

Statement by Deputy Press Secretary Popadiuk on President Bush's Meeting With President Arnold Ruutel of Estonia

March 29, 1991

President Bush met this morning in the Oval Office with Arnold Ruutel, President of Estonia. President Bush began the meeting by reiterating the unequivocal support of the U.S. for Estonia's right to self-determination. He expressed his outrage over the use of force in Vilnius and Riga in January, and he emphasized his conviction that the only solution to this situation was good-faith negotiations between the Baltic States

and Moscow. He assured President Ruutel that he had personally made this point to President Gorbachev on many occasions. President Bush took note that negotiations had begun between Estonia and Moscow, and he discussed with President Ruutel the results to date.

Note: The statement referred to President Mikhail Gorbachev of the Soviet Union.

Message on the Observance of Passover, 5751

March 29, 1991

As Jewish people around the world gather to celebrate Passover and to recount through the *Haggadah* the story of the Exodus, we are reminded of the triumph of good over evil. We are also reminded that the enduring spirit of liberty can never be crushed by the cruel hand of tyranny and enslavement. This lesson appears time and again in the pages of the Bible; and following the recent coalition victory in the Persian Gulf, it is a lesson all the more vivid to us today.

The traditions honored in Jewish homes during Passover, the festival of freedom,

celebrate the blessings of life and liberty and underscore their precious nature. This year, we join with our Jewish neighbors in giving thanks to the Almighty for those blessings and for His aid in preserving them. Indeed, as we strive to learn from the past and to face the future with renewed faith, we are united by our gratitude and by our renewed hopes for a safer, more peaceful world.

Barbara and I extend our best wishes to members of the Jewish community for a happy and joyous Passover holiday.

GEORGE BUSH

Statement by Deputy Press Secretary Popadiuk on the Resignation of Richard R. Burt as Head of Delegation to the Nuclear and Space Talks in Geneva and Chief START Negotiator

March 29, 1991

President Bush has accepted the resignation of Ambassador Richard R. Burt as Head of Delegation to the Nuclear and Space Talks in Geneva and Chief START Negotiator. After 10 years in government, serving in both the Reagan and Bush administrations, Ambassador Burt is moving

into the private sector.

In addition to his current post, Ambassador Burt, during his tenure in government, served in several other important positions, including as Director of the Politico-Military Affairs Bureau in the State Department, Assistant Secretary of State for European and

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Canadian Affairs, and Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany. In all of these positions, he served the United States with great distinction.

The President appreciates Ambassador Burt's dedicated service and is pleased that he has agreed to serve as a consultant to

the Secretary of State.

Following Ambassador Burt's departure from government, Ambassador Linton F. Brooks, who has served as Ambassador Burt's deputy since 1989, will become the Acting Head of Delegation to the Nuclear and Space Talks.

Nomination of John Schrote To Be an Assistant Secretary of the Interior

April 2, 1991

The President today announced his intention to nominate John Schrote, of Ohio, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Policy, Management and Budget in Washington, DC. He would succeed Lou Gallegos.

Since 1989 Mr. Schrote has served as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget at the Department of the Interior in Washington, DC. Prior to this, Mr. Schrote served as Assistant to the Secretary and Director of Congressional and Legislative Affairs at the Department of the Interior, 1989; administrative assist-

ant to Congressman F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr., 1984–1989; executive vice president for Bishop Bryant and Associates, 1983–1984; Deputy Director of the Office of Presidential Personnel at the White House, 1982–1983; and Acting Assistant Secretary for Administration for the Department of Agriculture, 1981–1982.

Mr. Schrote graduated from Ohio State University (B.S., 1958) and Xavier University (M.B.A., 1964). He was born May 6, 1936, in Findlay, OH. Mr. Schrote is married, has two children, and resides in Alexandria, VA.

Question-and-Answer Session With Reporters in Hobe Sound, Florida

April 3, 1991

Iraq

Q. Mr. President, could you say a few words? Did you learn anything new just then, for instance, on Iraq or anything else?

The President. No, I didn't learn anything new. Read some stuff that's not true, but I didn't learn anything new.

Q. Which—

The President. Well, there's no point in going into all of that.

Q. Did you sign an order for—

Possible Soviet-U.S. Summit

The President. I was talking about a firm date for a meeting with Gorbachev on there. That's not set. I want to meet with

President Gorbachev; I've said so. But, I don't know where a story like that comes from. It's just simply not true.

Q. Sir, are you optimistic that you can do it by the first half of the year?

The President. Do the summit meeting? I'd like to go to Moscow, and we've maintained that we should get a START agreement. And we also have some difficulties on CFE to work out, the conventional forces agreement. But this story is just simply not correct. Such a meeting may turn out to be, but I would know if that were set, and it's not.

Q. Would you consider meeting someplace other than Moscow?