

Originally Processed With FOIA(s):

FOIA Number:

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# FOIA MARKER

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**Record Group/Collection:** George H.W. Bush Presidential Records  
**Collection/Office of Origin:** Speechwriting, White House Office of  
**Series:** Speech File Draft Files  
**Subseries:** Chron File, 1989-1993

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**OA/ID Number:** 13510  
**Folder ID Number:** 13510-012

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**Folder Title:**  
Postal Union 11/13/89 [OA 3537]

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Stack:	Row:	Section:	Shelf:	Position:
<b>G</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 13, 1989

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
TO THE UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION CONGRESS

Kennedy Center  
Washington, D.C.

10:54 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Tony Frank, our distinguished Postmaster General. Thank you all for that warm welcome. Thanks to the Chairman of this Congress, Ed Horgan; and the Dean, just introduced, Mr. Murthy; the Director General, distinguished Mr. A.C. Botto de Barros. And also I want to single out -- but I don't see him up here -- our Ambassador to the United Nations, Tom Pickering, who I know is here someplace. But in any event, it is important he be here -- one of our top officials, and he has my full confidence. And I'm pleased to have been greeted by him outside.

I also see some distinguished members of the United States Congress. And to all of you members of this Congress, welcome to the United States.

It's a pleasure for me to address the Universal Postal Union because it brings to mind so many images from our own past, from our history. From the appointment of our first Postmaster General, Benjamin Franklin, to the trails blazed by the Pony Express, the riders of the Pony Express, to the convenience of modern post offices, the story of the postal service is tied to the whole story of our country.

And the mail itself reflects the American saga. In 1814, Dolly Madison wrote her sister to describe her escape from the burning White House. Alexander Hamilton sent a farewell letter to his wife before his duel with Aaron Burr. And Harry Truman wrote to folks back home about his first night as President of the United States. And I'm sure there are similar letters in the history of every single nation assembled here today.

But only once before in our history has the United States had the honor of hosting a Congress of the U.P.U. -- the Fifth Congress, which took place in 1897 right here in Washington, D.C. At that meeting, 106 delegates from 55 countries gathered in the Renwick Gallery, which stands on Pennsylvania Avenue right across from the White House.

The world has changed much since the last time your Congress met in Washington. The delegates to that Fifth Congress had never heard of radio or television, much less computers, airplanes, space shuttles, or satellites, which now seem so commonplace.

In 1897, the employees of the U.S. Post Office Department were still sorting out the mail by hand, much as their predecessors had sorted mail in 1775, when Benjamin Franklin was appointed. Today, the United States Postal Service has made great strides in the use of automated equipment -- some capable of sorting letters at speeds of up to 35,000 pieces an hour.

The postal systems of the world, too, have changed through the advances of technology. From Hammerfest, Norway, on the Arctic Ocean to Alice Springs, Australia, in the Outback, postal administrations have consistently adapted technology to their operations to ensure that the mail always gets through.

MORE

Stories abound of amazing deliveries through the mail system. In 1916, a 40,000-ton brick building was mailed across Utah, brick by brick, because it was cheaper than the freight charges. (Laughter.) This year, 120 live bees were mailed from Hawaii to Virginia. And they were en route when the airplane crashed. The bees survived and they were delivered in a thick envelope with a note from the Sioux City, Iowa, Postmaster explaining the delay. (Laughter.) And then, of course, there was the man who once mailed himself from New York to Los Angeles on a \$500 bet. However, after the eight hour flight in a styrofoam crate, he decided to stay out of the mail in the future. (Laughter.) While these stories may be out of the ordinary, Americans are proud of the extraordinary job being done by our United States Postal Service and its 800,000 employees.

But I'm also proud of the contribution that the United States has made and continues to make to the Universal Postal Union. The first attempt at organizing a worldwide postal union was, in large part, the inspiration of Montgomery Blair, the Postmaster General during the first administration of President Lincoln, President Abraham Lincoln.

At his invitation, delegates from 15 countries met in Paris in 1863 to propose regulations governing the international mails. Historians describe national postal systems in those days as total chaos -- at least 1,200 separate postal rates worldwide. Nations were forced to maintain bilateral agreements with every country just for the exchange of the mail. Postmaster General Blair, along with many others, envisioned a universal system that would consider the entire world as one unified postal territory. Much wisdom, eloquence and effort were devoted to the creation of the Universal Postal Union. The original foundation was not the work of any one man or any one nation, but rather that of many men from many nations. The idea of universal collaboration, bold in design, daring in concept for its day, gained impetus from a world that recognized international obligations and increasing interdependence of all peoples.

Written letters conveyed through the mails, linking the peoples and the nations of this world, often convey many notable enterprises: the advancement of civilization, the expansion of commerce and trade, the promotion of industry and science, and the encouragement of peace and goodwill. In fact, I understand that here at your World Stamp Expo, a new set of Soviet stamps will be issued -- two of which portray American astronauts.

The need to communicate by mail across national frontiers -- despite the march of time and the advent of telecommunication -- has remained constant to this very day. The expansion of the world's postal systems, represented by the 170 nations of the U.P.U., staggers the imagination. For even our latest technology and instant delivery services cannot do what the postal system alone can do -- get the mail through, anywhere on Earth, to any recipient at a very small cost.

Every week, I receive up to 60,000 letters from every state in the Union and from nearly every country in the world. You can get a lot of free advice in this job. (Laughter.) Letters arrive -- from children to our oldest citizens. In a world of Faxes and fiber optics, the mails still represent the most intimate means by which the people of this nation and other nations reveal their thoughts, their hopes, and their dreams -- whether it's a young child, crayon in hand, writing a letter to Santa Claus or a soldier waiting for a special letter from home.

"Letters mingle souls," John Donne, the poet, wrote. "Letters mingle souls." So look at it this way -- yours is a noble profession, for through your efforts, the written word stirs the imagination, improves the human condition and touches the heart. So I came over here today to say to you, good luck in your endeavors over the next five weeks of this Congress. God bless you all in your work. You are, indeed -- if you look at it this way, you can be,

- 3 -

just as this magnificent symphony -- you can be catalysts for peace,  
too.

Thank you all very, very much. Thank you. (Applause.)

END

11:04 A.M. EST



Grant/Martin  
November 9, 1989  
Draft four  
A:postal

REMARKS: OPENING CEREMONY  
UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION CONGRESS  
KENNEDY CENTER/WASHINGTON D.C.  
NOVEMBER 13, 1989  
10:45 A.M.

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At his invitation, delegates from 15 countries met in Paris in 1863 to propose regulations governing the international mails. Historians describe national postal systems in those days as total chaos -- at least 1,200 separate postal rates worldwide. Nations were forced to maintain bilateral agreements with every country for the exchange of mail. Postmaster General Blair, along with many others, envisioned a universal system that would consider the entire world as one unified postal territory.

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# # #

**WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM**

DATE: 11/11/89 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: ----

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: OPENING CEREMONY OF THE UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION CONGRESS (11/9 - draft four)

SUBJECT: KENNEDY CENTER  
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1989

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCCLURE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NEWMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ROGICH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
BATES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	UNTERMAYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CARD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>ROGERS</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CICCONI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>PINKERTON</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>WINSTON</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HAGIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

The attached has been forwarded to the President.

RESPONSE:

James W. Cicconi  
Assistant to the President  
and Deputy to the Chief of Staff  
Ext. 2702



Grant/Martin  
November 9, 1989  
Draft four  
A:postal

REMARKS: OPENING CEREMONY  
UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION CONGRESS  
KENNEDY CENTER/WASHINGTON D.C.  
NOVEMBER 13, 1989  
10:45 A.M.

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# # #

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM 9039

DATE: 11/8/89 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 1:00 PM, THURS, NOV. 9

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: OPENING CEREMONY UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION CONGRESS

SUBJECT: KENNEDY CENTER/WASHINGTON, DC NOVEMBER 13, 1989

(11/8 - draft three)

Table with columns: NAME, ACTION FYI (checkboxes), ACTION (checkboxes), FYI (checkboxes). Rows include VICE PRESIDENT, SUNUNU, SCOWCROFT, DARMAN, BATES, CARD, CICCONI, DEMAREST, FITZWATER, GRAY, HAGIN, MCCLURE, NEWMAN, PORTER, ROGICH, UNTERMAYER, ROGERS, PINKERTON, WINSTON.

REMARKS:

Please provide comments/edits directly to Chriss Winston, Room 122, x2930, by 1:00 PM, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9, with a copy to my office. Thank you.

RESPONSE:

November 10, 1989

TO: CHRISS WINSTON

NSC clears, with suggestions as marked.

Brent Scowcroft (signature)

cc: James W. Cicconi

James W. Cicconi Assistant to the President and Deputy to the Chief of Staff Ext. 2702

Grant/Martin  
November 8, 1989  
Draft three  
A:postal

1989 NOV -8 PM 8:01

REMARKS: OPENING CEREMONY  
UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION CONGRESS  
KENNEDY CENTER/WASHINGTON D.C.  
NOVEMBER 13, 1989  
10:45 A.M.

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The world has changed much since the last time your Congress met in Washington. The delegates to that Fifth Congress had never heard of radio or television, much less computers, airplanes, space shuttles, or satellites, which now seem commonplace.

In 1897, the employees of the U.S. Post Office Department were still sorting mail by hand, much as their predecessors had sorted mail in 1775, when Benjamin Franklin was appointed. Today, the United States Postal Service has made great strides in the use of automated equipment -- some capable of sorting letters at speeds of up to 350,000 pieces an hour.

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

November 8, 1989

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

THROUGH:           CHRISS WINSTON *cw*  
FROM:               MARY KATE GRANT *MKG*  
SUBJECT:            Opening Ceremony of the Universal Postal  
                          Union Congress

I. SUMMARY:

On Monday, November 13, 1989, you will address the opening session of the Universal Postal Union Congress in the Kennedy Center Concert Hall. You will be introduced by Postmaster General Frank, and you will speak for 8 to 10 minutes from speechcards.

II. DISCUSSION:

The remarks you will deliver to an international audience of 1,500 people will cover the history of UPU, the value of the mail in the hi-tech age, and the importance of the written word.

The UPU Congress is convened once every five years among the highest-ranking postal officials of 170 nations. Their decisions, made over the next five weeks, will govern international mail delivery until the next Congress.

Grant/Martin  
November 9, 1989  
Draft four  
A:postal

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KENNEDY CENTER/WASHINGTON D.C.  
NOVEMBER 13, 1989  
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PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: OPENING CEREMONY  
 UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION CONGRESS  
 KENNEDY CENTER/WASHINGTON, DC  
 NOVEMBER 13, 1989

SUBJECT: \_\_\_\_\_

(11/8 - draft three)

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCCLURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NEWMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ROGICH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BATES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	UNTERMAYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CARD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ROGERS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CICCONI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PINKERTON	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	WINSTON	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HAGIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

Please provide comments/edits directly to Chriss Winston, Room 122, x2930, by 1:00 PM, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9, with a copy to my office. Thank you.

RESPONSE:

James W. Cicconi  
 Assistant to the President  
 and Deputy to the Chief of Staff  
 Ext. 2702

1989 NOV -8 PM 8:01

Grant/Martin  
November 8, 1989  
Draft three  
A:postal

REMARKS: OPENING CEREMONY  
UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION CONGRESS  
KENNEDY CENTER/WASHINGTON D.C.  
NOVEMBER 13, 1989  
10:45 A.M.

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# # #

# WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 11/8/89 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 1:00 PM, THURS, NOV. 9

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: OPENING CEREMONY  
UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION CONGRESS  
KENNEDY CENTER/WASHINGTON, DC  
NOVEMBER 13, 1989

SUBJECT: (11/8 - draft three)

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCCLURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NEWMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ROGICH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BATES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	UNTERMAYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CARD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ROGERS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CICCONI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PINKERTON	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	WINSTON	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HAGIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS: Please provide comments/edits directly to Chriss Winston, Room 122, x2930, by 1:00 PM, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9, with a copy to my office. Thank you.

RESPONSE: No comment

89 OCT 9 3:12 PM  
James W. Cicconi  
Assistant to the President  
and Deputy to the Chief of Staff  
Ext. 2702

Grant/Martin  
November 8, 1989  
Draft three  
A:postal

1989 NOV -8 PM 8:01

REMARKS: OPENING CEREMONY  
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# # #

Bill Hammon - 6156

OMB - Treasury / Postal

Grant/Martin  
November 8, 1989  
Draft three  
A:postal

Concerned remarks are too  
laudatory, as POTUS may not  
sign upcoming  
UPU treaty on  
international mail prices.

REMARKS: OPENING CEREMONY  
UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION CONGRESS  
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NOVEMBER 13, 1989  
10:45 A.M.

As per phone (comments) to MKG 11:10 AM 11/9  
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NOVEMBER 13, 1989

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REMARKS:

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RESPONSE:

*See Comments  
11/9/89  
89007SS*

James W. Cicconi  
Assistant to the President  
and Deputy to the Chief of Staff  
Ext. 2702

Grant/Martin  
November 8, 1989  
Draft three  
A:postal

1989 NOV -8 PM 8:01

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NOVEMBER 13, 1989  
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# # #

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

November 9, 1989

Memorandum to Chriss Winston

From: Jim Pinkerton 

Subject: Universal Postal Union Congress Draft Speech

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This draft is well-written but misses a real opportunity to say something important. If our purpose is simply to praise the Postal Service and the international postal system then perhaps the postal anecdotes have their place (see comments on these below). But these seem a bit trivial next to the global changes that are dragging the world and the world's postal systems into a new ere. We believe, instead, that the President will wish to seize the opportunity to take a more substantial and visionary message: to use the occasion to talk about the larger theme of the global communications revolution and the truly dramatic changes that the new technologies of information are helping to create and support.

These changes include two broad aspects: around the globe, the New Breeze of political freedom, freer expression, and a truly globalized world economy; at home, a economy based on the creation of wealth through knowledge, the dispersal and decentralizing of the centers of economic and political authority, and even, given the trend toward telecommuting, a changed, more flexible, workplace.

Not only is this "Information Age" theme more newsworthy, it is more idealistic, more upbeat, and more appealing to the public which believes, frankly, that the Postal Service is less than praiseworthy.

Here is some suggested language which conveys the upbeat, positive tone we envision:

"Today we are witnessing the development of new tools and new mechanisms that can help promote freedom, just as the magnificent institutional mechanisms which our founders devised -- our system of checks and balances, for example -- have preserved and enhanced freedom on this continent.

(more)

2-2-2

"These new tools I speak of are especially evident in the emergence of new technologies that have made the spread of information much easier and more widespread. Like any instrument, these new information technologies can be used for good or evil purposes. But by and large, they are tending to overcome the barriers to free expression around the world, and to develop new forms of useful wealth based less on material things, and more on ideas and knowledge.

"These new technologies have allowed information, ideas, and capital to be transmitted from one place in the world to another in the blink of an eye. The new technologies of communication: computers, lasers, fax machines, lasers, optical fibers, satellites, have revolutionized the communications systems of the world, not least the international postal system.

"All these wonderful new things have symbolized what has come to be known as the Information Age, a new era marked by investment in human capital and the creations of the mind: services and software, ideas and information.

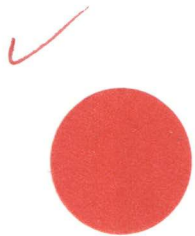
"Many of us see the new technologies in our everyday work: for example, in the personal computers that existed only in the imagination a short time ago. In many ways, the postal systems of the world will necessarily be on the cutting edge of this hopeful revolution. I believe that we in America, who are proud to have helped create this communications revolution, have an added obligation to see that the Information Age is true to its hopeful portents and fulfills its promise of greater individual freedom for all."

OTHER COMMENTS:

pg.2, para. 4, lines 7-8 We suggest dropping the story of the "midget" -- the very phrase is bound to be taken as derogatory -- in order to avoid giving offense.

###

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON



November 9, 1989

MEMORANDUM FOR CHRISS WINSTON  
DEPUTY ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT  
FOR COMMUNICATIONS

FROM: NELSON LUND *NL*  
ASSOCIATE COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Draft Presidential Remarks: Opening Ceremony --  
Universal Postal Union Congress

At the request of James W. Cicconi, Counsel's office has reviewed the captioned remarks. We have no legal objections.

We appreciate having had the opportunity to review these remarks.

cc: James W. Cicconi

89 OCT 9 12:54

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 KENNEDY CENTER/WASHINGTON, DC  
 NOVEMBER 13, 1989

SUBJECT: \_\_\_\_\_

(11/8 - draft three)

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CICCONI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PINKERTON	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	WINSTON	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HAGIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**REMARKS:**

Please provide comments/edits directly to Chriss Winston, Room 122, x2930, by 1:00 PM, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9, with a copy to my office. Thank you.

**RESPONSE:**

*OK.*  
*Bruce Bann for Dig Rogich*

James W. Cicconi  
 Assistant to the President  
 and Deputy to the Chief of Staff  
 Ext. 2702

Grant/Martin  
November 8, 1989  
Draft three  
A:postal

1989 NOV -8 PM 8:01

REMARKS: OPENING CEREMONY  
UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION CONGRESS  
KENNEDY CENTER/WASHINGTON D.C.  
NOVEMBER 13, 1989  
10:45 A.M.

Good morning. ((Acknowledgements))

Welcome to the United States. It is a pleasure to address the Universal Postal Union, because it brings to mind so many images from our history. From the appointment of our first Postmaster General, Benjamin Franklin, to the trails blazed by the riders of the Pony Express, to the convenience of modern post offices, the story of the postal service is tied to the story of our country.

And the mail itself reflects the American saga. In 1814, Dolly Madison wrote her sister to describe her escape from the burning White House. Alexander Hamilton sent a farewell letter to his wife before his duel with Aaron Burr. Harry Truman wrote the folks back home about his first night as President. I'm sure there are similar letters in the history of every nation assembled here today.

But only once before in our history has the United States had the honor of hosting a Congress of the U.P.U. -- the Fifth Congress, which took place in 1897, here in Washington, D.C. At that meeting, 106 delegates from 55 countries gathered in the Renwick Gallery, which stands on Pennsylvania Avenue across from the White House.

The world has changed much since the last time your Congress met in Washington. The delegates to that Fifth Congress had never heard of radio or television, much less computers, airplanes, space shuttles, or satellites, which now seem commonplace.

In 1897, the employees of the U.S. Post Office Department were still sorting mail by hand, much as their predecessors had sorted mail in 1775, when Benjamin Franklin was appointed. Today, the United States Postal Service has made great strides in the use of automated equipment -- some capable of sorting letters at speeds of up to 350,000 pieces an hour.

The postal systems of the world, too, have changed through the advances of technology. From Hammerfest, Norway on the Arctic Ocean to Alice Springs, Australia in the Outback, postal administrations have consistently adapted technology to their operations to ensure that the mail always gets through.

Stories abound of amazing deliveries through the mail system: In 1916, a 40,000-ton brick building was mailed across Utah, brick by brick, because it was cheaper than the freight charges. This year, 120 live bees were mailed from Hawaii to Virginia, but were en route when the airplane crashed. The bees survived, and were delivered in a thick envelope with a note from the Sioux City, Iowa, Postmaster explaining the delay. And a 50-pound midget once mailed himself from New York to Los Angeles on a \$500 bet. ((However, after the eight hour flight in a styrofoam crate, the man decided to stay out of the mail in the future.))

While these stories are out of the ordinary, Americans are proud of the extraordinary job being done by our United States Postal Service and its 800,00 employees.

But, I am also proud of the contribution that the United States has made, and continues to make, to the Universal Postal Union. The first attempt at organizing a worldwide postal union was, in large part, the inspiration of Montgomery Blair, Postmaster General during the first administration of President Abraham Lincoln.

At his invitation, delegates from 15 countries met in Paris in 1863 to propose regulations governing the international mails. Historians describe national postal systems in those days as total chaos -- at least 1,200 separate postal rates worldwide. Nations were forced to maintain bilateral agreements with every country for the exchange of mail. Postmaster General Blair, along with many others, envisioned a universal system that would consider the entire world as one unified postal territory.

Much wisdom, eloquence and effort were devoted to the creation of the Universal Postal Union. The original foundation was not the work of any one man or any one nation, but rather that of many men from many nations. The idea of universal collaboration, bold in design and daring in concept for its day, gained impetus from a world that recognized international obligations and increasing interdependence of all peoples.

Written letters conveyed through the mails, linking the peoples and the nations of this world, often convey many noble

enterprises: the advancement of civilization, the expansion of commerce and trade, the promotion of industry and science, and the encouragement of peace and good will.

I understand that here at your World Stamp Expo, a new set of Soviet stamps will be unveiled which portray American astronauts -- something I'm sure no one would have believed possible at the last U.P.U. Congress.

The need to communicate by mail across national frontiers -- despite the march of time and advent of telecommunication -- has remained constant to this very day. The expansion of the world's postal systems, represented by the 170 nations of the U.P.U., staggers the imagination. For even our latest technology and instant delivery services cannot do what the postal system alone can do: get the mail through, anywhere on earth, to any recipient at very small cost.

Every week, I receive up to 60,000 letters from every state in the Union and from nearly every country in the world. Letters arrive from children to our oldest citizens. In a world of faxes and fiber optics, the mails still represent the most intimate means by which the people of this nation and other nations reveal their thoughts, their hopes, and their dreams -- whether it's a young child, crayon in hand, writing a letter to Santa Claus ... or a soldier waiting for a special letter from home.

"Letters mingle souls," the poet John Donne wrote. Yours is a noble profession, for through your efforts, the written word stirs the imagination, improves the human condition and touches

the heart. Good luck in your endeavors over the next five weeks of this Congress. God bless you, and God bless America. Thank you.

# # #