

Jan. 23 / Administration of George Bush, 1991

Note: The President spoke at 7:42 p.m. in the Ballroom at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Maj. Gen. Robert C. Hope, ret., president of the Reserve Officers Association; Senators Strom

Thurmond and Ted Stevens; Representative G.V. (Sonny) Montgomery; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Gen. Merrill A. McPeak, Air Force Chief of Staff; and Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom.

Exchange With Reporters

January 24, 1991

Meeting With Republican Leaders

Q. Mr. President, do you subscribe to Mr. Yeutter's suggestion that the vote against the war resolution be an issue in the next election?

The President. We're here today to talk about a wide array of issues. This is my first meeting, formal meeting, with the Republican leadership. We've been in touch on the Hill, obviously, because of the Gulf, with the Democrats and Republicans. But we're moving forward now towards a new domestic agenda that's going to require a lot of legislation, and that's what the subject matter here is. We will have a briefing on the number one issue of the day, the Gulf crisis. We'll probably be talking about events inside the Soviet Union that concern all of us, Democrats and Republican alike. And then we'll focus in on the domestic agenda. And that's the last question I'll answer.

Thank you all very much.

Secretary Yeutter. And you need a little more precision on what Mr. Yeutter said. [Laughter]

Q. What did you say?

Secretary Yeutter. We'll tell you about that later.

Q. —that you said it, Mr. Yeutter. Is that a not—is he misquoting you, sir?

Secretary Yeutter. I will have more to say on that 4 weeks from now.

Q. Why wait that long?

Q. Four weeks?

Q. Truth should be told immediately.

Note: This exchange began at 10:05 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. Secretary of Agriculture Clayton K. Yeutter was nominated to be chairman of the Republican National Committee. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks to Arab-American Leaders

January 25, 1991

Normally I don't have much to say at these meetings with the press. We do that in the press room. But I do want to thank you all for coming. I'm anxious to hear what you've discussed with Governor Sununu.

But I want to take this opportunity to tell you something that bothers me because I've heard from some and then I've read accounts that suggest Arab-Americans in this country, because of the conflict abroad, are being discriminated against, and it's causing pain in families in this country. And

there is no room for discrimination against anybody in the United States of America. And I want you to suggest to me if there are things that I can do as President to get that message out loud and clear to every Arab-American; whether he agrees with me on this war or not is unimportant.

The message is: There is no place for discrimination in the United States of America. And if there's anybody in the communities

around this country that are being hurt by it, we have got to come together and do everything we can to see that it doesn't go on.

And secondly, on the war, I know there may be some divisions of one kind or another; that's fine. But it is going well, and I am more determined than ever to bring this to a successful conclusion. And the coalition is working very well, holding together with great strength and great conviction. And I want to tell you a little more about

that now when we get into the substance of our meeting here.

But, again, thank you all for coming. Many thanks for coming back. I'm glad to have you here always.

Note: The President spoke at 10:32 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to John H. Sununu, Chief of Staff to the President. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Letter Accepting the Resignation of Clayton K. Yeutter as Secretary of Agriculture

January 25, 1991

Dear Clayton:

It is with deep regret that I accept your resignation as Secretary of Agriculture, effective March 1, 1991, although I am delighted that you will continue to be a part of my team as Chairman of the Republican Party. You have been an outstanding Secretary and an extraordinarily effective and productive member of my Administration.

As Secretary of Agriculture, you have pursued an agenda that will guarantee America's farmers continue to be second to none. Our farmers export one-third of all they produce, and you have worked tirelessly toward our mutual goal of further opening the world's markets to increase their opportunities in global trade.

The success of American agriculture is the envy of the world. It is, therefore, fitting and commendable that you and the Department of Agriculture have taken a leading and critical role in assisting Eastern Europe in its transition to a market-oriented economy.

I commend you for your tremendous effort in successfully negotiating the 1990 Farm Bill of which we can both be proud. It is a market-oriented bill that keeps our farmers competitive, keeps our rural areas environmentally sound, and lets farmers make more of their own production decisions. It also encourages crucial agricultural research and ensures a safe and wholesome

food supply for all Americans.

I am also grateful for your many other important accomplishments, including supporting the development of alternative fuels; encouraging rural economic development; increasing opportunities for minorities and women at USDA; boosting the Women, Infants and Children and other food programs for those in need; and bringing balance and good common sense to a number of delicate food safety and environmental issues.

Confident of your tremendous ability and grateful for your service to our country, I am extremely pleased to know that you will assume the chairmanship of our great Party. I know the future of the Party is secure with your strong, capable leadership. Barbara and I wish you and Jeanne the very best as we continue to work together in meeting the great challenges that lie ahead.

Warmest personal regards.

Sincerely,

GEORGE BUSH

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Dear Mr. President:

At this time I respectfully submit my resignation as Secretary of Agriculture, effective March 1, 1991, so that I may assume the chairmanship of the Republican National Committee.