

Message to the Congress Reporting Budget Deferrals January 9, 1991

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the Impoundment Control Act of 1974, I herewith report two new deferrals and four revised deferrals of budget authority now totalling \$9,093,864,337.

The deferrals affect International Security Assistance programs, as well as programs of the Departments of Agriculture, State, and Transportation.

The details of these deferrals are contained in the attached report.

GEORGE BUSH

The White House,
January 9, 1991.

Note: The attachment detailing the proposed deferrals was printed in the "Federal Register" of January 16.

Exchange With Reporters on the Persian Gulf Crisis January 9, 1991

Q. Mr. President, are you encouraged by what you've heard from Secretary Baker, sir?

The President. Encouraged, you say? No.

Q. Why, sir?

The President. Because I think Iraq has demonstrated no flexibility whatsoever. And I think the meeting we're having here today now takes on even greater importance because I would like to see the Congress send a strong signal that they want to see these United Nations resolutions fully supported. And given the position taken by Iraq at the Geneva meetings—it lasted several hours, the meetings did—but I've talked to the Secretary of State, and I've told these friends in the United States Congress of his reaction. And his reaction was they were not flexible at all and showed no propensity to comply with the United Nations resolutions.

The rest of the world, I am convinced, wants to see all 12 of those resolutions complied with. So, Baker could not report any progress at all. He's having a press conference right now, and maybe I'll have an opportunity to talk to the White House press corps after that. We welcome the Members of Congress saying exactly how they feel when they leave here. Whether they agree with me entirely or not, they can go out and do what they want.

Q. Well, does this end the subject and does this mean war, Mr. President?

The President. As I told you, I hope that the Congress will send a good, strong signal, and I'm not giving up on peace at all. We took the extra step in terms of the United States meeting with Iraq after many, many dates proposed by us being turned down. We arranged for this—I proposed the Baker-'Aziz meeting. And now it has been a frustration because they have demonstrated no propensity to comply with the resolutions—none at all. And that is unsatisfactory to the United States, and it will be totally unsatisfactory also to our coalition partners. But let us hope that strong statements from around the world will help him understand that peace is the answer.

And so, though I have taken the last extra step for peace in terms of a bilateral negotiation, I would remind everybody that this isn't Iraq versus the United States; this is Iraq versus the entire United Nations—not just the Security Council but the General Assembly as well. And that is a point that is being missed by many people in the United States and around the world.

So, I am hopeful still that he will—having seen a firm position on the part of the United States, having heard from the EC as recently as 2 days ago, having heard from the French and the British and everybody

else that he must comply—that he will comply. But I can't tell you that this Baker meeting moved the process forward an inch unless—the only bright spot I can put on it is that he sees now, the Foreign Minister sees now, and hopefully he will report this directly back to the President, that the United States is more determined than ever to do its part in fulfilling the United States—in complying with all the resolutions of the U.N.

So, that's about where we are now.

Q. Would you welcome a French mission to Baghdad?

Q. Mr. President, would it help or hinder efforts at this point for the French and other partners in the alliance to——

The President. We have had mission after mission for peace. I'd have to think it out. I talked to the Secretary-General up there in Camp David this weekend about possibly another mission, but he knows and I know that he would operate within the confines of the Security Council. So if that could be helpful, we would be supportive.

The EC wanted 'Aziz to come and talk to them. I don't know, Larry [Lawrence O'Rourke, St. Louis Post-Dispatch], where that stands, but I gather that Iraq, once again, rather arrogantly turned that down. But we are going to keep probing for peace because that's what I want. But we are going to stay firm in our resolve to see the United Nations resolutions complied with.

Q. Did he offer you anything in the way—did he offer anything as an alternative to—a phased withdrawal——

The President. No.

Q. ——or some future point, or post-

poning the deadline?

The President. No.

Q. Why did they take 6 hours?

Q. Did they negotiate, sir, or did——

The President. You rush out now and listen to the Baker press conference, and you'll get the answer to those questions better than I could give them, because I think he's in a press conference right now. And that will be followed by the Tariq 'Aziz press conference in Geneva.

But I would like to turn this part of this meeting off by saying that I am very grateful to the Members of Congress here from both sides of the aisle, Democrats and Republicans, who have come together to try to help resolve this crisis in a peaceful manner. And in my view, a resolution supporting the United Nations resolutions or encouraging—of giving the President—telling the President to go out and do this is the best way now, given the intransigence of Iraq, to have a shot for peace.

But there was no concession by the Iraqis, no give, and they rejected the letter, to even take that directly to Saddam Hussein. So——

Q. Rejected your letter, sir?

The President. Exactly. And that will be covered now in the press conference.

Note: The exchange began at 2:05 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. President Bush referred to Secretary of State James A. Baker III; Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and Javier Perez de Cuellar de la Guerra, Secretary-General of the United Nations. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

The President's News Conference on the Persian Gulf Crisis January 9, 1991

The President. I have a brief opening statement, and then I will take a few questions.

I have spoken with Secretary of State Jim Baker, who reported to me on his nearly 7 hours of conversation with Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz. Secretary Baker made

it clear that he discerned no evidence whatsoever that Iraq was willing to comply with the international community's demand to withdraw from Kuwait and comply with the United Nations resolutions.

Secretary Baker also reported to me that