

Feb. 22 / Administration of George Bush, 1991

women of America, to do the best job I know how, because that is the job of labor, to work as well as we know how.

And again, Mr. President, you've set that example. You have my friendship because you're a doggone good friend, and I'm sure glad you're mine. [Laughter]

I must say to my friends—and for those of us in the audience who've been and are politicians in the best, wonderful sense of the word, from the word-base of “people,” the definition of friends are those who call you the morning after a loss and the next day after a loss. And that doesn't seem to bother them at all. To my friends who are here, thank you for calling the next day after. [Laughter] And although we are fighting over the rights to this joke, thank you, Paul Simon, without whose help I would not be here today. [Laughter]

And this isn't a last—and it's not a long speech—but to my family. My father is 88 or 87 or 89—[laughter]. And if you think I'm going to try to figure out which one, you will understand that that's going to be impossible. When I was growing up and working, as my mother worked and as my father worked, to save money for college, he didn't know there were things I couldn't do, so he told me I could do anything. That's what we have to tell all of our children because they can, they can.

And to my husband, thank you very much for swearing me in. [Laughter] Protocol now says that I get to walk in front of him. [Laughter] But he says a Federal judge has a lifetime term, and that's more important. [Laughter] And to the rest of the family, sons and daughters and new baby, wide awake at his grandmother's speech, thank you for being all that you are. You mean a great deal to me.

And now to all of you. The President of the United States came after an extraordinarily important announcement about the

strength and desire of this Nation. It would have been very easy for him to say, “I'm busy.” But instead, he came—and it wasn't for me. It was to give that joint message: that it's important, as we all know, what we are doing everywhere in the globe. This President also cares, as does this Cabinet and everyone here, about what's happening at home. And he wants to make sure and has charged me to do so, and I will follow that charge: to make sure the Department of Labor represents the men and women who work for this country here and abroad, who want and deserve the best, and who ask for little but opportunity to make sure they continue that tradition which says there is nothing better than the quality of the men and women of America. If I can match that, I can rightfully be called their Secretary of Labor.

So, for you, Mr. President, to my family, to my friends, to my soon-to-be colleagues in the Cabinet, I make that commitment, not because I'm smarter or better but because when the goal is so great, one must rise to it.

Thank you for being with me today.

*Note: The President spoke at 11:07 a.m. in the Great Hall at the Department of Labor. In his remarks, he referred to Julia Martin, Secretary Martin's daughter; John H. Sununu, Chief of Staff to the President; Lamar Alexander, Secretary-designate of Education; Edward R. Madigan, Secretary-designate of Agriculture; Secretary of Transportation Samuel K. Skinner; Elizabeth Dole and William E. Brock, former Secretaries of Labor; James R. Thompson, Jr., former Governor of Illinois; Harry D. Leinenweber, Secretary Martin's husband; and Lawrence Morley, her father. Secretary Martin referred to Senator Paul Simon, who successfully defended his seat against the Secretary in the 1990 election.*

## Statement by Press Secretary Fitzwater on the Persian Gulf Conflict February 22, 1991

The Soviet announcement yesterday represents a serious and useful effort which

is appreciated. But major obstacles remain. The coalition for many months has sought a

peaceful resolution to this crisis, in keeping with the U.N. resolutions. As President Bush pointed out to President Gorbachev, the steps the Iraqis are considering would constitute a conditional withdrawal and would also prevent the full implementation of relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions. Also there is no indication that Iraq is prepared to withdraw immediately.

Full compliance with the Security Council resolutions has been a consistent and necessary demand of the international community. The world must make sure that Iraq has, in fact, renounced its claim to Kuwait and accepted all relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions.

Indeed, only the Security Council can agree to lift sanctions against Iraq, and the world needs to be assured in concrete terms of Iraq's peaceful intentions before such action can be taken. In a situation where sanctions have been lifted, Saddam Hussein could simply revert to using his oil resources once again, not to provide for the well-being of his people but instead to re-arm.

So, in a final effort to obtain Iraqi compliance with the will of the international community, the United States, after consulting with the Government of Kuwait and her other coalition partners, declares that a ground campaign will not be initiated against Iraqi forces if, prior to noon Saturday, February 23, New York time, Iraq publicly accepts the following terms and authoritatively communicates that acceptance to the United Nations:

First, Iraq must begin large-scale withdrawal from Kuwait by noon New York time, Saturday, February 23. Iraq must complete military withdrawal from Kuwait in 1 week. Given the fact that Iraq invaded and occupied Kuwait in a matter of hours, anything longer than this from the initiation of the withdrawal would not meet Resolution 660's requirement of immediacy.

Within the first 48 hours, Iraq must remove all its forces from Kuwait City and allow for the prompt return of the legitimate government of Kuwait. It must withdraw from all prepared defenses along the Saudi-Kuwait and Saudi-Iraq borders, from Bubiyan and Warbah Islands, and from Kuwait's Rumaylah oilfield within the 1 week specified above. Iraq must return all its

forces to their positions of August 1st, in accordance with Resolution 660.

In cooperation with the International Red Cross, Iraq must release all prisoners of war and third country civilians being held against their will and return the remains of killed and deceased servicemen. This action must commence immediately with the initiation of the withdrawal and must be completed within 48 hours.

Iraq must remove all explosives or booby traps, including those on Kuwaiti oil installations, and designate Iraqi military liaison officers to work with Kuwaiti and other coalition forces on the operational details related to Iraq's withdrawal, to include the provision of all data on the location and nature of any land or sea mines.

Iraq must cease combat aircraft flights over Iraq and Kuwait except for transport aircraft carrying troops out of Kuwait, and allow coalition aircraft exclusive control over and use of all Kuwaiti airspace.

It must cease all destructive actions against Kuwaiti citizens and property and release all Kuwaiti detainees.

The United States and its coalition partners reiterate that their forces will not attack retreating Iraqi forces and, further, will exercise restraint so long as withdrawal proceeds in accordance with the above guidelines and there are no attacks on other countries.

Any breach of these terms will bring an instant and sharp response from coalition forces in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 678.

That's the conclusion of our prepared statement.

Let me just add a couple of points—first of all, that a copy of this document was provided to Iraqi diplomats here in Washington about noon today. President Bush and Secretary Baker spoke with President Gorbachev for over an hour and 15 minutes this morning to discuss this situation. Secretary Baker spoke with Soviet Foreign Ministry officials both yesterday and today. And we have consulted with all of our allies and coalition partners last night or this morning.

*Feb. 22 / Administration of George Bush, 1991*

The coalition remains strong and united.

*Note: Press Secretary Fitzwater read this statement to reporters at 12:48 p.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House. The*

*statement referred to President Mikhail Gorbachev of the Soviet Union, President Saddam Hussein of Iraq, and Secretary of State James A. Baker III.*

## Statement by Press Secretary Fitzwater on the Persian Gulf Conflict *February 23, 1991*

CENTCOM reports that they have detected no military activity which would indicate any withdrawal of Saddam Hussein from Kuwait. Similarly, there has been no communication between Iraq and the United Nations that would suggest a willingness to withdraw under the conditions of the coalition plan. Iraq continues its scorched earth policy in Kuwait, setting fire to oil facilities. It's a continuing outrage that Saddam Hussein is still intent upon destroying Kuwait and its people, still intent upon destroying the environment of the Gulf, and still intent upon inflicting the most brutal kind of rule on his own population, yet appears to have no intention of complying with the U.N. resolutions. Indeed, his only response at noon was to launch another Scud missile attack on Israel.

The coalition forces have no alternative but to continue to prosecute the war.

As we indicated last night, the withdrawal proposal the Soviets discussed with Tariq Aziz in Moscow was unacceptable because it did not constitute an unequivocal commitment to an immediate and unconditional withdrawal. Thus, the Iraqi approval of the Soviet proposal is without effect.

President Bush today spoke with Prime

Minister Kaifu of Japan, President Ozal of Turkey, and President Gorbachev of the Soviet Union. The phone call from President Gorbachev occurred at 11:15 a.m. and lasted for approximately 28 minutes. President Gorbachev informed the President that he asked for a U.N. review of his proposal and said that he had talked to Prime Minister Major and President Mitterrand about his plan. Both of the allied leaders indicated full support for the coalition withdrawal plan. President Bush thanked President Gorbachev for his extensive efforts and reflected our general disappointment that Saddam Hussein has chosen not to respond positively.

*Note: The statement referred to the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM); President Saddam Hussein and Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz of Iraq; Prime Minister Toshiki of Japan; President Turgut Ozal of Turkey; President Mikhail Gorbachev of the Soviet Union; Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom; and President Francois Mitterrand of France. The statement also referred to an allied peace plan that required Iraq to begin withdrawing its forces from Kuwait by noon, e.s.t.*

## Statement on the Persian Gulf Conflict *February 23, 1991*

We regret that Saddam Hussein took no action before the noon deadline to comply with the United Nations resolutions. We remain determined to fulfill the U.N. reso-

lutions. Military action continues on schedule and according to plan.

*Note: The statement referred to President*