AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

firefighters and people who wear our Nation's uniform are reminding us what it means to sacrifice for something greater than yourself in life. Once again the children believe in heroes, because they see them every day in America.

In these challenging times, the world has seen the resolve and the courage of America. And I've been privileged to see the compassion and the character of the American people. All the tests of the last 2½ years have come to the right nation. We are a strong country, and we use that strength to defend the peace. We're an optimistic country, confident in ourselves and in ideals bigger than ourselves.

Abroad, we seek to lift whole nations by spreading freedom. At home, we seek to lift up lives by spreading opportunity to every corner of America. This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it. And we know that for our country and for our cause, the best days lie ahead.

May God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:57 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Irvine Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Brad Freeman, California State finance chairman, and Mercer Reynolds, national finance chairman, Bush-Cheney '04, Inc.; and Gerald Parsky, Team California chairman, and Duf Sundheim, party chairman, California Republican Party. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Memorandum on the 2003 Combined Federal Campaign

August 15, 2003

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: 2003 Combined Federal Campaign

I am delighted that the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Mel R. Martinez, has agreed to serve as the Chair of the 2003 Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) of the National Capital Area. I ask you to enthusiastically support the CFC by personally chairing the campaign in your agency and appointing a top official as your Vice Chair.

The Combined Federal Campaign is an important way for Federal employees to support thousands of worthy charities. Public servants not only contribute to the campaign but also assume leadership roles to ensure its success.

Your personal support and enthusiasm will help positively influence thousands of employees and will guarantee another successful campaign.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 16.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Iraq

August 15, 2003

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (Public Law 107–243), the Authorization for the Use of Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public Law 102–1), and in order to keep the Congress fully informed, I am providing a report prepared by my Administration. This report includes matters relating to post-liberation Iraq under section 7 of the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998 (Public Law 105–338).

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 16.

The President's Radio Address

August 16, 2003

Good morning. This week, I traveled to Arizona and California to see some of America's forests and parks and to talk about my commitment to good stewardship of these natural treasures.

On Monday, I visited the Coronado National Forest in Arizona, where wildfires recently consumed thousands of acres of forest and destroyed hundreds of homes. Nearby,

I also saw forests that remained largely intact thanks to wise forest-management policy. Fire professionals and forest and park rangers agree, by thinning overgrown forests we will reduce the risk of catastrophic fire and restore the health of forest ecosystems.

That is the purpose of my Healthy Forest Initiative. We're cutting through bureaucratic redtape to complete urgently needed forest-thinning projects. We are speeding up environmental assessments and consultations required by current law. And we're expediting the administrative appeals process to resolve disputes more quickly. By the end of this fiscal year in September, we will have treated more than 2.6 million acres of overgrowth, more than twice the acreage that was treated in the year 2000.

Under current law, however, litigation often delays projects, while some 190 million acres of forest remain at high risk of dangerous fires and nearby communities remain vulnerable. So I'm asking Congress to reform the review process for forest projects. The "Healthy Forests Restoration Act" would make forest health a high priority when courts are forced to resolve disputes, and it would place reasonable time limits on the litigation process after the public has had an opportunity to comment and a decision has been made. For the health of America's forests and for the safety and economic vitality of our communities, the Congress must complete work on this bill. The House has passed the legislation, and now the Senate must act.

As we protect America's forests, we must also preserve the beauty of America's nearly 80 million acres of national parkland. On Friday, I visited the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area in southern California. It is one of America's 388 national park areas, including historic sites and battlefields, recreation areas, monuments, and shores. Every one of them is a point of pride for the Nation and for local communities.

Yet in the past, not all of these sites have been given the attention they require. Some of our national park areas are not in good condition. And for many years, Government did not even have the basic information about which places were most in need of repair or restoration. To meet this challenge, I pledge to spend $4.9 billion over 5 years on needed work and maintenance in our national park areas.

With the support of Congress, we're keeping that commitment. In the first 2 years of my administration, Congress provided nearly $1.8 billion for park maintenance and roads. And my request for the next three budgets will bring total funding for park maintenance and roads to more than $5 billion over 5 years.

With this funding, we've already undertaken approximately 900 park maintenance projects. This year, the Park Service is working on 500 more projects, and nearly 400 more are planned for next year. As we attend to needed repairs, we're also putting in place a new system of inventory and assessment to assure that America's parks stay in good condition. We have set a new course for our national parks, with better management and renewed investment in the care and protection. After all, the parks belong to the people.

I look forward to traveling next week to Oregon and Washington State, and I will be carrying the same message: Our system of national parks and forests is a trust given to every generation of Americans. By practicing good management and being faithful stewards of the land, our generation can show that we're worthy of that trust.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:55 a.m. on August 14 at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 16. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 15 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Interview With the Armed Forces Radio and Television Service

August 14, 2003

Liberia

Q. Thank you for joining us today. We really appreciate you being here and taking time out to talk with us.

I'd like to start out with a topic that's in the news this morning, and that's Liberia. Two weeks ago, you authorized Secretary Rumsfeld to send a small contingency into