

Barney's turf. [Laughter] So the press corps is a little nervous as well. [Laughter]

I appreciate the representatives of the National Turkey Federation who have joined us: President Joel Brandenberger, Chairman Paul Hill, Paul's wife Mary June. Today's birds were hatched on the Hill family farm in Ellsworth, Iowa. Paul's son Nathan and daughter-in-law Betsy, along with grandsons Collin and Connor, did a fabulous job of raising the guests of honor.

I also welcome the children here from Cloverly Elementary School. And after I make my brief remarks, you will be welcome to come up and pet our feathered friends.

This is an election year, so it is fitting that the names of these two birds were chosen through the democratic process. After a long, drawn-out election season, when the people finally spoke, the name of the ticket sent here to the White House was Pumpkin and Pecan. [Laughter] Pumpkin is right there. [Laughter] Pecan is in an undisclosed location. [Laughter]

Pumpkin and Pecan have an exciting trip ahead of them. Later today they will fly to Disneyland aboard "Turkey One." [Laughter] Pumpkin will be the honorary grand marshal of Disneyland's Thanksgiving Day Parade. Together, these birds will gobble the rest of their days in "the happiest place on Earth." I just hope they stay humble there. [Laughter]

This is my final Thanksgiving as the President. Over the past 8 years, I have been given many reasons to be thankful. I'm thankful to our men and women in uniform, and I am incredibly proud to have

been their Commander in Chief. I am thankful for the armies of compassion, volunteers who feed the hungry and shelter the poor. I am thankful for the teachers and nurses and pastors and police officers and firefighters, and others who serve their neighbors and better their communities.

I'm thankful for the wonderful and supporting family that I have been blessed with. I'm grateful to Laura for her love. I'm grateful for two Thanksgiving miracles who were blessed—who we were blessed with 27 years ago: Barbara and Jenna. I'm thankful for the fact that my mother is doing well. And I—[applause]. And this year, we're looking forward to having another place at our Thanksgiving table with a son-in-law, and I'm thankful for Henry.

Most of all, I thank the American people for the tremendous privilege of serving as the President. In recent weeks, I've talked a lot about sprinting to the finish. Yet I've assured these turkeys they will not be trotting to their finish. [Laughter] That's because in keeping with a longstanding tradition, Pumpkin and Pecan are hereby granted a full and unconditional Presidential pardon.

I wish all Americans a happy Thanksgiving, and may God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:20 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Henry Hager, husband of Jenna Bush Hager. The Thanksgiving Day proclamation of November 21 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

The President's Radio Address November 26, 2008

Good morning. This week, Americans gather with loved ones to celebrate Thanksgiving. This holiday season is a time of fel-

lowship and peace. And it is a time to give thanks for our many blessings.

During this holiday season, we give thanks for generations of Americans who overcame hardships to create and sustain a free nation. When the Pilgrims celebrated their first Thanksgiving nearly four centuries ago, they had already suffered through a harsh and bitter winter. But they were willing to endure that adversity to live in a land where they could worship the Almighty without persecution. When President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed Thanksgiving a national holiday in 1863, the United States was in the midst of a terrible civil war. But in that hour of trial he gave thanks, because he believed America would weather the storm and emerge into a new era of liberty.

During this holiday season, we give thanks for those who defend our freedom. America's men and women in uniform deserve our highest respect, and so do the families who love and support them. Lately, I have been asked what I will miss about the Presidency. And my answer is that I will miss being the Commander in Chief of these brave warriors. In this special time of year, when many of them are serving in distant lands, they are in the thoughts and prayers of all Americans.

During this holiday season, we give thanks for the kindness of citizens through-

out our Nation. It is a testament to the goodness of our people that on Thanksgiving millions of Americans reach out to those who have little. The true spirit of the holidays can be seen in the generous volunteers who bring comfort to the poor and the sick and the elderly. These men and women are selfless members of our Nation's armies of compassion, and they make our country a better place, one heart and one soul at a time.

Finally, I have a special note of thanks to the American people. On this my last Thanksgiving as your President, I am thankful for the good will, kind words, and heartfelt prayers that so many of you have offered me during the past 8 years. I have been blessed to represent such decent, brave, and caring people. For that I will always be grateful, and I will always be honored.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:50 a.m. on November 26 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 29. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 26. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on the Approval of a Strategic Framework Agreement and a Status of Forces Agreement in Iraq *November 27, 2008*

Earlier today, in another sign of progress, Iraq's Council of Representatives approved two agreements with the United States, a strategic framework agreement and a security agreement, often called a status of forces agreement or SOFA. The strategic framework agreement sets the foundation for a long-term bilateral relationship between our two countries, and the security agreement addresses our presence, activi-

ties, and withdrawal from Iraq. Today's vote affirms the growth of Iraq's democracy and increasing ability to secure itself. We look forward to a swift approval by Iraq's Presidency Council.

Two years ago, this day seemed unlikely, but the success of the surge and the courage of the Iraqi people set the conditions for these two agreements to be negotiated and approved by the Iraqi Parliament. The