

Feb. 20 / Administration of George Bush, 1991

America.

Note: President Bush spoke at 8:15 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prince Henrik, the Queen's husband, and her sons, Crown

Prince Frederik and Prince Joachim; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Colin L. Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Duane R. Bushey, master chief petty officer of the Navy; and Julian Gates, sergeant major of the Army.

Statement by Press Secretary Fitzwater on Remarks Made by President Saddam Hussein of Iraq on the Persian Gulf Conflict February 21, 1991

Let me just read a few sentences in response to Saddam Hussein's speech.

The statement by Saddam Hussein this morning is disappointing. He repeats the same invective and disregard for the United Nations mandate that we have heard so often since August 2d. In vowing to continue the war, he once again demonstrates his determination to maintain the aggression against Kuwait and the absence of com-

passion for his people and his country.

For our part, the coalition forces remain on the course set by the 12 United Nations resolutions. Our forces remain on a steady course. The liberation of Kuwait continues.

Note: Press Secretary Fitzwater read this statement to reporters at 11:23 a.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House.

Remarks on Signing the National Parents and Teachers Association Week Proclamation February 21, 1991

The President. Welcome to the White House. And may I thank Congressman Kildee for being with us. Of course, single out for special recognition Ann Lynch, the president of the National PTA. And, of course, Ted Sanders, who is our Under Secretary at Education and who really is a man of commitment and has done an outstanding job all across the board for education.

I want to welcome Mr. Stair, the president of ServiceMaster, this year's—right here—this year's sponsor of the National Parents and Teachers Association Week. And we are grateful to you, sir.

And a special welcome to the teachers and the parents, and, of course, the students—you're outnumbered, but you're here—[*laughter*]—from communities in and around our Washington area, representing the many millions who, together,

make up the real strength of the PTA.

And I want to begin today by sharing with you the results of a recent poll of the Nation's fourth graders. These days we all live by instant polling. And this one I know you will find fascinating. They were asked to pick a hero from the following list: Bart Simpson, George Bush, Paula Abdul, Bo Jackson, or E, none of the above. And they did not pick A, C, or D, or sad to say, B. [*Laughter*] The winners were write-in candidates. Children picked parents as their heroes by a landslide. And teachers were the runners-up, right in there very, very close. And Bo Jackson was third—[*laughter*]—and they didn't dare give me the rest of the results. [*Laughter*]

But the fact of the matter is that parents are our children's first teachers. And I guess Barbara, in her reading to kids, exemplifies this pretty darn well; now it's grandkids for

us. But it's more than a matter of helping our kids do their homework, teaching them how to read, or showing them through our own interests that learning is a lifelong pursuit. Our kids look to us for the moral values that guide and shape our lives.

And we know children look to us, and it's up to us to give our kids something to look up to. Ann Lynch is right on the mark when she says that "the difference between a good school and a great school is the parents."

And those of us in government, at the Federal level and in the statehouses and right down to the local school boards, have a responsibility to ensure that parents are at the center of educational reform. Together, let's work to meet a common challenge; let's find a way to help children who lack the advantages that come from a loving home and caring parents.

I am convinced that our efforts to improve our schools are at a critical turning point now. We here in the White House are committed to these national education goals. We've forged a real, working partnership with the Nation's Governors. And it is real; it's not just on paper. And we know real progress comes one school and one

student at a time. And that's why we see the PTA as a key partner in making certain that America's children receive an education that's second to none.

And once again, it is my great pleasure to welcome you to the White House. And now I will sign the proclamation designating this National Parents and Teachers Association Week. And Congressman Kildee, if you'd join us here, too, sir, it would make it extra special. And the deed is done.

Q. Mr. President, does Saddam's no-surrender statement mean there's no hope of avoiding a ground war?

The President. He should have spent more time in the PTA. [*Laughter*]

Note: The President spoke at 1:16 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Dale E. Kildee; Ann Lynch, president of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers; Ted Sanders, Under Secretary of Education; Charles W. Stair, president of the ServiceMaster Co.; television cartoon character Bart Simpson; singer Paula Abdul; and professional athlete Bo Jackson. The proclamation is listed in Appendix E at the end of this volume.

Remarks on the Persian Gulf Conflict

February 22, 1991

Good morning.

The United States and its coalition allies are committed to enforcing the United Nations resolutions that call for Saddam Hussein to immediately and unconditionally leave Kuwait. In view of the Soviet initiative which, very frankly, we appreciate, we want to set forth this morning the specific criteria that will ensure Saddam Hussein complies with the United Nations mandate.

Within the last 24 hours alone we have heard a defiant, uncompromising address by Saddam Hussein, followed less than 10 hours later by a statement in Moscow that, on the face of it, appears more reasonable. I say "on the face of it" because the statement promised unconditional Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait, only to set forth a

number of conditions. And needless to say, any conditions would be unacceptable to the international coalition and would not be in compliance with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 660's demand for immediate and unconditional withdrawal.

More importantly and more urgently, we learned this morning that Saddam has now launched a scorched-earth policy against Kuwait, anticipating perhaps that he will now be forced to leave. He is wantonly setting fires to and destroying the oil wells, the oil tanks, the export terminals, and other installations of that small country. Indeed, they're destroying the entire oil production system of Kuwait. At the same time that