

Jan. 3 / Administration of George Bush, 1991

party-line vote is neither fair nor right. That they have sought to break the budget agreement in what is virtually their first act of the 102d Congress puts in serious doubt whatever they might say or promise the American people on other significant issues in the upcoming session.

The provision the House Democrats would undo today is a key to enforcing the controls on Federal spending contained in

the agreement, and uncontrolled spending simply creates excuses for their raising taxes.

This matter is so fundamental to public confidence in the budget agreement and in the Government itself that I must state again, unequivocally, that I will veto *any* bill that contains the language specified in the rule passed by the House Democrats this afternoon.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Canada-United States Fishing Agreement

January 4, 1991

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976, as amended (Public Law 94-265; 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*), I transmit herewith an Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Canada on Fisheries Enforcement, signed at Ottawa on September 26, 1990. Under the Agreement, the United States and Canada agree to take measures to ensure that their nationals and vessels do not

violate the fisheries laws of the other party. This Agreement will improve enforcement of U.S. fisheries laws in the U.S. exclusive economic zone and will reduce risks to human life and safety caused by fisheries enforcement incidents on both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts.

GEORGE BUSH

The White House,
January 4, 1991.

Remarks on the United States Discussions With Iraq and a Question-and-Answer Session With Reporters

January 4, 1991

The President. Let me just make a brief statement and take a couple of questions; then I've got to be on my way.

But as you all know, Iraq has accepted my initiative for a meeting between Secretary Baker and Foreign Minister 'Aziz. The meeting will take place on Wednesday, January 9th, in Geneva. And this is a useful step.

I hope that Iraq's acceptance of the meeting indicates a growing awareness of the seriousness of the situation and a willingness to heed the international community's will as expressed in 12 United Nations Security Council resolutions. There can be no com-

promise or negotiating on the objectives contained in those U.N. resolutions. And so, it is now for Saddam Hussein to respond to the international community's plea for reason.

I took this initiative yesterday with the view of going the extra mile to achieve a peaceful solution to the current crisis in the Gulf. Secretary Baker's mission to Geneva is to convey to Iraq the gravity of the situation and the determination of the international community to overcome Iraq's aggression against Kuwait. Iraq knows what is necessary: the complete and unconditional and immediate withdrawal of all Iraqi

forces from all of Kuwait, and the restoration of the legitimate government of Kuwait.

And now let me just take a couple of questions, and I'll be on my way. Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International]?

Persian Gulf Crisis

Q. Mr. President, do you back up Baker's statement that there would be no retaliation against Iraq if it complies with the resolutions?

The President. I think it's been made clear to Iraq, not only by Secretary Baker but by others, that if they totally comply they will not be attacked. And as I have said, when they totally withdraw there still remains some problems to be solved, but they will not be under attack.

Q. Mr. President, what is in the letter you are sending to Saddam Hussein? And are you willing to have Secretary Baker go on to Baghdad if that proves an option?

The President. Well, the answer to your question is that letter has not been finalized yet. I'm working on it. I have a copy I'm carrying with me now. I want to talk to the Secretary of State some more about it. And the second part of the question is no.

Q. Why not, sir?

Q. Mr. President, you said you wanted Secretary of State Baker to speak eye to eye with Saddam Hussein. And he was willing to meet you on the 12th. You're willing to talk on the 9th. Why not wait 3 days and have that direct meeting?

The President. Because we have exhausted that option. We put forward 15 different dates. And I believe that the message that both Secretary Baker and I want to convey can be done in this matter.

Q. You said you wanted him speaking directly and not to his intermediaries so he would know you were serious.

The President. That was rejected by the Iraqi President, and so we're going to try it this way. And I hope that it will have the same result.

Q. Does 3 days mean that much, Mr. President?

The President. I hope this will have the same result.

Yes?

Q. Mr. President, in diplomacy, as you so well know, it is often the art of give and take. The Iraqis are already saying that they will talk about getting out of Kuwait, but they want to also talk in Geneva about the Palestinian problem, about Israel's occupation of the West Bank. How are you instructing Secretary Baker to handle that portion—

The President. I don't need to instruct him because he and I are in total sync on this, and so are the rest of the alliance. There will be no linkage on these two questions.

Q. If I may follow up, Mr. President: Quite apart from linkage—whether it's called linkage or not—the Iraqis want to pursue these discussions. Is there room for some discussion on these other issues?

The President. There will be no linkage on these other issues. We can't tell anybody what he can bring up at a discussion, but there will be no linkage.

Q. Mr. President, what do you make of today's French proposal in which, outside of linkage, the French are saying that they think a deal is possible if you tell the Iraqis that sometime down the road you'll discuss the Middle East? How do you react to that?

The President. I haven't seen the French proposal, so I wouldn't care to comment on it.

Q. Do you think that undercuts what you're trying to say here?

The President. No, I think Francois Mitterrand, if it has anything to do with him, has been a steadfast coalition partner. And I would want to know exactly what his feelings are on this before I commented.

Q. Mr. President, there have been several suggestions, including one by Mr. Mitterrand, that perhaps there's room for one more Security Council meeting before there is any military force used. Will you tell Perez de Cuellar that you would approve of anything like that, or do you think at this point the United Nations sanctions ought to stand with no clarification?

The President. I don't think any further U.N. action is required. I would be interested if the Secretary-General feels to the contrary. I again wouldn't comment on what President Mitterrand has suggested. Some-

body told me he responded to some questions—somebody putting the question to him—and he said, well, maybe it would have some utility. There has been no formal proposal by the French Government to its coalition partners.

Q. Mr. President, if at the meeting on the 9th there seems to be progress being made but is not finished, would you delay resorting to the use of force while these talks continue?

The President. That is a little hypothetical for me to respond, and I'm not going to take any hypothetical questions on this because I don't want to show any deviation from the coalition's determination to see these United Nations [resolutions] fully implemented.

*Republican National Committee
Chairmanship*

Q. In that case, since you couldn't take the hypothetical question, can you I ask you if you want Clayton Yeutter to head the RNC?

The President. He'd be very good, wouldn't he?

Economic Outlook

Q. Mr. President, on the economy for a second, with today's latest unemployment numbers, how serious do you think the recession is, and what specifically are you doing about it?

The President. I think the answer is that most people that have looked at the economy feel that the recession—should it be proved technically that this country is in recession—will be shallow. It will be not a deep recession. And wait and see what our proposals are for the economy in the State of the Union message.

Persian Gulf Crisis

Q. Mr. President, is Secretary Baker prepared to discuss with Tariq 'Aziz further steps on the Arab-Israeli issue—the Palestinian issue?

The President. No, I don't think he's prepared to do that.

Q. So, he'll just listen to anything he might have to say, but not—

The President. You'd have to ask him how he plans to conduct the meeting. But he

is going to conduct the meeting within the confines of the United Nations resolutions. And to do something different would be not in accord with what the coalition partners, including this one, wants to see happen.

Q. Are you more optimistic now about the chances for peace, now that there is a meeting set up?

The President. I haven't gotten pessimistic about it. But time is going on here, and the coalition remains united in every way on these U.N. resolutions. But I think you'd have to view this as a positive step, yes. I was pleased that the proposal has been accepted.

Q. You say it's a positive step. Do you think that finally Saddam Hussein is starting to get the message, or not?

The President. Well, I don't think he has gotten the message and, of course, the purpose here is that he do get the message. So, let's hope that it will work. I will say, just to be realistic about it, that there have been many meetings with Saddam Hussein, many meetings with Tariq 'Aziz, and heretofore the message has not been gotten. But Jim Baker is quite persuasive. He is a man of great conviction on this question. And I think that this represents a real opportunity for the Iraqis to understand how serious this coalition partner is about seeing these resolutions fully implemented.

Federal Reserve Board Vacancy

Q. Mr. President, do you expect to fill the Fed vacancy soon, and will it be Larry Lindsey?

The President. The answer to the question is: yes, and I don't know—two-pronged question.

Persian Gulf Crisis

Q. Mr. President, would you look without favor on a trip to Baghdad by some other members of the coalition right now, say a European representative?

The President. Look, these coalition members are free to do whatever they want. Several have gone to Baghdad, I believe. I'd have to think back to the actual members of the coalition—representatives of governments there. I know there's a French representative there right now, I believe. So,

they have to make that determination. But I am pleased with the way the EC has approached this matter, giving priority to the Baker-Aziz meeting in Geneva. I am very pleased with the comments coming out of the EC by Mr. Poos, just as I was by the comments coming out from Andreotti and De Michelis who had the Presidency—the Italians having the Presidency beforehand. So, I have no hangups on that.

Many people have tried to talk sense to the Iraqis and make them understand what they're facing. So, that's for others to determine. We're not trying to dictate to anybody what they do.

Yes, Rita [Rita Beamish, Associated Press]?

*Republican National Committee
Chairmanship*

Q. Mr. President, have you offered the job of RNC chairman to Clayton Yeutter?

The President. You're pinning me down too much, see. Because what I had planned to do is, if we had an announcement to make on that, I would sally forth and announce it. So, I don't want to respond except to reiterate that if Clayton Yeutter were asked to be chairman he would be a superb chairman.

Persian Gulf Crisis

Q. Mr. President, does your meeting tomorrow with Perez de Cuellar offer some new hope?

The President. I can't say that. I don't want to mislead the American people or the people around the world that are concerned and growing increasingly concerned about this situation. But I go back with Perez de Cuellar for a long time. We were Ambassadors at the United Nations together in 1971 or '2. And I've known him, and I know him very favorably, and I have great respect for what he has tried to do, including a trip to that area of the Middle East to make the Iraqis understand that the United Nations was serious.

I talked to him in Paris, and I am very anxious to see him and to compare notes with him. But I don't want to mislead you in answering the question. I don't have in mind any new initiative. But I do think that he stays in close touch with it. I heard

what he had to say yesterday about things he is doing privately, keeping up with the key players on this Gulf situation. And so, I think it's more of a getting together and comparing notes. And he knows of my determination and our coalition position, so I don't need to reiterate that there. But I think it's more getting together, and if some new initiative, he has it in mind, why, I'm most anxious to hear what it might be.

Q. Are you ruling out a meeting with Saddam by any American official?

The President. I certainly don't have anything of that nature in mind. As I told you, the home and home is off, and this meeting has replaced it.

Arms Request by Saudi Arabia

Q. Mr. President, isn't this a strange time to be canceling an arms deal for Saudi Arabia?

The President. I'm not canceling any arms deal for Saudi Arabia.

Q. I thought you had requested a \$7-billion package and that you're not going to go ahead with it.

The President. Well, I think the Saudi Arabians are free to make any request they want, and we would recommend it. But I think at this juncture, why, it may not be pushed forward right now. But that would not be without Saudi acquiescence, I can tell you that, because people are free to come in and make various requests, and if we think they're worthy, well, we'll push them. But they've got to satisfy themselves on the timing here.

One last one? Yes. I'm sorry. The frantic—way over—

Persian Gulf Crisis

Q. One of your key economic advisers, Michael Boskin, has said that the oil situation in the Middle East is putting a major drag on the economy. The fact that you are predicting that the recession will be short-lived—does that mean that you also expect the Gulf crisis to be short-lived and that you will resolve it quickly and decisively through military action?

The President. I wouldn't read too much into that. But one of the reasons I don't want it to drag on, one of the reasons, is

because of the adverse effect it is having not just on the United States economy but on the economies of the Third World, on the economies of the emerging democracies in Eastern Europe, on the economies of our friends in South America. This is universal.

And on my recent trip to South America I heard it over and over again. Vaclav Havel told me of a cost to his country of \$1.5 billion. I've heard indirectly from President Diouf of Senegal, and those that are concerned about the hardships that are being endured by the countries in Africa ought to hear what he has to say about what Saddam Hussein has done to his country by this adventure.

And so, this economic effect is worldwide, and yes, it does adversely affect the economy of the United States. I think it makes this decline, economic slowdown, the recession that exists in some parts of this country much more serious. And so, that would argue for a rapid conclusion to the deal.

And I see my wife telling me to get going, so thank you all very much. We'll see you all.

Note: The President spoke at 3:39 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, prior to his departure for Camp David, MD. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of State James A. Baker III; Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; President Francois Mitterrand of France; United Nations Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar de la Guerra; Secretary of Agriculture Clayton K. Yeutter; Lawrence Lindsay, Special Assistant to the President for Policy Development; Foreign Minister Jacques Poos of Luxembourg, President of the European Community; Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti and Foreign Minister Gianni De Michelis of Italy; Michael J. Boskin, Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers; President Vaclav Havel of Czechoslovakia; and President Abdou Diouf of Senegal.

Radio Address to the Nation on the Persian Gulf Crisis

January 5, 1991

As the new year begins, new challenges unfold—challenges to America and the future of our world. Simply put: 1990 saw Iraq invade and occupy Kuwait. Nineteen ninety-one will see Iraq withdraw—preferably by choice; by force, if need be. It is my most sincere hope 1991 is a year of peace. I've seen the hideous face of war and counted the costs of conflict in friends lost. I remember this all too well, and have no greater concern than the well-being of our men and women stationed in the Persian Gulf. True, their morale is sky-high. True, if they are called upon to fight the aggressors, they will do their job courageously, professionally and, in the end, decisively. There will be no more Vietnams.

But we should go the extra mile before asking our service men and women to stand in harm's way. We should, and we have. The United Nations, with the full support of the United States, has already tried to

peacefully pressure Iraq out of Kuwait, implementing economic sanctions and securing the condemnation of the world in the form of no less than 12 resolutions of the U.N. Security Council.

This week, we've taken one more step. I have offered to have Secretary of State James Baker meet with Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz in Switzerland. Yesterday, we received word that Iraq has accepted our offer to meet in Geneva. This will not be secret diplomacy at work. Secretary Baker will restate, in person, a message for Saddam Hussein: Withdraw from Kuwait unconditionally and immediately, or face the terrible consequences.

Eleven days from today, Saddam Hussein will either have met the United Nations deadline for a full and unconditional withdrawal, or he will have once again defied the civilized world. This is a deadline for Saddam Hussein to comply with the United