

blessings and remember those less fortunate. But it will also be a time to remember how this holiday began, as a harvest celebration between European settlers and the American Indians who had been living and thriving on the continent for thousands of years.

That is why on Friday, I encourage every American to join me in observing Native American Heritage Day. My administration is committed to strengthening the nation-to-nation relationship with tribal governments. But

it is also important for all of us to understand the rich culture, tradition, and history of Native Americans and their status today, and to appreciate the contributions that First Americans have made, and will continue to make to our Nation.

NOTE: The related National Native American Heritage Month proclamation of October 30 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

### **Statement on Albanian Independence Day** *November 25, 2009*

I send my warmest wishes to all those who will celebrate Albanian Independence Day on Saturday. Here in America, those that can trace their roots to Albania are an important

part of this Nation. Abroad, I hope for continued friendship and strengthened ties between our two countries.

### **Statement on Bosnia and Herzegovina National Day** *November 25, 2009*

On behalf of the American people, I extend my best wishes to all those who are celebrating the National Day of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Our Nation stands with Bosnia and Herzegovina as it continues its journey from a war-

torn past to a peaceful and stable future. I especially offer my congratulations to those in America that can trace their origins back to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

### **Statement on the Death of Abe Pollin** *November 25, 2009*

Michelle and I were deeply saddened to hear about the passing of Abe Pollin, a giant in the world of professional sports and someone I was proud to call a friend.

Abe was a man who knew that being an owner wasn't just about winning championships, although his teams had plenty of success. It was about helping young athletes become good people as well as good players. And it was about being part of a community. Abe

believed in Washington, DC, when many others didn't, putting his own fortune on the line to help revitalize the city he loved. He was committed to the teams he guided, generous to those who needed it most, and as loyal to the people of DC as they were to him.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Irene, his sons Robert and James, and the entire Pollin family.

### **Statement on the Hajj and Eid al-Adha** *November 25, 2009*

Michelle and I would like to send our best wishes to all those performing Hajj this year,

and to Muslims in America and around the world who are celebrating Eid al-Adha. The

rituals of Hajj and Eid al-Adha both serve as reminders of the shared Abrahamic roots of three of the world's major religions.

During Hajj, the world's largest and most diverse gathering, 3 million Muslims from all walks of life, including thousands of American Muslims, will stand in prayer on Mount Arafat. The following day, Muslims around the world will celebrate Eid al-Adha and distribute food to the less fortunate to commemorate Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son out of obedience to God.

This year, I am pleased that the Department of Health and Human Services has partnered

with the Saudi Health Ministry to prevent and limit the spread of H1N1 during Hajj. Cooperating on combating H1N1 is one of the ways we are implementing my administration's commitment to partnership in areas of mutual interest.

On behalf of the American people, we would like to extend our greetings during this Hajj season. *Eid Mubarak*.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released Arabic, Persian, Dari, Urdu, Pashto, Russian, and French language versions of this statement.

## The President's Weekly Address *November 26, 2009*

For centuries, in peace and in war, in prosperity and in adversity, Americans have paused at this time of year to gather with loved ones and give thanks for life's blessings. This week we carry on this distinctly American tradition. All across our country, folks are coming together to spend time with family, to catch up with old friends, to cook and enjoy a big dinner, and maybe to watch a little football in between.

As always, we give thanks for the kindness of loved ones, for the joys of the previous year, and for the pride we feel in our communities and country. We keep in our thoughts and prayers the many families marking this Thanksgiving with an empty seat saved for a son or daughter, a husband or wife stationed in harm's way. And we say a special thanks for the sacrifices those men and women in uniform are making for our safety and freedom and for all those Americans who enrich the lives of our communities through acts of kindness and generosity and service.

But as much as we all have to be thankful for, we also know that this year millions of Americans are facing very difficult economic times. Many have lost jobs in this recession, the worst in generations. Many more are struggling to afford health care premiums and house payments, let alone to save for an education or retirement. Too many are wondering if the dream of a middle class life—that American Dream—is slipping away. It's the worry I hear

from folks across the country, good, hard-working people doing the best they can for their families but fearing that their best just isn't good enough. These aren't strangers. They're our family, our friends, and our neighbors. Their struggles must be our concern.

That's why we passed the Recovery Act that cut taxes for 95 percent of working people and for small businesses and that extended unemployment benefits and health coverage for millions of Americans who lost their jobs in this turmoil. That's why we are reforming the health care system so that middle class families have affordable insurance that cannot be denied because of a preexisting condition or taken away because you happen to get sick. We've worked to stem the tide of foreclosures and stopped the decline in home values. We're making it easier to save for retirement and more affordable to send a son or daughter to college.

The investments we've made and tough steps we've taken have helped break the back of the recession, and now our economy is finally growing again. But as I said when I took office, job recovery from this crisis will not come easily or quickly. Though the job losses we were experiencing earlier this year have slowed dramatically, we're still not creating enough new jobs each month to make up for the ones we're losing. And no matter what the economists say, for families and communities across this country,