

Mar. 29 / Administration of George Bush, 1991

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?

The President. Sure, if we're going to have a meeting. Listen, you know my view. I've said I think nearly a year and a half ago that it would be appropriate to have meetings with President Gorbachev, once a year I think we said. But we've got to work out these details on these arms control agreements now, and that's what I think he's trying to do. And I know we're pushing our experts very hard on doing that. So, I don't know where this story could come from.

Iraq

Q. Mr. President, there's a story about Iraqi—that you had signed a finding—covert actions—

The President. Let me stop you right there. If you're going to ask about intelligence matters, you're wasting time because I never comment on them. And I wouldn't confirm or deny or comment on intelligence matters, particularly findings, in any way. It simply would be inappropriate.

Return of U.S. Troops

Q. Are you going to speak tonight? When you get back to Andrews you're going to be on in the middle of a nationwide CBS special on bringing back the troops. Do you feel a little bit awkward, participating in a gala like this, when most of the troops are still in the Middle East?

The President. No, they're coming home 3,000, 5,000 a day. And the rejoicing that the families have when these young men and women come home has been wonderful therapy for this whole nation. And I have nothing but respect for the military, the way in which they're bringing our troops out. And when we get a cease-fire agreement, you'll see them come out even more rapidly because it is my intention to do what I said early on: bring our troops home as soon as possible.

I think we've already brought home over 100,000. I'm looking around for somebody to give me the exact figures.

Q. Yes. The Pentagon has said that.

The President. But it's a lot of people back, and more will be coming back. And so, I have no feeling of awkwardness at all. The war hasn't been over all that long. It takes a long time to move people out.

But what we've done is keep our forces in Iraq, and we'll keep them there until we have a cease-fire agreement. And they'll come out. Hopefully, there will be a blue-helmeted U.N. force or some kind of security force along the border between Kuwait and Iraq, thus relieving the United States of any obligation in this regard. And they'll be coming out just as fast as we can bring them out.

But I have nothing but joy in my heart about the way these troops are being received, about what's happened to the American heartbeat as a result of all of this. And I'm looking forward to seeing some more of them that'll be coming home, seeing them tonight at Andrews Air Force Base.

Iraq

Q. Do you feel frustrated at not being able to help the Iraqis?

The President. Well, I feel frustrated any time innocent civilians are being slaughtered. And I feel very frustrated about that. But the United States and these other countries with us in this coalition did not go there to settle all the internal affairs of Iraq.

I have said that there will not be normalized relations with Iraq as long as Saddam Hussein is in power. And of course I feel a frustration and a sense of grief for the innocents that are being killed brutally. But we are not there to intervene. That is not our purpose; it never was our purpose. I can understand the frustration of some who think it should have been our purpose, some who never supported this in the first place on military action. I share their frustration, but I am not going to commit our forces to something of this nature. I'm not going to do that.

We will proceed along the diplomatic channels, working at the United Nations, getting security forces.

Q. Why let their helicopters continue?

The President. Because I do not want to see us get sucked into the internal civil war inside Iraq, that's why.

Q. Isn't that a violation of the informal cease-fire?

The President. I don't know whether technically, Lori [Lori Santos, United Press International], it's in violation or not. It is in

the fixed-wing planes to fly, but if it is a violation, that doesn't necessarily mean that we are going to commit our young men and our young women into further combat. I will do my level-best to use all diplomatic channels to bring this fighting to a halt. But I do not want to push American forces beyond our mandate. We've done the heavy lifting. Our kids performed with superior courage, and they don't need to be thrust into a war that's been going on for years in there. That's my view.

Q. Given the recent success of his forces, are you still confident that Saddam Hussein will not be there in less than a year?

The President. Yes. I'm still confident he won't be. I don't think he can survive, and I don't think he should survive. He's not going to have the kind of relations that Iraq should have with other countries as long as he's there. And I haven't changed my view on that at all.

Most of the people I talk to and hear from around the world, in that part of the world, feel the same way I do about that, incidentally.

Q. Has the fighting in Iraq complicated efforts to reach a permanent cease-fire at the U.N.?

The President. I don't think so. I mean, these cease-fire requirements are fairly straightforward, fairly strong, and they have not been changed by the fighting in Iraq itself. I think what's happened is, if further outrage was possible about Saddam Hussein's brutal behavior, that further outrage has been achieved, you might say. But I don't think it's changed the objectives of these United Nations resolutions that will bring about a cease-fire and will enable me as Commander in Chief to bring our troops home. That's what I want to do. We'll get some security along there.

We've got a major program for trying to bring peace, security, and stability to the Gulf area. I hope we can be a catalyst in moving the whole peace process forward between Israel and the Palestinians, between the Arab States and Israel, between Lebanon. But we want to get this Gulf matter under control. And I don't feel that the civil war has adversely affected our chances of getting a U.N. resolution or getting the U.N. to act. They should act very,

very soon.

Nobody's sympathetic for Iraq anymore. The very few friends they've had have deserted them because they see this man's abject brutality and lack of conscience. And so, there's no sympathy for Iraq out of this civil unrest. There's sympathy for those that are getting slaughtered, not for the Iraqi regime. I have said that we want to help the innocents, children, those that are starving. I don't care what their politics are, what their previous associations have been. If there's a child hurting, America cares about that.

But what we don't care about is helping project a regime that has lost all credibility and lost all chance of running the country because of the brutality. And I'm talking about Saddam Hussein himself, personally.

If his own army would do something about it, maybe we could start over. I think the world has seen even more clearly since the end of the fighting how brutal he is. We saw it in Kuwait, what he did to the Kuwaiti people—women and children. And now we've seen it, what he's done to the Shiites in the south and the Kurds in the north. He's turned off everybody. If he had one scintilla of good will, it's been dissipated.

Q. What could the U.S. do to help the children you are worried about?

The President. Well, food, medicines. We will do our part. We always have, and we always will. That's the beauty of it. When you see those American soldiers extending their hearts and their hands to those fleeing, when you see them picking up the children, that's the American spirit, and we are going to do that. We are going to continue to help. But we're not going to do anything to help Saddam Hussein. And that distinction is very, very clear.

Q. Sir, when you say the army could do something about it, wouldn't you have a situation where a group that's accused of all these atrocities would be in charge?

The President. I blame Saddam Hussein for the atrocities, and I have made it clear to the Iraqi leaders long before the war started. You go back and take a look at what I said then, because I think it's apropos now—we do not have an argument with the leadership. Our argument is with

the brutality of Saddam Hussein and the orders he's given. Now, does that clear somebody that goes down and rapes a child in Kuwait? No, it does not. But for the most part, it does, because Saddam Hussein has been the major villain there. I would be willing to take a new look if the army took those matters into their own hands, as I've said before. But he's got to go, and he will someday. He can't survive.

Q. Sir, were you at all surprised at the success of his army in putting down the rebellion?

The President. No, no I wasn't surprised about his success of his army. His army has been battered and can no longer project offensive military might against his neighbors. I believe that. But to go in and crush a bunch of people that aren't armed, that doesn't take much macho to do that. It just takes a lot of brutality and cruelty, and that's what's happened.

Q. Can you expand on this new look? You said you might take a new look if the army took the matters into their own hands.

The President. If a new regime emerged in there, I'd like to know what their goals are. Do they want to live peacefully in the neighborhood? Do they want to start treating their people with respect? Do they want to try to work out some of the differences with the Kurds that have been there for ages? Are they willing to talk to the Shiite leaders in the south?

That's what I want to see. And that's what the world wants to see. It's not just what the U.S. wants, incidentally. All our coalition partners are in exactly the same mode on this one as far as I am. I stay in touch

with them. I know that. And you haven't seen the call, incidentally, from any of them for the United States to go in and use this superior military might to try to sort out this civil war. But you have seen statements from all of them saying that it would be a good thing if we had new leadership in Iraq, in Baghdad.

U.S. Diplomacy in the Middle East

Q. Did you send Scowcroft to Lebanon and Iran as well as Saudi Arabia?

The President. Hey, listen. If I'd have wanted to talk about Scowcroft's itinerary, I'd have made that public. There are certain things you've got to try to do your best in diplomacy that are better to keep quiet. And it's very hard in our open society, and I don't blame you a bit for asking, and I hope you'll forgive me for not answering.

Turkey

Q. What about Turkey? Did you offer \$1 billion to Turkey?

The President. Excuse me just a minute. Did I what?

Q. Turkish Government—

The President. No.

Q. How did your game go?

The President. Fun was had by all.

Note: The session took place at 1:45 p.m. at the Jupiter Hills Country Club Golf Course. During the exchange, President Bush referred to President Mikhail Gorbachev of the Soviet Union, President Saddam Hussein of Iraq, and Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this session.

Statement on the United Nations Persian Gulf Cease-Fire Resolution

April 3, 1991

I am extremely pleased that the Security Council has voted in favor of Resolution 687. Fourteen times now the United Nations has demonstrated its determination to contribute significantly to the prospects for lasting peace and security in the Gulf region.

This latest resolution creates the basis for a formal cease-fire in the Gulf. It comes 8 months since Iraq invaded Kuwait. During these 8 months, the world community has stood up for what is right and just. It is now up to Iraq's Government to demonstrate that it is prepared to respect the will of the