

New Year's Message to the People of the Soviet Union

January 1, 1991

It's a great pleasure to wish President and Mrs. Gorbachev and all the peoples of the Soviet Union a happy and healthy New Year. In your country and in mine, the start of a New Year is a good time to reflect on the many achievements of the past and to look ahead with hope.

This year our two countries, as well as those around the world, have much to be grateful for—first and foremost, the improved and strengthened relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. Our countries have made great progress, particularly in important political and arms control areas. And we've taken a common approach to a new challenge in the name of stability and peace. I applaud—the world applauds—the decisive action of the Soviet Union in strongly opposing Saddam Hussein's brutal aggression in the Gulf.

But just as important as these new areas of cooperation between our two nations are the increased contacts between the Americans and Soviet peoples. Tens of thousands of Soviets have had contact with Americans now, and the numbers are growing. Barbara and I are thrilled to see our two peoples meeting and getting to know one another

as friendly neighbors.

On this New Year's Day, as you celebrate with your friends and family, I also want to applaud the Soviet Union for the important steps you've taken in building a new society, for the determination with which you are pressing forward with difficult political and economic reforms. It's an arduous journey, but one well worth making, for it is a path that leads to a brighter future for your nation.

The American people look with hope to the year ahead. Our two nations have set out on a new course, making a better life for both our peoples and a better world of peace and understanding. On behalf of the American people, I wish President Gorbachev and all the wonderful people of the Soviet Union a happy, prosperous New Year.

Note: This message was recorded on December 19, 1990, in Room 459 of the Old Executive Office Building. It was televised in the Soviet Union on January 1. In his message, President Bush referred to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Statement by Press Secretary Fitzwater on the Deployment of North Atlantic Treaty Organization Forces to Turkey

January 2, 1991

NATO decided today, at a meeting of its Defense Planning Committee, to deploy the air component of the Allied Command Europe Mobile Force to Turkey. Turkey asked the alliance for this help in order to deter the threat posed by Iraq and demonstrate NATO's solidarity with Turkey in this crisis. The NATO unit that will go to

Turkey includes squadrons of aircraft from Germany, Italy, and Belgium. This alliance move is significant in three respects: First, the Allied Command Europe Mobile Force has never before been deployed in a crisis to defend an ally. Second, the decision demonstrates the alliance's support for the coalition effort and Turkey's part in it against