

*Apr. 23 / Administration of George Bush, 1991*

and his troops did in terms of fulfilling our objectives is fantastic. And what he and his troops did for the morale of the United States of America is unbelievable.

We have a great team in Secretary Cheney and General Powell and General Schwarzkopf, and the country knows it. You can feel it. Anytime you get out to this place, why, you sense it. It is fantastic. And I told him that and congratulated him.

*Q.* General Schwarzkopf—

*Q.* —the Oval Office, General?

*The President.* Would you like to see how a guy should handle the press? Come on, Norm. [*Laughter*] And don't change your style.

*Q.* General Schwarzkopf, regardless of

your agreement with the President to end the war, do you feel that you would have liked to have gone on and prosecuted it further?

*The General.* What I'd really like to say is if the President's not going to answer any questions, I damn sure am not going to answer any. [*Laughter*]

*The President.* Now you see how to handle them?

*Note: The President spoke at noon in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney and Gen. Colin L. Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.*

## Remarks at the Presentation of a Point of Light Award to the United States Naval Academy/Benjamin Banneker Honors Mathematics and Science Society Partnership in Annapolis, Maryland

*April 23, 1991*

Thank you, Admiral Hill. And thank all of you. Thank you very, very much. I just can't tell you how pleased I am to be here. Let me salute our Secretary of Education from whom you've just heard, Lamar Alexander. We've outlined a program of revolution, if you will. We want to start from scratch and challenge every school in this country to do better, every State to do better. And we have an outstanding former Governor and outstanding educator as our Secretary, and we are very blessed. And I'm delighted he was here with me today.

I want to thank Governor Schaefer, too, for pledging to have Maryland remain—and I use that word advisedly—remain in the forefront of this educational revolution. Under him the State has been innovative, and now he's pledged to be out front even further. And we're very grateful, Don, and thank you, sir, for that.

I want to salute the mayor over here, thank him for the weather and thank him for greeting us when we arrived over here on the lacrosse field, or wherever the hell it was over here. [*Laughter*]

And as for J.D. over here—when I saw

him up here waving I said, we've got an election in '92, I've got to watch this guy. [*Laughter*] But there's a man of commitment. And I'll say a little more about him later on. But I'll tell you, I was impressed with what I saw here today, and delighted. And also, as one who a thousand years ago wore a naval uniform, I wanted to salute the midshipmen of the greatest Navy on the seven seas. You don't have to take my word for that. If you want a reference, go ask Saddam Hussein—if you can find him.

And as for General Powell, he went to Yankee—I had a bad day opening the Rangers game. [*Laughter*] Got to throw out the first ball for the Rangers game, Milwaukee/Rangers, and I—curve ball, broke a little early, went into the ground. That's my side of the story, and I'm staying with it. [*Laughter*] And then a week later, hard, fast, right over the center of the plate, Colin Powell up in Yankee Stadium. Sergeant Powell will be reporting—[*laughter*]—to Nome, Alaska. [*Laughter*]

But I guess there was a lesson in this, because I saw it all through the war—able to throw it right over the plate, call them as he saw them, lead this great military to a victory that I think has made every American proud. Colin, we're grateful to you.

And we're running a couple of minutes late. We wouldn't have been, but Colin and I and a couple others, Secretary Cheney, we just had lunch at the White House with General Norm Schwarzkopf. He hasn't had a good meal in a long time. You should have seen the guy eat. So, we're a little late. [*Laughter*] I'll tell you, we can't afford to invite him over there anymore. [*Laughter*]

But now to the business at hand. Because like Colin and like Lamar Alexander, I was in those science labs, seeing some of these midshipmen and seeing these students from Banneker Honors Society. I heard about these projects—I'm a guy that dropped out after one day in physics at Yale. Literally—it's in the record. One day and I couldn't take it anymore. But here I was hearing these kids talking about satellite dishes or rockets or kind of splitting some kind of ray coming through a bunch of things. They were trying to tell me what it was. [*Laughter*] And I got to thinking, we are very grateful and very lucky.

You know, the other day, as one who is computer-illiterate—and to answer Lamar Alexander's challenge that everybody, not just those in school but everybody out of school ought to learn a little something, too, and then share that—I pledged that I would learn to run a computer. I'm the guy that doesn't know how to play "Super Mario Brothers" yet. But I'm going to try hard. And yet, I saw these young kids, way in advance of all of that, not only with their computers but with their dedication to science.

It's an honor to be here to celebrate that kind of spirit that I think means a bright future for the Navy. And I'm talking not just about the sacrifice of these midshipmen that help, but I'm talking about the spirit of these kids. This kind of spirit means a bright future for our nation, as Colin Powell said. The men and women of our Armed Forces who responded so brilliantly when the world needed them in the Persian Gulf

are also quietly responding to the call to meet the challenges here at home.

No challenge is more crucial than education. So, 2 years ago, as Lamar said, we met with the Nation's Governors, and together we set six national education goals for the year 2000. Last week, we announced a new national crusade to reinvent, literally, to reinvent the American school, with the help, though, of citizens, businesses, educators, communities, midshipmen—everyone. Secretary Lamar Alexander has put together this dynamic, exciting strategy, and we call it America 2000.

The midshipmen here and the local community have set the kind of example that we would like to see duplicated all around the Nation. You understand that everyone in America has a crucial role to play in education—producing the kind of informed, enlightened public that gives power to democracy and gives us a leg up on the 21st century.

That's why I am so pleased and proud to present our 437th daily Point of Light award to this outstanding educational partnership between the Benjamin Banneker Honors Math and Science Society and the United States Naval Academy.

The midshipmen here are famous for their many quiet acts of community service. Today we salute this group of midshipmen who, with the professors here at Annapolis, have served for the last 3 years as tutors and mentors. They've helped kids from local schools begin discovering the real promise, the real potential.

The midshipmen give up those precious few, precious free Saturdays to tutor young people in math and science and to take them to lunch in that friendly little dining hall, King Hall. You're helping kids learn math and science, but just as important, they get to see firsthand your discipline, your dignity, your determination—the kind of example that they need to succeed.

The midshipmen here today are only half the story. This program would never have been launched without the parents determined to accept nothing less than excellence from their children. Let me offer my special thanks and congratulations to you parents, to the local schools who have been superb in cooperation, and especially to the

man on my left over here who made this outstanding program happen—Mr. Joseph D. Speller—J.D. We need millions more like you, J.D.—people concerned about the condition of their communities and moved not just to complain about it but to do something about it.

I'm proud to recognize this program during the Points of Light National Celebration, here on National Youth Service Day—a day when we shine the spotlight of national attention and praise on young people who make a difference in their communities through direct and consequential acts of service.

These midshipmen in this program and in all of the Navy's community efforts—Academy's community efforts—are learning the true satisfaction that comes from serving others. They'll tell you they get far more from their relationship with these kids than they give.

Midshipman Lionel Hines, for instance, who's suffering through being a plebe here, says, "Helping these kids makes you feel like you're not so much of a nobody." Lionel, I'll be rooting for you and your classmates when you climb that big lard-covered pole next month.

Before I go—and I really don't want to go back to work—I want to share a story that really embodies the spirit of our Points of Light celebration. Midshipman Paul Schimpf has been tutoring fourth-graders at school in Annapolis. Their teacher, Mrs. Young, wrote the commandant to describe Paul's impact on her children. The students rarely miss Tuesdays when "their Mid" comes to class. They dress better. And she writes, "A funny thing has happened. After a major discussion of President Bush's Thousand Points of Light goal and Midshipman Schimpf's example, my students now give up their Monday morning break to become 'reading buddies' to one of the kindergarten classes in their own school.

The Points of Light theory," she says, "has become contagious." Well, if the spirit of community service really is contagious, I hope an epidemic breaks out all over America.

To all of the midshipmen who've served their community and their country—to the parents and local leaders who've turned their concern for education into direct action—for all that you've been doing to help these promising youngsters, please accept the heartfelt thanks of this President and the entire Nation. I salute you as our 437th Point of Light.

Thank you. Congratulations to each and every one of you. And may God bless the United States Navy. Thank you all very, very much.

Now it is my pleasure to present Mr. Joseph D. Speller, representing the Honors Society, and Midshipman Alex Campbell, representing the Academy. Where is he? Here we go. The letter is designating their organizations as our 437th daily Point of Light.

J.D., congratulations and thank you for what you're doing. And, Alex, congratulations to you. Good luck.

*Note: The President spoke at 3:12 p.m. in Bancroft Hall at the U.S. Naval Academy. In his remarks, he referred to Virgil L. Hill, Jr., Superintendent of the Academy; Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander; Gov. William Donald Schaefer of Maryland; Alfred Hopkins, mayor of Annapolis; Joseph D. Speller, parent/sponsor of the U.S. Naval Academy/Benjamin Banneker Honors Mathematics and Science Society; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Gen. Colin L. Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney; Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, commander of the U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf; and midshipmen Lionel Hines, Paul Schimpf, and Scott A. Campbell.*