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favorable action on this legislation. Taken together, these initiatives, coupled with the rest of the AMERICA 2000 strategy, would spur the actions that are necessary for this country to attain the National Education Goals by the year 2000.

GEORGE BUSH

The White House,
May 22, 1991.

Remarks Announcing the Reappointment of General Colin L. Powell as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and a News Conference

May 23, 1991

The President. Well, today I announce with great pleasure my decision to reappoint General Colin Powell as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs for a second 2-year term when his term expires.

Look, he has done a fantastic job, and I'm taking this step now to demonstrate my great confidence in his ability and the tremendous respect that I have for him. And it's personal, and it's professional. And the military advice that he provided me under pressure for our operations in Panama and Liberia, Somalia and, of course, most important, in the Gulf was absolutely remarkable. And the confidence I have in him is reflected in the confidence the men and women of our Armed Forces have in General Powell. And I've seen it firsthand, and it has not diminished in any way.

In the years ahead, we're going to be making important changes in the military, in its size, in its structure, and in its orientation. And General Powell and I and Secretary Cheney have been talking about this over the months. These decisions are not easy, but he's been at the forefront of planning for this critical restructuring, and I can think of no one more qualified to lead our Armed Forces as we prepare them for the challenges of the 21st century.

And so, Colin, I am delighted that you are willing to re-up and to take on another term in this very onerous, taxing job. I think of Alma and your family. I think of the alternatives and the options, but your sense of service to country is just unquestioned. And I am delighted that you are willing to undertake this.

General Powell. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. We have a rebuttal here. [*Laughter*]

General Powell. Thank you, Mr. President. I am very honored and privileged that you would offer me a second term as Chairman. I, of course, accept it gladly because it gives me the opportunity to stay in uniform and to continue serving a nation, serving you, but most importantly, serving the great young men and women who volunteer to serve in their Nation's Armed Forces.

The next 2 years will be full of many challenges, but I'm sure with the great national security team that you have working for you, we will meet these challenges and come out the other end with a strengthened Armed Force, ready to discharge any responsibilities and any problems that may come its way and to ensure that the Nation continues to be well-defended and that we are a solid arm of your policy team, and that, when called upon, the Armed Forces will acquit themself as well as they have over the past 20 months.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Q. General?

The President. Brit [Brit Hume, ABC News] wants to ask you a question.

Q. General, would you care to comment on the recent account of the Gulf War suggesting that you had, at a minimum, serious misgivings about the use of force option, at least at one point, and give us your sense of how that happened?

General Powell. No, I really am not going to start commenting on any accounts or

books that are out on the subject. The President knows what advice I gave to him, so does the Secretary. It's a pleasure working within a team that you can give advice on all options. We were all together throughout this entire exercise, and efforts to suggest that there was distance between the President and his other advisers are incorrect.

The President. And let me add something, Brit. We had a lot of meetings. And General Powell leveled with me, and Admiral Jeremiah leveled with us, and Norm Schwarzkopf leveled with us. And to the degree they were not rushing to commit our young men and women to battle, that's exactly the way they should have been. And I wasn't rushing to commit our young men and women to battle. And he gave me sound advice. He gave me straightforward advice. I never had any concern about where he stood. I expect the Secretary of Defense feels exactly the same way.

And I just want to be on the record as saying that he spoke his mind; he did it openly. And then when we had to get together in meetings and figure the next steps, he was a constructive force all the way along the line. And it was Colin Powell, more than anyone else, who I think deserves the credit for the time we had to—after all options, in my view, were exhausted—draw the line in the sand. It was he that suggested to me, sitting right up here in that office.

And so, I feel that he did what any general officer should do. He told me the risks; he told me what was at stake in human life. He told me what his view is to how it would go, which was always very positive, if we had to commit forces. And I am unhappy about revisionistic views of things.

Soviet Union

Q. President Gorbachev is apparently requesting $100 billion in economic help and would like to come to the London economic summit. Are either of those possible? And what share would the United States be willing to take in the $100 billion?

The President. Well, as I said yesterday, we're still talking to our allies about this. President Gorbachev has not presented me with this proposal. We will be having Mr. Primakov and another gentleman here—I think it's this week—to discuss this, or to discuss what Gorbachev told me would be some new ideas on economic reform. But what I want to do—and I expect this is true of President Mitterrand, I know it's true of Kohl and certainly of John Major—is to get together, talk about it, and see what we can do to help genuine reform in the Soviet Union.

So, I'm not prepared to comment on a proposal that has not been brought to my attention.

Q. Are we closer to a summit in Moscow after the visit of General Moiseyev here in Washington?

The President. Well, I defer to our experts, Secretary Cheney standing here, Brent Scowcroft there, and the Secretary of State. And it is my view—I think I said this yesterday—that there is some room for optimism on working out these remaining problems on arms control. And if that's true, there will be a summit.

Q. Before the end of June, sir?

The President. Well, I can't help you on the timing. That was our hope, you remember, to have it in the first half of the year. But I have not sat down with our experts to understand what progress they have made. I think they felt progress was made by the Moiseyev visit. You want to add anything to that, Dick?

Secretary Cheney. No, sir.

Q. Mr. President, you said what you ought to do is get together with the allies and sit down and talk about economic reform in the Soviet Union. Are you talking about the forum like an economic summit or some other kind forum to have an allied discussion?

The President. No, I'm talking about a lot of diplomacy between now and the economic summit.

Q. You mean individual——

The President. Yes, Not a big meeting of any sort, although with the sherpas meeting, I expect this subject will come up. But I'm not—you're asking about me personally, and I don't plan any pre-summit head-of-state meeting.

Q. Why would you not favor just doing this at the economic summit with Gorba-

chev? What's the downside to that?

The President. We don't want to look—I don't want to have something come out of the summit that's negative. What I want to have come out is positive.

Q. Mr. President, President Gorbachev said yesterday that it is in the West's interest to put some significant sums of money behind economic reforms in the Soviet Union—billions of dollars. Do you think that the West, and the United States in particular, ought to be willing to put some significant sums of money behind that cause?

The President. The Soviet Union is a great power. And we deal with them with respect. We have problems with them. But it is in our interest—it is in the national security interest of the United States, and I think in every other interest, to have a reformed Soviet Union, particularly one that's going to prove to be more democratic. And I've never believed that President Gorbachev had given up on reform. And certainly he's not given up on openness, *glasnost.* So, my answer would be, let's look at it. But nobody's talked to me about numbers. Nobody's talked to me about details. As I said, we're receiving a delegation at Gorbachev's request, just as he received our agricultural delegation at my request. So, it's mutual, and we will work constructively with our allies—$100 billion is a large piece of change still.

Q. Have you made a decison on the question of more grain export credits?

The President. No decision.

Q. Mr. President, as far as the London summit is concerned, is there some possibility that you might consider some kind of an option where Mr. Gorbachev would come in an observer status or perhaps to view in an informal way rather than be a formal participant?

The President. I think all options are open. None closed. But, again, what's going to help? What's going to help bring the West closer on terms that are reasonable? I think President Gorbachev knows that we have understandable concerns about credit worthiness. And I think he understands—I hope he understands that I and the other allied leaders want to move forward.

Q. So you think there's a real possibility still that he might be in London in some way or another?

The President. Well, as I said, Carl [Carl P. Leubsdorf, Dallas Morning News], I'm not going to go into it beyond—I tried to answer the question vaguely as possible—[*laughter*]—until we know more about it. You can't pin me down on it.

Israel

Q. Mr. President, do you share Secretary of State Baker's frustration with the new Israeli settlements in the occupied territories? And how much of an impediment to a peace process are these settlements?

The President. Secretary Baker reiterated the long-standing policy of the United States Government, not just in our administration but, as General Powell and Secretary Cheney know, of previous administrations. And so, I didn't see anything particularly new in what he said. I have appealed to the Soviet Union—I mean, to Israel not to move forward with more settlements. They know it's our policy. And I can understand the Secretary's concern and perhaps frustration by this. However, Israel's moving in some ways that I will not discuss with you. And so, I have no reason to be totally pessimistic. The settlements have been and will continue to be a difficult problem for us.

Soviet Union

Q. Mr. President, it was clear that Gorbachev yesterday was moving to press the West for commitments on aid. Is it your concern at this point that without his reforms actually in place and fully implemented that it would be premature or a possible waste for the West to commit large sums of credits or invite him to the summit in London?

The President. Norm [Norman Sandler, United Press International], I just go back to the answer I've given—about three different answers, same question—nicely disguised as a new question. But I really—I think I've answered the question. I honestly believe it. I'm not going to get out there——

Q. It seems there are some reservations on your part. Is that true?

The President. My only reservations are,

will it help? Will it be true—will it encourage reform? I'll tell you, there is something that's positive there, and that is that Yeltsin and Gorbachev appear to be in communication. Gorbachev has reiterated to me, which he didn't have to do, his continuing commitment to reform. And you see these agreements that are worked out between the Republics—I think it's called the "nine-and-one" agreement. And these are positive things. So, I want to look at it positively. But we also have to look at it realistically. And President Gorbachev knows this.

This is the last—this is the final question, the very final one, right over here.

Fast Track Legislation

Q. How do you stand this morning about Fast Track? Do you think it's going to pass in both Chambers?

The President. That's a slow ball, and the answer is yes. Okay. Thank you for asking. It's very, very important to us. And not just to the administration; it is important to the workers in this country. It's important to the environmentalists in this country. A more prosperous Mexico, for example, can do a lot more on border problems, environmental problems, and labor wage problems. And so, I'm excited about the prospect of being able to negotiate without our hands tied for a Uruguay round continuation, for a satisfactory conclusion of Uruguay round and for the Mexican FDA.

This is the last one now.

Middle East Peace Talks

Q. Mr. President, given that Secretary Baker portrayed the Israel new settlements every time he went back there as something of an insult, a thumb in the eye, and given the fact that U.S. aid generally props up Israel, are you willing to now use that lever to pressure Israel?

The President. What I want to do—I'm not pressuring anybody. What I want to do is get people to talk in that part of the world where they haven't talked before. And what I want to do is take the credibility that I believe the United States has now in Israel and in the Gulf countries and in the other countries in the Middle East to try to be a catalyst for peace. So, we're not talking about pressure. And what Secretary Baker was doing was reiterating a long-standing policy of the United States.

Thank you all very much. A follow-on; no more new ones.

Q. Do you agree with Secretary Baker that those settlements were the main impediment to success on his trip?

The President. I would want to read his testimony, but new settlements do not enhance the prospects for peace.

Note: The President's 84th news conference began at 9 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In the news conference, the following persons were referred to: Chairman Powell's wife, Alma; Adm. David E. Jeremiah, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, commander of the U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf; Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney; President Mikhail Gorbachev of the Soviet Union; Yevgeniy Primakov, Soviet Presidential Council member and envoy for President Gorbachev; President Francois Mitterrand of France; Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany; Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom; Gen. Mikhail Moiseyev, Chief of the General Staff of the Soviet Union; Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; Secretary of State James A. Baker III; and Boris Yeltsin, President of the Republic of Russia.