

Remarks to Central Intelligence Agency Employees in Langley, Virginia

January 8, 1993

Anything to keep from having to go back to work. I know how it is. [*Laughter*] But listen, it's the other way around. I came out here to thank you all for fantastic support for your country in so many ways. And of course, I want to thank Bob Gates, my right-hand person and trusted adviser when at the White House, and then thank him for the superb job he's done out here.

It's great to be back at Langley. I guess the last time I was out here was when Bob Gates was sworn in as DCI. I have loved this warm welcome back, wandering through the halls out there, and now this. I just can't get over it. I feel very welcome. And I want to thank each and every one of you.

Last November when Bob became Director, I noted that the men and women of the intelligence community faced a new mission in a dramatically different world. I stated then, and I'd like to just repeat it now, that we must not diminish our intelligence. There are big changes. I think the world may be perceived to be more peaceful, but in my view, the need for intelligence is as great as ever. You're doing a great job. And I will try to be a voice after I leave in a few more days for keeping this intelligence community the strongest, the best in the entire world, which it is now.

I do think there have been dramatic changes. I had a chance to visit with some of the analysts and operators upstairs. We talked about the visit that Barbara and I had to the Soviet Union—what used to be the Soviet Union; I've got to learn to say Russia now—but with Yeltsin. And I think that the work of this Agency and of the intelligence community through the years really probably will never get the credit that it deserves for effecting these changes, for your role in bringing about these changes and having Presidents hopefully make informed decisions on the world we face. But we did manage to work out with Yeltsin a treaty over there, finalize a treaty that many here in one way or another contrib-

uted to that does provide great hope for a better and safer world. So I'm very happy that we were able to conclude that treaty before I go back to Houston, Texas, on January 20th.

But we can't fool ourselves. Those who would challenge us, and we're seeing it right now as we try to decide what we should do over in Iraq, those who would challenge freedom's gains are many. We continue to face threats in the world of terrorism where a lot of good work has been the antiterrorist work. And the intelligence contributing to that out here has been fantastic. Many here are concerned about and have worked on weapons proliferation. And of course, I remain very much concerned about that. I had a little briefing on just a corner of the world on narcotics trafficking. And here the Agency and the community is doing a superb job on the intelligence for that. Economic security—I salute those who are involved in the economic side of our intelligence. And all of these things must continue, and all of these accounts must be strongly serviced.

So I come back to the point that the threats we face are real. We need more intelligence, not less, if we're to meet the challenge. We've got to have the best possible intelligence as we work for peace and decency and respect for the rule of law.

I wish all of you could have been with me on this visit to Somalia. It was very moving. And we are doing the right thing. But I'll tell you, when you say respect for the law, there isn't any there. We've got to conduct ourselves in such a way in the last days of our administration, and I'm sure the new President will feel the same way, to demonstrate America's lasting respect for law. And again, this Agency and the people, all the people here in one way or another, I think, point out the fact that we must work for peace, for decency, and respect for the rule of law.

So this is not a time to claim victory and turn our backs on the intelligence needs of

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the future. And as we face a more turbulent and unpredictable world, and as our military forces are being reduced, I just don't think that we ought to be contemplating significant reductions in the intelligence budget. I'm going to be glad to convey that on to those who follow General Scowcroft and Bob Gates and me.

So let me just say that the work you've done has always been hard. There's no question about that. I think of the operations side, particularly, but it's true on the intelligence side, everything. The dangers that we face as a country are real. I still get emotionally convinced of that when I see the stars out in the hall of this building. I just think that the Nation is very fortunate to have the service of everybody here. You don't get to sit at the head table quite as much as I have in my last incarnations, and you don't get saluted as much as perhaps others in different Departments, but you deserve a great deal of credit. So I came to say, thank you.

And now before I depart, I have one last matter that I want to do. And I would like to—I don't know—Bob, is Becky out here? Where is she? Right in front. Becky, come

on up here, and the kids as well. I want to get the Gates family here. And it gives me great pleasure, particularly surrounded by people who have worked with Bob, to honor him here as a distinguished public servant by awarding him the National Security Medal. This is the highest medal that a President can give for national security.

I have a long list here that some very thorough speechwriter wrote out about Bob Gates' accomplishments, his record, his service to his country, but I expect people here know this better than most. But you ought to know how much I trust him, admire him, and respect him. I will ask—*[applause]*

So this is the National Security Medal. And if there's ever been one that's been well deserved or well earned, it's the one I present now with great pride to Bob Gates, Director of Central Intelligence.

Is that it? We're out of here. Thank you all very much. Thanks a lot.

Note: The President spoke at 1:15 p.m. at the Central Intelligence Agency headquarters.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Alaska's Mineral Resources

January 8, 1993

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I transmit herewith the 1992 Annual Report on Alaska's Mineral Resources, as required by section 1011 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (Public Law 96-487; 16 U.S.C. 3151). This report contains pertinent public information relating to minerals in Alaska gathered by the U.S. Geological Survey, the Bureau of Mines, and other Federal agencies. This report is significant because of the importance

of the mineral and energy resources of Alaska to the future well-being of the Nation.

Sincerely,

GEORGE BUSH

Note: Identical letters were sent to Thomas S. Foley, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Dan Quayle, President of the Senate.