direction of Michael L. White, Managing Editor, Office of the Federal Register. The series is produced by the Presidential and Legislative Publications Unit. The Chief Editor of this book was Stacey A. Mulligan, assisted by Lois Davis, Michael J. Forcina, Joseph G. Frankovic, Diane Hiltabidle, Alfred Jones, Joshua H. Liberatore, Heather N. McDaniel, Amelia E. Otovo, D. Gregory Perrin, Matthew R. Regan, and Joseph K. Vetter.

The frontispiece and photographs used in the portfolio were supplied by the White House Photo Office. The typography and design of the book were developed by the Government Printing Office under the direction of Davita Vance-Cooks, Acting Public Printer.

Michael L. White
Acting Director of the Federal Register

David S. Ferriero
Archivist of the United States

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Cabinet

Secretary of State	Condoleezza Rice
Secretary of the Treasury	Henry M. Paulson, Jr.
Secretary of Defense	Robert M. Gates
Attorney General	Michael B. Mukasey
Secretary of the Interior	Dirk Kempthorne
Secretary of Agriculture	Edward T. Schafer (appointed 1/28)
Secretary of Commerce	Carlos M. Gutierrez
Secretary of Labor	Elaine L. Chao
Secretary of Health and Human Services	Michael O. Leavitt
Secretary of Housing and Urban Development	Alphonso R. Jackson (resigned 4/18) Steven C. Preston (appointed 6/5)
Secretary of Transportation	Mary E. Peters
Secretary of Energy	Samuel W. Bodman
Secretary of Education	Margaret Spellings
Secretary of Veterans Affairs	James B. Peake
Secretary of Homeland Security	Michael Chertoff
Chief of Staff	Joshua B. Bolten

Administrator of the Environmental
Protection Agency Stephen L. Johnson

United States Trade Representative Susan C. Schwab

Director of the Office of Management
and Budget James A. Nussle

Director of National Drug Control
Policy John P. Walters