

Letter Accepting the Resignation of Edward J. Derwinski as Secretary of Veterans Affairs

September 26, 1992

Dear Ed:

It is with great regret and with sincere appreciation for your dedicated service to our country that I accept your resignation as Secretary of Veterans Affairs. However, I'm delighted that you are willing to now devote your great energies to speeding our message of renewal across America as Deputy Co-Chairman of our Campaign.

When I appointed you as Secretary of Veterans Affairs in 1989, I knew that you were the right person to represent the more than 25 million men and women who have served in our Nation's Armed Forces, as well as some 53 million of their dependents and survivors. As one who began his career as an enlisted member of the United States Army, you have a long and distinguished record of compassion and support for those who have so ably defended our Nation. You can be proud of your role in strengthening a Department of nearly 250,000 employees, the second largest civilian work force in the United States Government, and I am grateful to you for helping to lead the Administration's efforts to protect veterans benefits while promoting more effective management of existing veterans programs.

While Operation Desert Storm constituted a resounding victory for freedom and the rule of law, it also brought new challenges to the Department of Veterans Affairs. However, you proved your determination to meet them, and I salute you for that. At a time when our Nation proudly celebrates the expansion of democracy around the globe and the potential for increased international cooperation in this post-Cold War era, you have rightly reminded all Americans of our tremendous debt to our veterans.

From your service in the Army to your many achievements in the United States House of Representatives, the Department of State, and now, the Department of Veterans Affairs, your contributions to our Nation have been substantial; your loyalty and con-

cern for others, inspiring. I am grateful for your friendship and support, and Barbara joins me in sending best wishes to you and Bonnie for the future.

Sincerely,

GEORGE BUSH

Dear Mr. President:

It is an honor for me to accept your request to serve as your campaign's Deputy Chairman for Ethnic Coalitions. I hereby tender my resignation as Secretary of Veterans Affairs so that I may devote my full energies to this vital role and uphold your determination to keep VA free of any political label.

As I leave the position you appointed me to 3½ years ago as the first Secretary of the new cabinet-level Department of Veterans Affairs, I do so with deep appreciation for your support in bringing effective and compassionate health-care and benefits services to the Nation's veterans. Your personal concern for their well-being has been consistently demonstrated with record levels of resources committed to VA programs.

I welcome the opportunity that I will now have to bring your solid record of achievement in furthering the ideals of democracy and liberty abroad to this important bloc of American voters.

Thank you for your confidence in my ability to be of service to you in the home-stretch of the re-election campaign.

Respectfully,

EDWARD J. DERWINSKI

Note: These letters were made available by the Office of the Press Secretary but were not issued as White House press releases.