

to improve the world mark the citizens of the United States as a people possessing virtues that echo those of Leif Erikson and the first Vikings who landed on our northern shores.

To honor Leif Erikson, the brave son of Iceland and grandson of Norway, and our Nordic American heritage, the Congress, by joint resolution (Public Law 88–66) approved on September 2, 1964, has authorized and requested the President to proclaim October 9 of each year as Leif Erikson Day.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 9, 2001, as Leif Erikson Day. I call upon all Americans to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs to honor our rich Nordic-American heritage.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this ninth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand one, 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., October 11, 2001]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 12.

**Executive Order 13229—  
Amendment to Executive Order  
13045, Extending the Task Force on  
Environmental Health Risks and  
Safety Risks to Children**

*October 9, 2001*

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to extend the Task Force on Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks to Children, it is hereby ordered that Executive Order 13045 of April 21, 1997, is amended by deleting in section 3–306 of that order “for a period of 4 years from the first meeting” and

inserting in lieu thereof “for 6 years from the date of this order”.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
October 9, 2001.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:54 a.m., October 10, 2001]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 11.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders  
Reporting on Combat Action in  
Afghanistan Against Al Qaida  
Terrorists and Their Taliban  
Supporters**

*October 9, 2001*

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

At approximately 12:30 p.m. (EDT) on October 7, 2001, on my orders, U.S. Armed Forces began combat action in Afghanistan against Al Qaida terrorists and their Taliban supporters. This military action is a part of our campaign against terrorism and is designed to disrupt the use of Afghanistan as a terrorist base of operations.

We are responding to the brutal September 11 attacks on our territory, our citizens, and our way of life, and to the continuing threat of terrorist acts against the United States and our friends and allies. This follows the deployment of various combat-equipped and combat support forces to a number of locations in the Central and Pacific Command areas of operations, as I reported to the Congress on September 24, to prepare for the campaign to prevent and deter terrorism.

I have taken these actions pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. It is not possible to know at this time either the duration of combat operations or the scope and duration of the deployment of U.S. Armed Forces necessary to counter the terrorist threat to the United States. As I have stated previously, it is likely that the American campaign against terrorism will be lengthy. I will direct such additional measures as necessary in exercise of