

continue consulting with our coalition partners in this and in other efforts designed to alleviate the plight of the many innocent Iraqis whose lives have been endangered by the brutal and inhumane actions of the Iraqi government.

I also want to add that this urgent air drop is but one of several steps the United States is taking to deal with this terrible situation. I will shortly be signing an order that will authorize up to \$10 million from the Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance Fund. These funds will help meet the needs of the burgeoning refugee population in the region. Our military forces in southern Iraq will continue to assist refugees and displaced persons. We are also providing considerable economic and food assistance to the Government of Turkey, to help it sustain the many refugees who have taken refuge there. We are prepared as well to deploy a U.S. military medical unit to the border area in southern Turkey to meet emergency needs.

The United States is also concerned about the welfare of those Iraqi refugees now fleeing to Iran. We will be communicating, through our established channel, to the

Government of Iran our willingness to encourage and contribute to international organizations carrying out relief efforts aiding these individuals.

In an effort to help innocent people, and especially the children of Iraq, we will be donating \$869,000 to UNICEF for child immunizations in Iraq. We will also be providing a further \$131,000 and 1,000 tons of food to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). In all cases, funds and goods provided to international organizations will be distributed by the organizations themselves to civilian in Iraq.

Finally, I have asked Secretary Baker to travel to Turkey, en route to the Middle East, to meet with President Ozal and visit the border area to assess the refugee situation and report back to me.

Note: The statement referred to Secretary of State James A. Baker III and President Turgut Ozal of Turkey. Presidential Determinations 91-26 and 91-27 of April 6 concerning assistance to refugees in the Persian Gulf region were printed in the "Federal Register" of April 23.

Remarks at a Meeting With Hispanic Business Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters in Newport Beach, California

April 5, 1991

The President. Is this it? A modest turnout. [Laughter] First, I want to thank everybody for coming here because the importance that I place on this Fast Track negotiating authority is critical, a highest priority. I look around this room and I see many who know of my interest in and have been terribly supportive in strengthening a relationship with Mexico. Mexico is in the big middle of this, and so is our free trade with the Europeans. The Uruguay round relies on our getting Fast Track authority.

So, I'm glad to see so many of you again. And what I wanted to do on this point, this business point, is to encourage your strong support to the Members of the Congress for Fast Track negotiating authority.

And if we get it, I believe we can get a free-trade agreement with Mexico. I think it will be good for the United States of America, I think it will be good for jobs in this country, and I think it will be darn good for Mexico as well.

We're starting down that free-trading hemisphere, which is a wonderful concept. Those that worry about loss of jobs, they don't need—take a look at history. When you get this kind of an agreement, it expands job opportunities. And in this case, it also strengthens a friend, President Salinas of Mexico, who's seen on his end relations between Mexico and the United States have never been better. They really have never been better. So, that's one point.

The second point I wanted to make—and we can talk about it in a minute—is about the human suffering in Iraq. I've just put out a statement that shows that we will be doing more. We've already tried to help with the refugees, but we're going to step that way up, and we are going to be dropping supplies to these Kurdish refugees. Jim Baker will be going to the area to talk to other countries, but starting with the conversations in Turkey itself—Turkey threatened by an enormous amount of refugees pouring across their border.

I made my positions clear yesterday, and I'll say it again here, that I have no intention of putting American troops into this situation. We've fulfilled our objectives in that regard. But we are going to do what America has always done, and that is, when people are hurting and being brutalized, we're going to help. We're going to continue to help. I saluted in this statement I put out to the British and the—[applause]. And you know, it's heartbreaking when you see these families on the road, pushed out by a brutal dictator. So, we will do what we can to help there without being bogged down into a ground force action in Iraq. That is not our intention, never has been, and won't be. But we can help a lot, and we will. And we are, as a matter of fact.

Aid to Iraqi Refugees

Q. Mr. President, has the United States informed the Iraqis of your plans for this air drop? And if so, have they given you any kind of clearance or—

The President. I wanted these guys to hear about it first, and then we'll notify them later on. They'll know about it now by this statement.

Q. So, you have not formally communicated these plans then as yet?

The President. No. It's been all—no—

Middle East Peace Negotiations

Q. Can you tell us also, on Secretary Baker going to the Middle East, is this because something has developed in the few short weeks or the little time that's left since he was there last, or is it because the window of opportunity is rapidly closing over there?

The President. I think there's been—I

have reason to be hopeful on it. We don't want to miss an opportunity to move forward on the peace process. He'll be talking about the security and stability in the Gulf area itself, but he'll also be talking about the question that's divided the Palestinians and Israelis for a long, long time. So, I think it's a mission that has an underpinning of hope, Norm [Norman Sandler, United Press International], but I don't think we're at the verge of having some deal, if that's what your question is.

Q. Any new proposals?

The President. It's not that we don't—the other side of your question was, or is it because the window is closing with no progress—and it's not that, either. It's a follow-on to an earlier trip. And of course, it has this dimension now of assistance to these refugees. But it's got both components to it.

Aid to Iraqi Refugees

Q. Are you prepared in any way to give asylum or to take some of the refugees? Apparently President Ozal is closing the border unless some of the other countries, the United States and Europe, will agree to take these massive—

The President. I think every country should do its part, and we certainly would be open-minded. But certainly what I think they ought to do is to be able to peacefully stay in their own area, their own country. And that means a real difference in the way they're being treated. I notice that there was some offer of peaceful return, but that's what should happen. But the United States will do its part in the humanitarian sense.

Q. Mr. President, that doesn't help the refugees that are being fired on by the Iraqi troops. They can have all the food and humanitarian supplies they need. How is this going to help them from the violence of the Red Guard?

The President. I'm very much concerned about the violence and I'm hopeful that that will calm down. But it is not a question where the United States or its coalition partners plan to intervene militarily. We're not going to do that.

Note: The President spoke at 1 p.m. in

Apr. 5 / Administration of George Bush, 1991

Room 1801 of the Four Seasons Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to President Carlos Salinas de Gortari of Mexico, Secretary of State James A. Baker III, President Saddam

Hussein of Iraq, and President Turgut Ozal of Turkey. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Death of John Tower

April 5, 1991

Barbara and I are deeply saddened by the tragic deaths of our dear friends Senator John Tower and his daughter Marian. America has lost a great man and distinguished statesman who dedicated his life to public service. The news of the plane crash today outside Brunswick, GA, deepens the sorrow and sense of loss we have so recently felt with the death of Senator John Heinz.

John Tower and I became friends 30 years ago. We have remained close friends to this day. Senator Tower's years of public service greatly strengthened the course of our national security and foreign policy, and his advocacy for a strong defense helped to lay the groundwork for the many recent successes we have witnessed in our ability to respond to international conflicts.

He served the people of Texas and the

Nation with honor and distinction for over 30 years. Many Presidents benefited from his experience and counsel since his arrival in the Senate in 1961. I am among those who will sorely miss his advice, especially in the fields of arms control, national security, and intelligence.

He was a friend, a leader, and a great Senator. Our sympathy and prayers go out to his surviving family members, Penny and Jeanne. Barbara and I join all Americans in mourning his death, and our hearts go out to the families of those who lost loved ones in this tragic accident.

Barbara and I were also saddened to learn of the death of U.S. astronaut Manley Laniar "Sonny" Carter, Jr. He served the Nation well, and his experience will be sorely missed.

The President's News Conference With Secretary of State James A. Baker III in Houston, Texas

April 6, 1991

The President. Well, we haven't had our discussion yet, and I'm very anxious to talk to the Secretary about his upcoming trip. In just a second I'm going to ask him to make a comment on that trip. But let me just say that I'm very pleased with the reception so far to our refugee relief program for those that have been brutalized and turned into refugees by the Government of Iraq. And it's a good program. It's strong. The air drop will be starting very, very soon. It's just a question of the exact timing I'm not sure of yet, but it will start very, very, very, very soon. And the program is, I think,

comprehensive.

We have not heard from Iran on how the part will work that affects refugees along the Iranian border. But I am very pleased that we and others have stepped up to the plate on this one. As a matter of fact, I think we've already, over the period of the last few weeks, spent something like \$35 million, and that's prior to this new program that we've announced. So, the United States is doing its part, should do its part, always has done its part.

But now I'd like to ask the Secretary just to comment on his trip. Then we'll take just