

Subject: Cabinet Report for the Week of August 30, 2004
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Cabinet Report

For the Week of August 30, 2004

Office of Cabinet Affairs

August 27, 2004

456-2572 (EEOB)

456-0165 (WW)

TOP ITEMS
FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 30, 2004

- ***Partial Birth Abortion Decisions Expected in Nebraska and New York.***
Prior to August 31, Federal judges in Nebraska and New York will issue their opinions regarding the constitutionality of the federal ban on partial birth abortion. National media interest is expected.
- ***USDA to Accept Applications for Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).***
On August 30, the Farm Service Agency at USDA will begin accepting new applications from eligible producers under the CRP. This sign-up period will continue through September 24. CRP is a voluntary program for agricultural producers to help them safeguard environmentally sensitive land.
- ***Inspector General Report on Superfund to be Presented to Congress.***
On or about August 31, the EPA Inspector General report on the Superfund Program will be presented to Congress. Congress requested that the Inspector General evaluate Superfund expenditures and make recommendations to increase resources directed to cleanup activities while minimizing administrative costs. The draft report indicates weaknesses in central management and control over Superfund resource allocation and use. The report is anticipated to receive negative media attention.
- ***Implementation of Registered Traveler Program.***
On September 3, Secretary Ridge is scheduled to announce the implementation of the Reagan Washington National Airport Registered Traveler program. The Registered Traveler program will expedite low-risk frequent flyers through Transportation Security Administration check points. Registered travelers will proceed through a designated lane and provide their name, address, phone number, date of birth, and biometric information to a biometric kiosk. The registered traveler will then proceed through a designated security screening check point and will not be selected for a random secondary screening. Media will be present.
- ***Department to Announce Expanded Hunting and Fishing in National Wildlife Refuges.***
On September 1, the Fish and Wildlife Service is tentatively scheduled to announce the final regulations for 2004-2005 authorizing 325 public hunting programs and 282 public fishing programs in National Wildlife Refuges. Since 2001, 60 new hunting and fishing programs have been added in National Wildlife Refuges. In addition, the final rule to set the early season proposed frameworks for migratory bird hunting regulations is expected to be published in the *Federal Register* this week. From this framework, states may select season dates, shooting hours, and daily bag and possession limits for the 2004-2005 season.
- ***Secretary Principi to Participate in American Legion 86th Annual National Convention.***
On August 31, Secretary Principi will address the American Legion's 86th Annual National Convention in Nashville, Tennessee. The American Legion is the country's largest veterans' service organization with nearly three million members. The Secretary will discuss VA's services to the newest generation of combat veterans, the realignment of VA's health care system, and VA's success in reducing waiting lists for health care and backlogs for claims. He will participate in interviews with *The Tennessean* and local radio and television stations.

Additionally, Secretary Ridge will speak at the conference and will also address the American Legion Auxiliary Group. At both events Secretary Ridge will discuss veteran issues and volunteer service as it relates to national preparedness.

PRESIDENTIAL DISASTER DECLARATIONS

- ***Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands: Super Typhoon Chaba.***
Issued August 26. Major Disaster Declaration for Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation.
- ***State of Nevada: Wildland Fire.***
Issued August 26. Major Disaster Declaration for Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation.

KEY SPEAKING AND TRAVEL ENGAGEMENTS

Date	Location	Audience / Event	Speech
<i>Secretary Abraham</i>			
30 August – 3 September	New York, NY	Republican National Convention	Attend
<i>Attorney General Ashcroft</i>			
1 September – 5 September	Lake Como, Italy	Ambrosetti Workshop “Intelligence 2004” Conference (Fighting International Terrorism)	Remarks
<i>Secretary Chao</i>			
29 August – 2 September	New York, NY	Republican National Convention	Attend
1 September	New York, NY	Republican National Convention; Evening Session Remarks	Remarks
<i>Secretary Evans</i>			
29 August – 3 September	New York, NY	Republican National Convention	Attend

3 September	White Sulphur Springs, WV (T)	Political Event	Attend
<i>Secretary Jackson</i>			
29 August – 5 September	New York, NY	Republican National Convention	Attend
<i>Administrator Leavitt</i>			
30 August – 3 September	New York, NY	Republican National Convention	Attend
<i>Secretary Norton</i>			
29 August – 3 September	New York, NY	Republican National Convention	Attend
<i>Secretary Paige</i>			
29 August – 3 September	New York, NY	Republican National Convention	Attend
31 August	New York, NY	Republican National Convention; Evening Session Remarks	Speech
<i>Secretary Powell</i>			
28 August	Athens, Greece	Olympics-Closing Ceremony	Attend
1 September	Panama	Travel to Panama for Presidential Inauguration	Travel; Attend
<i>Secretary Principi</i>			
29-30 August	New York, NY	Republican National Convention	Attend
31 August	Nashville, TN	64 th Annual National Convention of American	Remarks

		Legion Auxiliary	
31 August – 3 September	New York, NY	Republican National Convention	Attend
3 September	Fayetteville, AR	106 Bed Nursing Home Facility	Check Presentation
<i>Secretary Ridge</i>			
31 August	Washington, D.C.	CSPAN	Interview
31 August	Washington, D.C.	Oliver North	Interview
1 September	Nashville, TN	American Legion Convention	Attend
<i>Secretary Thompson</i>			
29 August – 3 September	New York, NY	Republican National Convention	Attend
<i>Secretary Veneman</i>			
28 August – 3 September	New York, NY	Republican National Convention	Attend

CABINET REPORT

For the Week of August 30, 2004

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

- ***Department to Participate in HealthierUS Back-to-School Events.***
Commencing this week and continuing through September, Department officials will participate in back-to-school events across the country to highlight the HealthierUS Initiative. The first of these events will be held on August 31 when Secretary Veneman visits the Bronx Charter Preparatory School in New York City, a school that is entirely supplied with free or reduced-price lunches through the Department's school lunch program.

Press Activity:

- ***National Public Radio (NPR) Story on Roadless Rule.***
NPR is currently developing a story on the role of State Governors in the future of roadless areas under the Department's proposed rule to continue roadless protections. The Department has provided background information to NPR. The story is expected to be negative and is anticipated to air next week.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

- ***Upcoming Economic Indicator Releases from Commerce.***
Personal Income and Outlays: August 30 (July 2004)
Construction Spending: September 1 (July 2004)
Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories, and Orders: September 2 (July 2004)

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

- ***Department to Train Customs Inspectors and Border Guards Worldwide.***
On August 30, the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) will deploy the first stage of its Commodity Identification Training (CIT) curriculum in training sessions in Latvia. The CIT curriculum was designed to make foreign customs inspectors and border

enforcement personnel more aware of illicitly transferred goods that countries of concern or even terrorist organizations might use to build nuclear or other WMD and their means of delivery. Training in additional nations will be conducted through November.

- ***Energy Information Agency to Publish Petroleum Marketing Annual 2003.***

On August 30, the Energy Information Agency is expected to publish the Petroleum Marketing Annual 2003. This report provides final monthly price and volume statistics on crude oil and refined petroleum products at a National, regional, and State level that were previously published in the Petroleum Marketing Monthly.

- ***\$75 Million in Hydrogen Grants to be Announced in Denver.***

On August 30, the Department is tentatively scheduled to announce at the World Renewable Energy Congress and Expo that it has selected over \$75 million in hydrogen production, delivery and analysis projects as part of the Hydrogen Fuel Initiative. These research projects will address major technical and economic challenges in renewable and distributed hydrogen production technologies, and may total over \$100 million when private cost share is included.

- ***Hydrogen Education Workshop to be Held in Portland, Oregon.***

On August 31, the Department will hold the fourth of six hydrogen education workshops for State and local government officials in Portland, Oregon. The hydrogen education workshop series is intended to educate State and local decision-makers who do not have a technical background, but are interested in learning more about hydrogen and fuel cell technologies.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

- ***Administrator Leavitt to Address Power Plant Air Pollutant Control Symposium.***

On August 30, the Administrator will deliver the keynote speech at the Combined Power Plant Air Pollutant Control Symposium in Washington, D.C. The symposium will focus on air pollutants, such as mercury, nitrogen oxides, and sulfur dioxide. This is an open press event and is expected to draw more than 800 attendees. Because the Administrator will discuss mercury-related issues, some negative public reaction is anticipated.

- ***EPA to Release Asbestos Action Plan 2004.***

On or about September 2, EPA will publish a *Federal Register* notice announcing availability of the Asbestos Action Plan 2004. The plan focuses on three key areas: (1) improving the state of science for asbestos; (2) identifying and addressing exposure and risk reduction opportunities associated with asbestos products; and (3) reducing existing risks through contaminated site cleanups. Negative media attention is anticipated.

Press Activity:

- ***Administrator Leavitt to Meet with New York Times Editorial Board Member.***

This week, Administrator Leavitt will meet with Bob Semple of the *New York Times* Editorial Board to discuss mercury-related issues and wetlands.

- ***St. Louis Post Dispatch on Asbestos Action Plan 2004.***

The *St. Louis Post Dispatch* is currently working on a story concerning the Asbestos Action Plan 2004 that is scheduled to be released this week. The story is expected to be published in connection with the release of this report and is anticipated to be negative.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

- ***A Portion of Chiron Flu Vaccines Contaminated.***

Eight lots or approximately four million doses of flu vaccine for the 2004-2005 influenza season have been discovered by Chiron Vaccines to be contaminated with *Serratia Marcescens*, which is a bacterium. For the 2004-2005 flu season, Chiron planned to produce approximately 52 million doses of vaccine. They have indicated that continued manufacturing can replace approximately half of the lost doses. It is estimated that approximately 100 million doses of vaccine will be needed in the U.S. this year.

- ***Update on CDC Involvement in Mysterious Ohio Illness Probe.***

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has provided lab materials and sent three researchers to Lake Erie's South Bass Island in Ohio to help pinpoint the source of a mysterious disease that has stricken hundreds of people. Health officials have documented 378 cases and are investigating 150 other claims of illnesses. Through the course of testing, one case of salmonella has been confirmed along with three cases of norovirus, a gastrointestinal virus; and 10 cases of campylobacter, a common infectious disease usually coming from food or water contaminated with bacteria.

Press Activity:

- ***60 Minutes (CBS) on Dangers Related to Decreasing Immunization Rates.***

60 Minutes (CBS) is working on an in-depth segment on the dangers of decreases in immunization rates (specifically related to pertussis, measles, and other outbreaks). Several senior Department officials have been interviewed and provided background information. The Department anticipates that this story will be positive and may be aired as early as September 1.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

- ***Department Partners with State, Local Agencies on Republican Convention Security.***

On July 9, 2003 the Department announced the designation of the Republican National Convention as a National Special Security Event. Over the past year the U.S. Secret Service, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Coast Guard, Customs and Border Protection, Transportation Security Agency, Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection, and Science and Technology along with numerous Federal, State, and local agencies have worked together to provide an unprecedented level of security. The Convention will be held from August 30 to September 2.

- ***Continuation of a Nationwide Citizenship and Immigration Services InfoPass Launch.***
On August 30, Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) will continue its Nationwide launch of InfoPass in the following CIS district offices: Anchorage, Alaska; Honolulu, Hawaii; Phoenix, Arizona; Portland, Oregon; San Diego, California; San Francisco, California; and Seattle, Washington. InfoPass is a web-based system that enables the public to schedule online appointments with immigration information officers at select CIS offices. Media will be present at each of these launches.

Press Activity:

- ***Secretary Ridge to Participate in C-SPAN Washington Journal Live TV Show.***
On August 31, the Secretary will participate in the C-SPAN Washington Journal TV Show, which is broadcast live. He will discuss security issues and answer questions from viewers.
- ***Secretary Ridge Interview with Oliver North, Host of "War Stories" Program on FOX.***
On August 31, Secretary Ridge will participate in an interview by Oliver North for his FOX program "War Stories." Interview topics will include Department accomplishments.

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

- ***Department Charges "Thrifty Nickel" With Violating the Fair Housing Act.***
The Department plans to charge Want Ads of Boise, Inc., publisher of *The Thrifty Nickel*, with violating the Fair Housing Act by accepting and publishing housing ads that excluded potential owners and renters because of their familial status. Unless either the complainant or respondent elect to have the case decided by a Federal judge in U.S. District Court, a hearing on the current charges will be held by a U.S. Administrative Law Judge on November 16 in the Boise, Idaho area. An election to go to trial in District Court must be made by September 7.
- ***Rural Housing and Economic Development Program Award Announcements.***
This week, the Office of Rural Housing and Economic Development will continue the process of notifying awardees of Rural Housing and Economic Development grants, which provide for capacity building at the State and local level for rural housing and economic development. The grants, ranging in size from \$150,000 to \$400,000, total \$24.5 million and were awarded to rural areas in 36 states including, Alabama, California, Kentucky, New Mexico, and Texas.

Press Activity:

- ***NBC News on Section 8 Program.***
NBC News is developing a story on the current Section 8 Program and the Flexible Voucher Program (FVP) reform scheduled for 2005. FVP includes incentives for Public Housing Authorities to help families move to self-sufficiency. NBC News will submit the completed story to local NBC stations throughout the country. Public and Indian Housing Assistant Secretary Michael Liu was interviewed. The story should be fair, but the visual images could appear negative. It is slated to run sometime between August 25 and 30.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

- ***Department to Announce Water 2025 Grants in Arizona.***

On September 3, the Bureau of Reclamation will host a Water 2025 grant event in Yuma, Arizona. Including the two projects in Yuma, 19 projects located in ten states have been selected under the Water 2025 initiative. The total investment for all projects selected for grants is almost \$30 million, which includes the matching contributions of non-Federal partners. The Water 2025 initiative is aimed at helping manage scarce water resources in the West.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

- ***Attorney General to Address Ambrosetti Conference in Italy.***

From September 1 to 5, the Attorney General is scheduled to visit Lake Como, Italy, to address the Ambrosetti Conference. This is an annual conference, which will be attended by approximately 250 international business leaders, statesmen, Nobel laureates, academicians and other influential personalities from around the world. This year, the topic of the conference is "Intelligence 2004 on the World, on Europe, on Italy." This will be a closed press event, but international media interest is expected.

- ***Valley Fills/Mountain Top Removal Appeal Authorized.***

In July, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of West Virginia issued an order enjoining the Army Corps of Engineers from issuing authorizations pursuant to a Clean Water Act Nationwide Permit that authorizes surface coal mining using a technique commonly referred to as valley fills or mountain-top removal. Both the Department of the Interior and the Army Corps of Engineers recommended appeal and the appeal was authorized by the Acting Solicitor General Clement today. Environment and Natural Resources Division currently plans to file the notice of appeal on August 30.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

- ***Department to Announce Opening of Occupational Illness Resource Center.***

On August 31, the Departments of Labor and Energy will announce the opening of the new Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Resource Center in Livermore, California. The purpose of the Center is to provide assistance to potential and existing claimants under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act. Representative Ellen Tauscher (D-CA) is expected to attend the opening and express her views that the Administration has not been supportive of this effort.

- ***AFL-CIO Leads Nationwide Precinct Walk.***

On September 2, the AFL-CIO will lead a nationwide precinct walk in key electoral states in an effort to "educate and mobilize working families for the November election." The AFL-CIO has pitched this as "the largest-ever nationwide union mobilization" and a way to "jumpstart our fall campaign." The AFL-CIO Executive Council is requiring each union to

ensure that at least one-half of one percent of their members participate in the precinct walk and that leaders at every level participate.

Press Activity:

- ***Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) to Release Reports.***
Metropolitan Area Employment and Unemployment Report: September 1 (July 2004)
Productivity and Costs Report: September 2 (Q2 2004, revised)
Employment Situation Report: September 3 (August 2004)

NASA

- ***International Space Station Spacewalk.***
On September 3 at 1:00 p.m. EDT, International Space Station astronauts Gennady Padalka and Mike Fincke are scheduled to perform an Extra Vehicular Activity, also known as a spacewalk.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

- ***Panamanian Presidential Inauguration, Panama City, Panama.***
On September 1, Secretary Powell will lead the U.S. delegation to the inauguration of President-elect Martin Torrijos in Panama City, Panama. Following the ceremony, the Secretary will meet briefly with Torrijos. Topics of discussion will likely include security cooperation, canal expansion and good governance.
- ***Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian Travel to Panama via the U.S.***
On August 29 and 30, and then again on September 3 and 4, President Chen will transit Honolulu and Seattle en route to and from the inauguration of President-elect Torrijos in Panama. The Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs is facilitating the safety, comfort, and convenience of President Chen while setting parameters so that the stops are not used as a pretext for speeches or media events.
- ***South Korean Unification Minister Chung Dong-Young to Visit Washington, D.C.***
From August 31 to September 2, Minister Chung will visit Washington, D.C. During this visit, he is likely meet with Secretary Powell to discuss North-South Korea relations.
- ***HIV/AIDS – Partnering with Faith-Based Organizations, Washington, D.C.***
On September 1, the Global AIDS Coordinator at the Department of State, Ambassador Randall Tobias, will meet with representatives of the American Jewish World Service and the Church World Service. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss their initiative to build the capacity of local African faith-based organizations to provide care for children orphaned by HIV/AIDS.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

- ***Additional Obsolete Ships to Leave Virginia's James River.***

This week, two additional obsolete vessels from the James River Reserve Fleet will be towed to scrapping facilities. The two ships, the *American Banker* and the *Santa Isabel*, are among the last vessels in the fleet designated as "high priority" by the Maritime Administration (MARAD) due to their deteriorating condition.

- ***Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to Announce Runway Incursion Reductions.***

On August 31, Administrator Blakey will host a media roundtable to discuss FAA efforts to improve runway safety. The number of runway incursions declined dramatically in 2003, with the most serious incursions decreasing 52 percent over the four-year reporting period. Also, for the second consecutive year, there were no serious incursions involving two large commercial jets.

Press Activity

- ***ABC World News on Mediating the Impact of Weather on Aviation.***

ABC World News is working on a story examining how the FAA works with airlines to impose ground-delay and ground-stop programs during bad weather and how the agency and airlines coordinate to get air traffic back to normal as weather improves. ABC is hoping to pick a day when weather is bad and spend much of that day filming at the FAA Command Center in Herndon, Virginia. The positive story would air the evening of the filming.

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

- ***Department to Lead Delegation to Syria and Jordan on Terrorist Financing.***

From August 29 to September 3, the Office of Terrorist Financing and Financial Crimes will lead an interagency delegation to Syria and Jordan to investigate banks suspected of being involved in terrorist financing. The Syrian visit will focus on specific money-laundering concerns that must be addressed before the Department will lift its designation of the Commercial Bank of Syria as a "primary money laundering concern." The Jordan visit will focus on a series of terrorist financing issues, including concerns regarding the Arab Bank. The delegation includes representatives from the State Department, FBI, and Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

- ***Department Participation in Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Meetings.***

On August 31, Under Secretary Taylor will lead the U.S. delegation to a meeting of APEC finance ministers in Santiago, Chile. Topics of discussion will include exchange rate flexibility, the G8 remittance initiative, and various bilateral issues. He will then travel to La Paz, Bolivia to discuss implementation of the Mesa Government's economic policies with government officials and private sector representatives. He will also visit Lima, Peru to discuss the reform agenda of the Toledo Government.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

- ***Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to Tour Nashville VA Medical Center.***
On August 31, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Richard B. Myers will visit the Nashville campus of the VA Tennessee Valley Health System. American Forces Press Service and *Army Times* reporters will accompany the General, who has asked that no additional media be invited to attend.

Press Activity:

- ***Secretary Principi on CNN with “The Dolans.”***
On September 1, the Secretary is scheduled to be a guest on the CNN program *The Dolans*. He will talk about the role of veterans’ issues in the current campaign, with an emphasis on Administration accomplishments.

OTHER AGENCIES

National Endowment for the Arts:

- ***Operation Homecoming Writers Workshop at Camp Ederle Army Base, Italy.***
August 31 and September 1, soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan via Camp Ederle, Italy, will have the opportunity to participate in a National Endowment for the Arts’ writing workshop. This literary program is aimed at preserving the stories and reflections of American troops who have served our Nation on the frontlines and stateside defending the homeland.

USAID:

- ***Meeting with Leaders of the Non-Governmental Organization Community.***
On August 30, Administrator Natsios and Dr. Rice will meet with leaders of the non-governmental organization (NGO) community to stress the importance of expanding NGO capacity to provide assistance in Darfur and Chad; to share the Administration approach to the crisis; and to seek NGO ideas on improving the humanitarian situation on the ground.