

end up helping somebody who's been on welfare, they realize they're more help than the person they're trying to help.

And that's what this is all about. I want to thank you all again. I want to thank those who have had the courage to stand up and seek self-esteem and independence. I want to thank the—those who have been mentors and provided love in the darkest days of people who wondered whether there was any hope in our society. And I want to thank corporate America, those who have sat up and said, "I'm going to be a good citizen. Not only am I going to provide for my shareholders and my employees, I'm going to provide for people who need a helping hand."

It's such an honor to be here today. Again, I want to thank the four good souls who have agreed to stand up here. Thank you for your example. May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:22 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Public Law 104-193, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996.

Statement on the Death of Canadian Troops in Afghanistan

April 18, 2002

All Americans are deeply saddened by the deaths yesterday of four brave Canadian military personnel in Afghanistan and by the injuries sustained by eight others. I immediately expressed to Prime Minister Chretien my deepest sorrow and sympathy at this tragic accident. Canada's fallen heroes and their families are in our hearts and prayers.

Canada is a vital member of a mighty coalition against terrorism and hatred. It is shouldering great burdens and making tremendous sacrifices to make the world a safer place for all people. It is doing so in defense of the values that define the Canadian nation and that unite our two peoples.

As I told the Prime Minister, we will work together with Canada in a thorough and timely investigation to determine exactly how yesterday's tragedy in Afghanistan occurred. We will draw every possible lesson from what

happened and do everything we can to protect coalition forces engaged in this vitally important mission.

Statement on House of Representative Action on Tax Relief Legislation

April 18, 2002

I commend the House for its bipartisan passage of legislation to make permanent last year's tax relief. Tax relief is right for America, and it has been right for our economy. Taxpayers need to know they can count on continued lower tax rates as they plan and invest for the future. I urge the Senate to act on this measure because failure to do so would penalize every American who pays Federal income taxes.

Statement on Senate Action on Legislation To Strengthen Border Security and Urging Action on Immigration Legislation

April 18, 2002

Improving our Nation's border security is vital to protecting Americans from future terrorist attacks. I commend the Senate for passing legislation that strengthens border security and gives our law enforcement officials additional tools to secure our homeland. I look forward to Congress sending me this important legislation as soon as possible so that I can sign it into law.

I also continue to urge Congress to act to strengthen families and make America more welcoming. Congress should pass a temporary extension under 245(i) so that immigrants eligible to become legal residents will not be forced to leave the country and their families to have their immigration status resolved.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released this statement in Spanish.

Proclamation 7543—National Crime Victims' Rights Week, 2002

April 18, 2002

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Thirty years ago, advocates from some of the most crime-ridden neighborhoods of St. Louis, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C., founded the Nation's first assistance programs for crime victims. These centers were established in communities where violence was common, and they were clear about their mission: to bring help, hope, and healing to those who had suffered the effects of crime. The creation of these victim-assistance programs launched a movement that brought domestic violence shelters, homicide victim support groups, and rape crisis centers to help victims in cities and towns throughout the United States.

The crime victims' rights movement also brought changes in the way the criminal justice system treats and interacts with crime victims. In many cases, crime victims began to be treated with greater respect and to play an important role in criminal justice proceedings.

In 1982, President Ronald Reagan assembled a task force of nine national leaders to travel the country and listen to service providers, criminal justice professionals, and victims. The Task Force's Final Report listed 68 recommendations for meeting victims' needs, including the need for a Federal constitutional amendment. The momentum generated by this report helped spur passage of the Victims of Crime Act of 1984, which now supports thousands of assistance programs throughout the Nation. The Victim and Witness Protection Act of 1982 and other laws have given victims of Federal crimes many important rights.

All 50 States have now passed victims' rights laws, and more than half the States have amended their constitutions to guarantee rights for crime victims. However, more remains to be done to secure victims' rights. I support a Federal Constitutional Amendment to protect the rights of victims of violent crime.

Our Nation has come to realize the tragic toll that crime takes, and we have developed the resources to ease crime's physical, emotional, and financial impact. This support network, which was already in place on September 11, made us better prepared to deal with the unspeakable pain and tragedy inflicted by the terrorist attacks. Along with the many firefighters, law enforcement officers, paramedics, and rescue workers who responded in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania, hundreds of counselors, chaplains, social workers, volunteers, and victim service providers came together for the common purpose of helping the victims, the families, and our Nation.

My Administration has made the fight against crime a top priority. But when a crime does occur, I am dedicated to providing assistance and comfort to victims and to ensuring that the rights of victims are protected. At the time of their great trauma, crime victims deserve nothing less than our complete support.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 21 through April 27, 2002, as National Crime Victims' Rights Week. I encourage every community to embrace the cause of victims' rights and services and to advance them in all sectors of our society.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eighteenth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-sixth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., April 22, 2002]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on April 23.

Remarks at the National Fire and Emergency Services Dinner

April 18, 2002

The President. Thank you all. Please be seated. Thank you all very much. Thank you