

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.

During my service to you over the past two years my admiration for you and my respect for your extraordinary leadership and your exemplary human traits have only grown. These traits have all been vividly illustrated in the recent Persian Gulf crisis, which you have handled so admirably.

You have always encouraged your cabinet to pursue the challenges that most affect the American people. America's farmers have their share of challenges, but because of the groundwork laid by your market oriented policies, they are now better able to meet the future with optimism. You recognized the fundamental reforms needed in global agricultural trade when you asked me to serve as your Secretary of Agriculture. All of American agriculture is now poised to capitalize on these reforms when they come to fruition in the Uruguay Round and other negotiations. Mr. President, we are deeply grateful for your unwavering support in these efforts.

One of our major domestic accomplishments, achieved in cooperation with the Senate and House Agriculture Committees, was the 1990 Farm Bill, for it will guide our agricultural policies for the next 5 years. No farm bill in memory has been written under such complex circumstances. Not only was it necessary to project the needs of American agriculture over the ensuing 5 years, but we had to do so in the context of demanding budget realities, increasing global competition, heightened trade disputes, and the need for farmers to expand their roles as stewards of the environment. What emerged is not a perfect piece of legislation, but it is certainly a respectable work product that balances well innumerable sensitive and divergent interests.

The 1990 Farm Bill continues the market oriented approach of the 1985 Act through aggressive export assistance programs, increased research efforts, and added production flexibility for farmers. The new act also encourages tree plantings through your America the Beautiful initiative, and fosters our domestic food assistance programs that help so many needy Americans.

Reducing the federal budget deficit will bring benefits to all Americans, and particularly our nation's farmers. Although income supports will be reduced under the 1990

Deficit Control Act, our farmers will benefit greatly from the resulting lower interest rates and reduced inflation. In the long run they'll be better off, and so will future generations of farm families.

You have guided American foreign policy through two of the most tumultuous years in world history. The incredible changes in Eastern Europe have been fostered by your courageous and straight-forward approach, and we at USDA have pursued a facilitating role in the transition. From the day you asked that I lead a Presidential mission to Poland, we have sought to assist the region by providing the food, technical assistance, and training necessary to accomplish agricultural development and privatization.

On the home front, we have initiated an aggressive effort to expand opportunities for women, minorities and the disabled here at the Department of Agriculture. We now have in place a Workforce Diversity Program which will ensure that employees of the Department of Agriculture more closely reflect the composition of American society. And we've dramatically expanded our summer internship program for minority students.

From a managerial standpoint, we have developed and are implementing an Electronic Benefits Transfer Program which will improve the integrity and efficiency of our domestic food assistance programs, and we are upgrading our technology at the National Finance Center which services not only our payroll but many other agencies as well. We've become a lot more sophisticated everywhere these past 2 years.

Your Administration has faced a plethora of environmental challenges. Agriculture has been at the center of many of them, from wetlands to water quality, global change, and the protection of endangered species. We have sought to balance interests in this very sensitive area in a fair and rational way, and I believe we have done so.

Recognizing the economic and demographic hardships facing rural America, you created a Presidential Council on Rural Development. This Council met for the first time this week, and this group of outstanding leaders from business, government and academia will soon be providing you with

their counsel on how best to ensure the future growth and viability of America's rural communities.

There are many other accomplishments here at USDA, most of them not attributable to me but to the fine team we've assembled here. That team exemplifies competence, and they'll continue to serve you well after my departure. From increasing our funding of research in the areas of food safety, the environment, and U.S. competitiveness, to assisting youth at risk

in society as a whole, we have been motivated and guided by your leadership.

It has been a high privilege to have served you and the American people as Secretary of Agriculture. I now look forward with enthusiasm to the challenges and opportunities which lie ahead for the chairman of the Republican party.

Sincerely,

CLAYTON
Clayton Yeutter

Remarks on the Nomination of Edward R. Madigan To Be Secretary of Agriculture and a Question-and-Answer Session With Reporters January 25, 1991

The President. I wanted to walk in here to this news room to say that I intend to nominate Edward Madigan, a good friend and outstanding Member of the United States Congress, to be the next Secretary of Agriculture. Ed Madigan has served for 19 years in the House of Representatives. He's been an aggressive leader on all agricultural issues, serving as the ranking minority member on the House Agricultural Committee. And I've known him for a long time. I've known him as a friend, as a leader in our party, and as a man who cares deeply about the farm policies of our government and the people from agricultural America. He has walked in the shoes of Illinois farmers. He knows their needs, their concerns, and most importantly, their dreams for a future in agriculture.

These aren't easy times for the family farmer, but they are important times. And we have been—the United States—a role model for the world in the production of food. And yet, American farm families have not always enjoyed the prosperity that they deserve. I believe that Ed Madigan is the man to go to work on these problems. He stands tall, and he'll cast a big shadow in the Oval Office there as we consider America's agricultural future.

And so, I want to introduce him to you, ask him to say a few words, and then I'll be glad to take a few questions and turn

it over to Ed again for questions.

Representative Madigan. Mr. President, I want to thank you for the confidence that you have expressed in me and for this opportunity to serve you and the farmers and ranchers of America.

As you know, agriculture is the largest industry in the United States, employing nearly 20 percent of our total work force, and agriculture exports amount to nearly \$40 billion each year. So, this will be a job that touches everyone in the country.

My goal, Mr. President, is to carry out your desire that rural Americans have a strong voice in the councils of the government. Many issues have a major impact on the family farmers of America. And I'm going to work hard with you to ensure that their concerns are heard in these councils of government. Ensuring that America has an abundant and affordable and a safe food supply is a big job, but I will work hard for you and for these farmers, Mr. President, to justify that your confidence in me is warranted and that we can get this job done.

Thank you very much.

The President. Thank you, Ed, and I'm just delighted you're doing it. Big shoes to fill, and I'm glad you're taking it on.

Persian Gulf Conflict

Now, Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International].