

to join me in recognizing the contributions of America's hunters and anglers, and all those who work to conserve our Nation's fish and wildlife resources.

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

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., October 1, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 4. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

September 25, 2004

Good morning. This week, I was honored to welcome the Prime Minister of a free and sovereign Iraq to the White House. In less than 3 months, Prime Minister Allawi and his Government have accomplished a great deal, despite persistent violence in parts of Iraq. The enemies of freedom are using suicide bombings, beheadings, and other horrific acts to try to block progress. We are sickened by their atrocities, but we will never be intimidated, and freedom is winning.

We're making steady progress in implementing our five-step plan toward the goal we all want, completing the mission so that Iraq is stable and self-governing and American troops can come home with the honor they have earned.

The first step was achieved on June 28th, not only on time but ahead of schedule, when the coalition transferred full sovereignty to a government of Iraqi citizens.

The second step is to help Iraq's new Government establish stability and security. Nearly 100,000 fully trained and equipped Iraqi soldiers, police officers, and other security personnel are working today, and the Iraqi Government is on track to build a force of over 200,000 security personnel by the end of 2005.

In Najaf and other important areas, Iraqi military forces have performed with skill and success. The Government's strategy is to surround and isolate enemy militias, reach out to the local population, and negotiate from a position of strength. Serious problems remain in several cities. Yet, Prime Minister Allawi believes this combination of decisive action and outreach to peaceful citizens is the most effective way to defeat the killers and secure the peace. And America stands with him.

The third step in our plan is to continue improving Iraq's infrastructure. Today, in most of Iraq, children are about to go back to school, parents are going back to work, and new businesses are being opened. Electricity has been restored above pre-war levels. Telephone service has increased dramatically. In the next several months, more than \$9 billion will be spent on contracts that will help Iraqis rebuild schools, refurbish hospitals and health clinics, repair bridges, upgrade the electrical grid, and modernize the communications system. Prime Minister Allawi and I agree that the pace of reconstruction can and should be accelerated, and we're working toward that goal.

The fourth step in our plan is to enlist additional international support for Iraq's transition to democracy. The multinational force of some 30 nations continues to help secure a free Iraq, and we are grateful for the service and sacrifice of all. Our coalition is also grateful that the United Nations has reestablished its mission in Baghdad. We are grateful to the G-8 countries and the European Union for pledging support to the new Iraqi Government. We are grateful to the NATO Alliance for help in training Iraqi forces. And we are grateful to many of Iraq's creditors, which have agreed to a further reduction of Iraq's debt.

The fifth and most important step in our plan is to help Iraq conduct free national elections no later than January. An Iraqi electoral commission has already hired personnel and is making key decisions about election procedures. Just this week, the commission began a public education campaign to inform Iraqis about the process and encourage them to become voters. United Nations electoral advisers are on the ground in Iraq, and Prime

Minister Allawi and I have urged the U.N. to send more personnel to help ensure the success of the Iraqi elections.

The war for Iraq's freedom is a fight against some of the most ruthless and brutal men on Earth. In such a struggle, there will be good days, and there will be difficult days. But every day, our resolve must remain the same: Iraq, America, and our coalition will stand firm; and Iraq will be free; the world will be more peaceful; and America will be more secure.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:45 a.m. on September 24 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on September 25. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 24 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Ayad Allawi of the Iraqi Interim Government. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Proclamation 7821—Gold Star Mother's Day, 2004

September 25, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Americans have always answered the call to serve our Nation. Many brave American men and women have made the ultimate sacrifice to defend freedom's blessings, and no one feels their loss more deeply than their mothers. On Gold Star Mother's Day, we remember these mothers who have suffered the loss of a son or daughter through service to our country. We honor their courage and perseverance and the memory of their children.

Across our Nation, these compassionate and generous women are volunteering to serve veterans, helping families of service members, supporting educational programs that promote patriotism and citizenship, and turning their grief into action. They inspire all Americans with their compassion and service. On this day, people across America join together to honor our Gold Star mothers

and send our gratitude, prayers, and best wishes to them and to their families.

The Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 115 of June 23, 1936 (49 Stat. 1895 as amended), has designated the last Sunday in September as "Gold Star Mother's Day," and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this day.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Sunday, September 26, 2004, as Gold Star Mother's Day. I call upon all Government officials to display the flag of the United States over Government buildings on this solemn day. I also encourage the American people to display the flag and hold appropriate meetings in their homes, places of worship, or other suitable places as a public expression of the sympathy and respect that our Nation holds for our Gold Star Mothers.

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

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:04 a.m., September 28, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 29.

Remarks in a Discussion on Education in Springfield, Ohio

September 27, 2004

The President. Thank you all for being here. Appreciate you being here. Thanks for coming. Thank you all.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Okay, thanks. We got to get started here. Thank you. Thank you all for coming. Please be seated. I'm honored so many came out. Thanks for the warm welcome here in Springfield. It's such a pleasure to be here. I'm excited to be here.

I've come to let you know that I've got a reason for seeking the vote again, that I'm