

Mar. 11 / Administration of George Bush, 1991

say that there are other marines on another front line, this one right here, right here in our own backyard. And these Henderson Hall marine buddies are serving our country in another kind of fight, the one to help our children be successful, happy students.

To the marine buddies, I say thank you for the important work that you're doing here and for the inspiring example of strength you're showing the Nation. And to the kids, to the students, I say I hope you'll follow the example of these outstanding marine buddies of yours by helping people who need you throughout your whole life. The marines are the heroes of today, and I've got this wonderful, warm feeling that you'll be the heroes of tomorrow.

And so, it's my great pleasure to recognize our 400th Point of Light and to present to you, the marine buddies, and to you, Dr. Kahan, for Barcroft Elementary School, letters of appreciation for the wonderful example that you have set for our entire country.

Thank you all very, very much.

Note: The President spoke at 1:57 p.m. in the cafeteria of the school. In his remarks, he referred to Ellen Kahan, principal of the school; Rita Treadwell, civil coordinator of the marine program; Col. Robert R. Buckley, Henderson Hall base commander; and Corp. Dawn Simms, a marine tutor. Following his remarks, the President returned to the White House.

Statement by Press Secretary Fitzwater on Louisiana Governor Buddy Roemer's Republican Party Affiliation

March 11, 1991

The President today welcomed Louisiana Governor Buddy Roemer's announcement that he has switched his party affiliation from the Democrat Party to the Republican Party. The President looks forward to working closely with Governor Roemer as the most recent addition to the ranks of Republican Governors.

As Governor Roemer stated, "The reason is simple. After more than 10 years of public service, it has been my observation and increasing conviction that it is the Republican Party that is becoming most open to new ideas, new thinking, new people, most open

to team building, to opportunity building."

Governor Roemer, a former four-term Congressman, was elected Governor in 1987 and is the first sitting Governor to switch parties in modern history. This follows a number of Democrat officeholders, more than 200, who have switched their affiliations in the past 2 years.

Governor Roemer telephoned the President last week to discuss his decision to switch party affiliations. The President has invited the Governor to come to the White House on Monday, March 18, 1991.

Appointment of Jay Parmer as Special Assistant to the President and Director of Presidential Advance

March 11, 1991

The President today announced the appointment of Jay Parmer as Special Assistant to the President and Director of Presidential Advance at the White House in Washington, DC. He would succeed John

G. Keller, Jr.

Mr. Parmer has served in the Presidential Advance Office since January 1989, first as Assistant Director and later as Deputy Director for Special Projects. He served in the

Office of the Vice President as Assistant to the Director of Advance from September 1987 to August 1988, when he left to join the staff of Bush-Quayle '88. From 1985 to 1987, Mr. Parmer was a Special Assistant for External Relations at the U.S. Agency for International Development. During the 1984 elections, Mr. Parmer was political director of the Mississippi Republican Party.

In 1983, he served on the support staff of the summit of industrialized nations in Williamsburg, VA.

Mr. Parmer is a native of Meridian, MS, and graduated from the University of Mississippi with a bachelor of public administration degree in 1983. He is married to the former Ardis Elaine Johnson of Reno, NV, and resides in Chevy Chase, MD.

Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Edward R. Madigan as Secretary of Agriculture

March 12, 1991

The President. Thank you all very, very much for that welcome. Thank you, Bob. Thank you, Congressman Michel; and Mr. Speaker, delighted to see you, sir; members of the President's Cabinet here today. Monsignor O'Dea, nice to see you and meet you; your altar boy's come a long way. [Laughter] May I greet the former Secretaries of Agriculture and the distinguished Members of the House and Senate, so many with us here today.

It's a great pleasure to witness the swearing-in of the newest member of our Cabinet team, Secretary Ed Madigan. He brings personal qualities to the job that farmers and ranchers hold dear: honesty and integrity. You ask anybody, any of his colleagues, any of us here in Washington that know him, or go back in Illinois and talk to his friends there: honesty and integrity is what Ed Madigan is all about. When Ed says he's going to do something that will be in the best interests of the farmers and America's consumers, you can rest assured he's shooting straight.

But before I go any further, I'd like to put the momentary spotlight on another individual—outstanding individual. I know Ed Madigan shares my high esteem for the first-class performance of his predecessor, Clayton Yeutter, who's here with us. Clay, stand up. [Applause] Let it be said of Clayton that he's moved on to another fertile field. [Laughter] But I do count my blessings that I keep Clayton's good counsel and that I now add Ed Madigan to our Cabinet

team.

Ed's experience is going to be put to immediate use, as everybody in this building knows. He's spent 16 of his 18 years in the House on the Ag Committee, 8 of them as the ranking Republican. He played a leading role in the writing of both of the past two farm bills. And that's a major reason that we've been able to build more free market flexibility into our Federal farm policy.

Ed takes the reins at USDA at a critical time. The new farm bill must be implemented. And that's going to be a challenge because farmers have a lot more decisions to make for themselves. And Ed's guiding hand will be a steady influence on the process.

This Department is fortunate to have a Secretary with Ed Madigan's experience. And he's not only from the land of Lincoln; he's from the town of Lincoln, in the midst of some of the Nation's most fertile farmland. He knows firsthand about the modern miracle that is American agriculture, the special combination of hard work and high tech that enables this small percentage of the American work force to feed a nation and the world.

And Ed knows the farming business. Back where he grew up, agriculture is the economy. Of course, agriculture is today a critical area in international trade and a critical element of the American economy. Agriculture is one sector that maintains a positive trade balance for this nation.