

Week Ending Friday, January 31, 2003

### **The President's Radio Address**

*January 25, 2003*

Good morning. This coming Tuesday, I will deliver the State of the Union Address to Congress and the American people. Our Nation faces many great challenges all at once. We will meet all of them with courage and steady purpose.

In 2003, we must work to strengthen our economy, improve access to affordable, high-quality health care for all our seniors, encourage compassion at home and abroad, and defend our Nation against the threats of a new era. The war on terror is an ongoing priority for our Nation. We will take every measure that is necessary to protect the American people from terrorist groups and outlaw regimes. The world depends on America's strength and purpose, and we will meet our responsibilities for peace.

Today I want to speak to you about a few key domestic priorities. When I address Congress, I will urge them to pass my plan to strengthen our economy and help more Americans find jobs. The tax relief already planned for later in this decade should be made effective this year, including income tax reduction, marriage penalty relief, and an increase in the child-tax credit. When Congress acts, I will direct the Treasury to return this money to taxpayers right away, which will provide immediate help to our economy.

We can also lay the foundation for future prosperity by encouraging investment and helping Americans to prepare for the new jobs a growing economy will bring. I will ask Congress to eliminate the unfair double taxation of dividends and raise the deduction limit for small businesses that invest in new machinery and equipment. And to help unemployed workers find a job as soon as possible, I propose new reemployment accounts. These accounts will assist with the cost of finding work, including training and child

care and moving expenses, and provide a cash bonus to workers who find a job quickly.

Strengthening and improving Medicare is also a priority for my administration in the coming year. I will urge Congress to join me in keeping our commitment to America's seniors by working to modernize Medicare and include a prescription drug benefit to help seniors who are squeezed by rising drug prices. As a prosperous nation, we have an obligation to help Americans who are struggling to build better lives for themselves. So I will propose new initiatives to bring the work of faith-based and community groups to the needs of our fellow citizens. All of these priorities will be reflected in the budget I submit to Congress in early February.

As we fund important priorities, however, we must also practice spending discipline in Washington. Spending restraint is important to economic growth and job creation. And it is critical to reducing the deficit caused by war and national emergency and recession. Under my budget, discretionary Federal spending will rise by 4 percent, about the same as the increase in family incomes. Government should not grow faster than workers' paychecks. Government should follow the example of American families by setting priorities and staying with them.

In this session of Congress, we must work to make our Nation safer, more prosperous, and more compassionate. I look forward to working with the Republicans and Democrats in this important year for America and the world. Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 12:03 p.m. on January 24 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 25. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 24 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

## **Proclamation 7643—National Consumer Protection Week, 2003**

*January 27, 2003*

*By the President of the United States of America*

### **A Proclamation**

Few technologies have become fixtures in our daily lives as quickly as computers and the Internet. Today, more than half of all Americans log on to the Internet, and that number is growing. Our access to information, entertainment, credit and banking, products, and services from every corner of the world is greater than ever before. As our personal information becomes more accessible, consumers, corporations, and government agencies must take precautions against the misuse of that information.

Computer technology and the Internet have revolutionized our ability to communicate and share knowledge. This new freedom offers incredible opportunities; but as individuals and as a Nation, we must guard against the misuse of personal information and identity theft. The theme of this year's National Consumer Protection Week is "Information Security," and during this week we resolve to help all Americans learn how to keep personal information secure.

For consumers, securing a computer is a matter of routine maintenance and caution. Effective passwords, firewalls, and up-to-date antivirus software can help protect computers, and the personal or business information we store on them, from those who would damage a network operation or steal personal information to commit a crime. By practicing effective information security measures, all citizens can contribute to the protection of our national information infrastructure.

To assist consumers, public and private entities have joined forces to highlight the importance of information security. They include the Federal Trade Commission, the U.S. Postal Service, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, the Federal Consumer Information Center, the National Association of Attorneys General, the National Consumers League, the American Association of Retired Persons, the Better Business Bureau, the Consumer Federation of America, and the

National Association of Consumer Agency Administrators. The National Strategy to Secure Cyberspace also offers guidance for the full range of computer users on information security. By working together, we can help consumers and businesses understand how information security affects their decisions at home and in the marketplace.

During National Consumer Protection Week, I encourage all Americans to take the appropriate steps to ensure the security of their personal or sensitive information. By learning ways to safeguard this data, individuals can help ensure their financial security, and contribute to the strength and prosperity of our Nation.

**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 February 2 through 8, 2003, as National Consumer Protection Week. I call upon Government officials, industry leaders, and consumer advocates to provide consumers with information about how we can help safeguard the economic future of all Americans by keeping our personal information secure.

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

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:52 a.m., January 29, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on January 30.

## **Remarks Following a Cabinet Meeting**

*January 28, 2003*

**The President.** Thank you for coming. I'm going to make a quick statement, and then I will ask you all to leave without any questions.

**Q.** With questions?

**The President.** No, without any questions. I appreciate your understanding.