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goodwill of all who had the privilege of knowing him. On August 9, 1974, he stepped into the presidency without having ever sought the office.

During his time in office, the American people came to know President Ford as a man of complete integrity, who led our country with common sense and kind instincts. Americans will always admire Gerald Ford's unflinching performance of duty, the honorable conduct of his Administration, and the great rectitude of the man himself. We mourn the loss of such a leader, and our thirty-eighth President will always have a special place in our Nation's memory.

President Ford lived 93 years, and his life was a blessing to America. Now this fine man will be taken to his rest by a family that will love him always and by a Nation that will be grateful to him forever.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, in honor and tribute to the memory of Gerald R. Ford, and as an expression of public sorrow, do hereby direct that the flag of the United States be displayed at half-staff at the White House and on all buildings, grounds, and Naval vessels of the United States for a period of 30 days from the day of his death. I also direct that for the same length of time, the representatives of the United States in foreign countries shall make similar arrangements for the display of the flag at half-staff over their Embassies, Legations, and other facilities abroad, including all military facilities and stations.

I hereby order that suitable honors be rendered by units of the Armed Forces under orders of the Secretary of Defense.

In a further expression of our national grief, I will appoint in a subsequent proclamation a National Day of Mourning throughout the United States when the American people may assemble in their respective places of worship, there to pay homage to the memory of President Ford.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-seventh day of December, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., January 3, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on January 4, 2007.

Proclamation 8094—National Day of Mourning for Gerald R. Ford

December 28, 2006

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

As a further mark of respect to the memory of Gerald R. Ford, the thirty-eighth President of the United States,

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, in honor and tribute to the memory of Gerald R. Ford, and as an expression of public sorrow, do appoint Tuesday, January 2, 2007, as a National Day of Mourning throughout the United States. I call on the American people to assemble on that day in their respective places of worship, there to pay homage to the memory of President Ford. I invite the people of the world who share our grief to join us in this solemn observance.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-eighth day of December in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., January 3, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on January 4, 2007.

Executive Order 13421—Providing for the Closing of Government Departments and Agencies on January 2, 2007

December 28, 2006

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and laws of the United States of America, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. All executive departments, independent establishments, and other governmental agencies shall be closed on January 2, 2007, as a mark of respect for Gerald R. Ford, the thirty-eighth President of the United States. That day shall be considered as falling within the scope of Executive Order 11582 of February 11, 1971, and of 5 U.S.C. 5546 and 6103(b) and other similar statutes insofar as they relate to the pay and leave of employees of the United States.

Sec. 2. The first sentence of section 1 of this order shall not apply to those offices and installations, or parts thereof, in the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the Department of Justice, the Department of Homeland Security, or other departments, independent establishments, and governmental agencies that the heads thereof determine should remain open for reasons of national security or defense or other essential public business.

George W. Bush

The White House,
December 28, 2006.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., January 3, 2007]

NOTE: This Executive order will be published in the *Federal Register* on January 4, 2007.

Remarks Following a Meeting With the National Security Council in Crawford, Texas

December 28, 2006

I just had a meeting with my national security team, and this is the first time we've had a chance to sit down with Secretary Gates since he came back from Iraq. General Pace went with the Secretary; they reported firsthand what they saw, what they found. It's an important part of coming to closure on a way forward in Iraq that will help us achieve our objective, which is a country that can govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself. And, Mr. Secretary, thank you for your timely trip, and thank you for this important briefing.

I've got more consultation to do until I talk to the country about the plan. Obviously, we'll continue to work with the Iraqi Government. The key to success in Iraq is to have a government that's willing to deal with the elements there that are trying to prevent this young democracy from succeeding.

We want to help them succeed. And so we'll continue to consult with the Iraqis. I'm going to talk to Congress—not only will I continue to reach out to Congress, but members of my team will do so as well. I fully understand it's important to have both Republicans and Democrats understanding the importance of this mission. It's important for the American people to understand success in Iraq is vital for our own security. If we were to not succeed in Iraq, the enemy—the extremists, the radicals—would have safe haven from which to launch further attacks, they would be emboldened, they would be in a position to threaten the United States of America. This is an important part of the war on terror.

I'm making good progress toward coming up with a plan that we think will help us achieve our objective. As I think about this plan, I'm always—have our troops in mind. There's nobody more important in this global war on terror than the men and women who wear the uniform and their families. And as we head into a new year, my thoughts are with them. My thoughts are with the families who have just gone through a holiday season with their loved one overseas. My thoughts are with the troops as we head into 2007.

People always ask me about a New Year's resolution—my resolution is, is that they'll be safe and that we'll come closer to our objective, that we'll be able to help this young democracy survive and thrive, and therefore, we'll be writing a chapter of peace. I can't thank our families enough for supporting their loved one who wears the uniform, and I can't thank those who—soldiers and sailors