

Jan. 25 / Administration of George Bush, 1991

Q. Agriculture. [Laughter]

The President. Education to the Agriculture Secretary. [Laughter]

Q. Is it desperation, Mr. President?

Q. Sir, couldn't the oil—Mr. President—

The President. Ed, I apologize.

Persian Gulf Conflict

Q. Sir, couldn't the oil interfere with amphibious landings, though? Doesn't that make military sense?

The President. No, it doesn't interfere with anything.

Representative Madigan. I think I'll leave with you.

Farm Bill

Q. Mr. Madigan?

The President. Agriculture.

Q. Mr. Madigan?

Representative Madigan. Yes.

Q. Sir, the farmers' wives say—women involved in farm economics say a half a million family farmers will go out of business with this new 1990 agriculture bill.

Can you do something about it? Can you take it back for reconsideration?

Representative Madigan. Well, I don't think that's true. I was a cosponsor of the 1990 farm bill. It received overwhelming support from Members of both parties in both the House and Senate. I think it's a very workable bill. The implementation of the bill hasn't even begun, and I think these are very premature remarks.

Thank you.

Note: President Bush spoke at 3:02 p.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh of the Soviet Union; Secretary of State James A. Baker III; Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev; Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom; Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu of Japan; Representative Lee H. Hamilton; and Secretary of Agriculture Clayton K. Yeutter, nominee for chairman of the Republican National Committee. Marlin Fitzwater was Press Secretary to the President.

Remarks at the Annual Convention of the National Religious Broadcasters

January 28, 1991

Thank you, President Rose, thank you, sir, and Executive Director Gustavson—all. First, let me salute your leadership of the NRB: Billy Graham and Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, James Dobson; Chuck Colson; the FCC Commissioners Sikes and Duggan and James Quello.

This marks the fifth time that I've addressed the annual convention of the National Religious Broadcasters. And once again let me say it is, for both Barbara and me, an honor to be back here.

Let me begin by congratulating you on your theme of declaring His glory to all nations. It's a theme eclipsing denominations and which reflects many of the eternal teachings in the Scripture. I speak, of course, of the teachings which uphold moral values like tolerance, compassion, faith, and

courage. They remind us that while God can live without man, man cannot live without God. His love and His justice inspire in us a yearning for faith and a compassion for the weak and oppressed, as well as the courage and conviction to oppose tyranny and injustice.

And I'm very grateful for that resolution that has just been read prior to my speaking here.

Matthew also reminds us in these times that the meek shall inherit the Earth. At home, these values imbue the policies which you and I support. Like me, you endorse adoption, not abortion. And last year you helped ensure that the options of religious-based child care will not be restricted or eliminated by the Federal Government.

And I commend your concern, your

heartfelt concern, on behalf of Americans with disabilities and your belief that students who go to school to nourish their minds should also be allowed to nourish their souls. And I have not lessened my commitment to restoring voluntary prayer in our schools.

These actions can make America a kinder and gentler place because they reaffirm the values that I spoke of earlier, values that must be central to the lives of every individual and the life of every nation. The clergyman Richard Cecil once said, "There are two classes of the wise: the men who serve God because they have found Him, and the men who seek Him because they have not found Him yet." Abroad, as in America, our task is to serve and seek wisely through the policies we pursue.

Nowhere is this more true than in the Persian Gulf where—despite protestations of Saddam Hussein—it is not Iraq against the United States, it's the regime of Saddam Hussein against the rest of the world. Saddam tried to cast this conflict as a religious war, but it has nothing to do with religion *per se*. It has, on the other hand, everything to do with what religion embodies: good versus evil, right versus wrong, human dignity and freedom versus tyranny and oppression. The war in the Gulf is not a Christian war, a Jewish war, or a Moslem war; it is a just war. And it is a war with which good will prevail.

We're told that the principles of a just war originated with classical Greek and Roman philosophers like Plato and Cicero. And later they were expounded by such Christian theologians as Ambrose, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas.

The first principle of a just war is that it support a just cause. Our cause could not be more noble. We seek Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait—completely, immediately, and without condition; the restoration of Kuwait's legitimate government; and the security and stability of the Gulf. We will see that Kuwait once again is free, that the nightmare of Iraq's occupation has ended, and that naked aggression will not be rewarded.

We seek nothing for ourselves. As I have said, U.S. forces will leave as soon as their mission is over, as soon as they are no longer

needed or desired. And let me add, we do not seek the destruction of Iraq. We have respect for the people of Iraq, for the importance of Iraq in the region. We do not want a country so destabilized that Iraq itself could be a target for aggression.

But a just war must also be declared by legitimate authority. Operation Desert Storm is supported by unprecedented United Nations solidarity; the principle of collective self-defense; 12 Security Council resolutions; and in the Gulf, 28 nations from 6 continents united, resolute that we will not waver and that Saddam's aggression will not stand.

I salute the aid—economic and military—from countries who have joined in this unprecedented effort, whose courage and sacrifice have inspired the world. We're not going it alone, but believe me, we are going to see it through.

Every war—every war—is fought for a reason. But a just war is fought for the right reasons, for moral, not selfish reasons. Let me take a moment to tell you a story, a tragic story, about a family whose two sons, 18 and 19, reportedly refused to lower the Kuwaiti flag in front of their home. For this crime, they were executed by the Iraqis. Then, unbelievably, their parents were asked to pay the price of the bullets used to kill them.

Some ask whether it's moral to use force to stop the rape, the pillage, the plunder of Kuwait. And my answer: Extraordinary diplomatic efforts having been exhausted to resolve the matter peacefully, then the use of force is moral.

A just war must be a last resort. As I have often said, we did not want war. But you all know the verse from Ecclesiastes—there is "a time for peace, a time for war." From August 2d, 1990—last summer, August 2d—to January 15, 1991—166 days—we tried to resolve this conflict. Secretary of State Jim Baker made an extraordinary effort to achieve peace: more than 200 meetings with foreign dignitaries; 10 diplomatic missions; 6 congressional appearances; over 103,000 miles traveled to talk with, among others, members of the United Nations, the Arab League, and the European Community. And sadly, Saddam Hussein rejected out

of hand every overture made by the United States and by other countries as well. He made this just war an inevitable war.

We all know that war never comes easy or cheap. War is never without the loss of innocent life. And that is war's greatest tragedy. But when a war must be fought for the greater good, it is our gravest obligation to conduct a war in proportion to the threat. And that is why we must act reasonably, humanely, and make every effort possible to keep casualties to a minimum. And we've done so. I'm very proud of our military in achieving this end.

From the very first day of the war, the allies have waged war against Saddam's military. We are doing everything possible, believe me, to avoid hurting the innocent. Saddam's response: wanton, barbaric bombing of civilian areas. America and her allies value life. We pray that Saddam Hussein will see reason. To date, his indiscriminate use of those Scud missiles—nothing more than weapons of terror, they can offer no military advantage—weapons of terror—it outraged the world what he has done.

The price of war is always high. And so, it must never, ever, be undertaken without total commitment to a successful outcome. It is only justified when victory can be achieved. I have pledged that this will not be another Vietnam. And let me reassure you here today, it won't be another Vietnam.

We are fortunate, we are very fortunate, to have in this crisis the finest armed forces ever assembled, an all-volunteer force, joined by courageous allies. And we will prevail because we have the finest soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and coastguardsmen that any nation has ever had.

But above all, we will prevail because of the support of the American people, armed with a trust in God and in the principles that make men free—people like each of you in this room. I salute Voice of Hope's live radio programming for U.S. and allied troops in the Gulf, and your Operation Desert Prayer, and worship services for our troops held by, among others, the man who over a week ago led a wonderful prayer service at Fort Myer over here across the river in Virginia, the Reverend Billy Graham.

America has always been a religious nation, perhaps never more than now. Just look at the last several weeks—churches, synagogues, mosques reporting record attendance at services; chapels packed during working hours as Americans stop in for a moment or two. Why? To pray for peace. And I know—of course, I know—that some disagree with the course that I've taken, and I have no bitterness in my heart about that at all, no anger. I am convinced that we are doing the right thing. And tolerance is a virtue, not a vice.

But with the support and prayers of so many, there can be no question in the minds of our soldiers or in the minds of our enemy about what Americans think. We know that this is a just war. And we know that, God willing, this is a war we will win. But most of all, we know that ours would not be the land of the free if it were not also the home of the brave. No one wanted war less than I did. No one is more determined to seize from battle the real peace that can offer hope, that can create a new world order.

When this war is over, the United States, its credibility and its reliability restored, will have a key leadership role in helping to bring peace to the rest of the Middle East. And I have been honored to serve as President of this great nation for 2 years now and believe more than ever that one cannot be America's President without trust in God. I cannot imagine a world, a life, without the presence of the One through whom all things are possible.

During the darkest days of the Civil War, a man we revere not merely for what he did but what he was, was asked whether he thought the Lord was on his side. And said Abraham Lincoln: "My concern is not whether God is on our side, but whether we are on God's side." My fellow Americans, I firmly believe in my heart of hearts that times will soon be on the side of peace because the world is overwhelmingly on the side of God.

Thank you for this occasion. And may God bless our great country. And please remember all of our coalition's armed forces in your prayers. Thank you, and God bless you.

Note: President Bush spoke at 9:03 a.m. in the ballroom of the Sheraton Washington Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to the following officials of the National Religious Broadcasters: Jerry Rose, president, Brandt Gustavson, executive director, and Billy Graham, Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, and

James Dobson, members of the board of directors; Charles W. Colson, president of Prison Fellowship Ministries; Alfred C. Sikes, Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, and Commissioners Ervin S. Duggan and James H. Quello; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Foreign Minister Ahmed Esmat Abdel Meguid of Egypt

January 29, 1991

May I just say welcome to the Egyptian journalists, and we're glad you're here.

I might violate a rule here. I normally don't have much to say in the Oval Office, but I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the Egyptian Government, specifically to President Mubarak and to Foreign Minister Meguid, for standing shoulder-to-shoulder with the coalition, leading it in many ways, and for the steadfast position that Egypt has taken in trying to counteract this aggression by Sad-

dam Hussein. It's been a miraculous—a strong, wonderful leadership coming out of Egypt, and we are very grateful. And I'm very happy that I can say that here from the bottom of my heart.

Thank you all very much.

Note: President Bush spoke at 1:40 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak of Egypt and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Foreign Minister Hans Van den Broek of The Netherlands

January 29, 1991

Q. Mr. President, could the third time be the charm here, sir? Could we ask you—

The President. What he doesn't understand is that I don't take questions at these photo opportunities. Of course, our guests—

The Foreign Minister. I've heard that before, Mr. President. [*Laughter*]

The President. —although our guests are more than able to. This is a new animal that's been added to our repertoire since you've come back.

The Foreign Minister. That's a very interesting one.

Q. Your aides, sir, are taking bets on whether we'll ask a question, sir. [*Laughter*]

Q. Could you answer one of ours, please,

and prove them wrong? [*Laughter*]

Q. Mr. President, what do you think about the Dutch support so far?

The President. You know, I feel very badly I didn't explain to your press corps that I don't take questions in the Oval Office. I can understand why she would ask. However, let me just tell you that one of the reasons I'm delighted to have this meeting is to be able to express to you and to Prime Minister Lubbers and others the appreciation on the American side for this outstanding cooperation. And I think we've worked very closely together. We've noted your statements with great approval and appreciation, I might say. And so, I look forward to hearing from you any further thoughts you have on the Gulf or any other