

Division Command Sergeant Major, 3d Infantry; Gen. John W. Hendrix, USA, Commanding General, and Com. Sgt. Maj. Andrew McFowler, Command Sergeant Major, U.S. Army Forces Command; and Maj. Gen. David Poythress, The Adjutant General of Georgia.

Remarks to the Troops at Norfolk Naval Air Station in Norfolk, Virginia

February 13, 2001

The President. Thank you all. Thank you very much. General, thank you for that kind introduction, and thank you for your service to our Nation. I'm honored to be here with the Secretary of Defense, Don Rumsfeld. I picked a good man to be the Secretary of Defense.

General Shelton, thank you for accompanying us today. Admiral Perowne, Admiral Mayer, members of the NATO staff. I want to thank the NATO Ambassadors who are here, or the Ambassadors representing NATO countries who are here. I'm honored that you took time out of your day to come down. I'm thankful that members of the congressional delegation from the Commonwealth of Virginia and other States around the Nation traveled with us. I'm particularly pleased that Senator John Warner is here, along with the former Governor of the State of Virginia, now-Senator George Allen.

I also want to recognize not only Members of the United States House of Representatives but also Ed Shrock, the newly elected United States Congressman from this district. I appreciate Ed traveling with us, as well.

Most of all, I want to thank the men and women who wear the uniform for your warm greeting, and thank you for your service to the United States of America. I also want to thank your family members who are here with you. Oftentimes, we talk about the men and women who wear the uniform; it's also important to remember the husbands and wives of those who do, as well.

Just this morning we're reminded of the risks of your duty and the sacrifices that you make. I ask you to join me in a moment of silent prayer for the dead, the wounded, and missing crew members of the 25th Infantry

Division who were involved in a training accident on Oahu this morning.

[*At this point, a moment of silence was observed.*]

The President. Amen.

We fly 19 flags here. Together, they symbolize one of the supreme achievements of the last century. NATO is the reason history records no world war III. By preserving the stability of Europe and the transatlantic community, NATO has kept the peace, and the work goes on.

When NATO was formed, the great challenge was to prevent conflict in Europe by a system of collective defense among three nations. In a message to Congress sent with the NATO Treaty, President Harry Truman explained his purpose this way: "The nations signing this treaty," he said, "share a common heritage of democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law. The security and welfare of each member of this community depend upon the security and welfare of all. None of us alone can achieve economic prosperity or military security. None of us alone can assure the continuance of freedom."

This is still true today. Our challenges have changed, and NATO is changing and growing to meet them. But the purpose of NATO remains permanent. As we have seen in the Balkans, together, united, we can detour the designs of aggression and spare the Continent from the effects of ethnic hatreds.

I'm here today with a message for America's allies. We will cooperate in the work of peace. We will consult early and candidly with our NATO Allies. We will expect them to return the same. In diplomacy, in technology, in missile defense, in fighting wars, and above all, in preventing wars, we must work as one. Transatlantic security and stability is a vital American interest, and our unity is essential for peace in the world. Nothing must ever divide us.

A little while ago I saw an example of that unity in action. From the command center here, I had a glimpse of future threats and of the technology that will be used to meet them. These new systems are impressive, and they're only a beginning in the technologies we will need to deter wars in the decades to come. Because America, NATO, and our

allies have made the world more secure, we have an opportunity today given to few nations in history to prepare for the future, to think anew.

Eleven years after the end of the cold war we are in a time of transition and testing, when it will be decided what dangers draw near or pass away, what tragedies are invited or averted. We must use this time well. We must seize this moment.

First, we must prepare our nations against the dangers of a new era. The grave threat from nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons has not gone away with the cold war. It has evolved into many separate threats, some of them harder to see and harder to answer. And the adversaries seeking these tools of terror are less predictable, more diverse. With advanced technology, we must confront the threats that come on a missile. With shared intelligence and enforcement, we must confront the threats that come in a shipping container or in a suitcase.

We have no higher priority than the defense of our people against terrorist attack. To succeed, America knows we must work with our allies. We did not prevail together in the cold war only to go our separate ways, pursuing separate plans with separate technologies.

The dangers ahead confront us all. The defenses we build must protect us all. And secondly, as you know firsthand, we must extend our peace by advancing our technology. We're witnessing a revolution in the technology of war, powers increasingly defined not by size but by mobility and swiftness. Advantage increasingly comes from information such as the three-dimensional images of simulated battle that I have just seen. Safety is gained in stealth and forces projected on the long arc of precision-guided weapons. The best way to keep the peace is to redefine war on our terms.

At my request, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld has begun a comprehensive review of the United States military, the state of our strategy, the structure of our forces, the priorities of our budget. I have given him a broad mandate to challenge the status quo as we design a new architecture for the defense of America and our allies. We will modernize some existing weapons and equip-

ment, a task we have neglected for too long, but we will do this judiciously and selectively. Our goal is to move beyond marginal improvements to harness new technologies that will support a new strategy.

We do not know yet the exact shape of our future military, but we know the direction we must begin to travel. On land, our heavy forces will be lighter; our light forces will be more lethal. All will be easier to deploy and to sustain. In the air, we will be able to strike across the world with pinpoint accuracy, using both aircraft and unmanned systems. On the oceans, we will connect information and weapons in new ways, maximizing our ability to project power over land. In space, we'll protect our network of satellites essential to the flow of our commerce and the defense of our common interests. All of this will require great effort and new spending.

The first budget I will send to Congress makes only a start. Before we make our full investment, we must know our exact priorities, and we will not know our priorities until the defense review is finished. That report will mark the beginning of a new defense agenda and a new strategic vision and will be the basis for allocating our defense resources.

As I announced yesterday, my 2002 defense budget will increase spending on the people of our military immediately with better pay, better housing, and better—[*applause*]. This need is urgent, and it's obvious. [*Laughter*] You give the best, and we owe you the best in return. My 2002 budget will also include \$2.6 billion as a downpayment on the research and development effort that lies ahead.

Yet, in our broader effort, we must put strategy first, then spending. Our defense vision will drive our defense budget, not the other way around.

Vice President Cheney often points out that the military itself is like a ship that cannot be turned around in a moment. It has a dynamic and momentum all its own, set in motion by events and decisions long ago and turning only in a wide, long arc. Change will not come easy for America's military and for our allies. But we must know our direction and make our turn. You can count on

me to lead these changes in a spirit of respect and gratitude for the military and its traditions.

Some things about America's Armed Forces must never change. In times of trouble and in times of peace, the men and women who wear the uniform are the military's greatest asset. Without your hard work and heroism, your discipline and personal courage, the finest of technologies cannot defend us.

Our NATO Allies have brought their own character and courage to the defense of liberty. We're cast together in a story of shared struggle and shared victory. Here, where three ships from England once passed on their way to Jamestown, we carry on the alliance that joined the old world and the new. We're allies, and we are friends. As long as we stand together, power will always be on the side of peace and freedom.

God bless the United States military. God bless NATO, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:25 a.m. outside the headquarters building of the NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. William F. Kernan, USA, NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic, Commander in Chief, U.S. Joint Forces Command; Gen Henry H. Shelton, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; Adm. Sir James F. Perowne, KBE, United Kingdom Navy, NATO Deputy Supreme Commander, Atlantic; and Rear Adm. Martin J. Mayer, USN, Deputy Commander in Chief, U.S. Joint Forces Command.

Exchange With Reporters Aboard Air Force One

February 13, 2001

The President. Glad to see you all again. It's been a while since I've been able to emerge out of the—are you doing okay?

Tax Cut/Legislative Agenda

Q. We wondered what your thoughts were on the retail sales jumping seven-tenths of a percentage point last month, and does that still speak to the need for a tax cut?

The President. Oh, I think it's one good statistic amongst a sea of some pretty dismal statistics. I am concerned about the economy. I strongly believe the combination of

monetary policy, fiscal policy will help ease whatever economic pain is on the horizon. I'm obviously very pleased about those numbers and hope that other numbers bear out that piece of good news.

Q. Are you going to try anything beyond what you've done already to try to get Congress to move up? I know you oppose retroactive, but they still have to pass to pass it.

The President. No, we've got to get it through, and I understand that. It's just, you know, the calendar is what it is, and we'll work with the Congress to get all our bills moving as quickly as possible. They're in charge of the timeframe, and I believe we're going to get a good hearing on our pieces of legislation as quickly as possible. But it will take a while.

U.S.S. Greenville

Q. Are you concerned about the allegations from the Japanese that the crew of the *Greenville* stood by and did not offer assistance?

The President. I called the Prime Minister today. That's why I was 3 minutes late, on the on-time administration. [Laughter] But I spoke to Prime Minister Mori. I assured him that we will do everything we can to try to recover and find—find or recover the bodies. He did not bring up that allegation to me. I have yet to hear all the facts from Secretary Rumsfeld, and I look forward to what he has to say. I am—I did assure him—I apologized on behalf of the country.

Marc Rich Pardon

Q. Are you distracted at all by the furor over the Marc Rich pardon and the former President?

The President. Not at all.

Q. Not a distraction?

The President. Not at all. I will tell you one thing, just in terms of the former President. All the allegations that they took stuff off of Air Force One is simply not true, for example. But no, I'm not the—sit down; I'll come back.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

[At this point, the President left the press area. Later, he returned.]

The President. As promised. [Laughter]