

Originally Processed With FOIA(s):

S

FOIA Number:

S

# FOIA MARKER

**This is not a textual record. This is used as an administrative marker by the George Bush Presidential Library Staff.**

---

**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

---

**OA/ID Number:** 13642  
**Folder ID Number:** 13642-002

---

**Folder Title:**  
Utah National Guard 9/15/92  
[OA 5813]

---

Stack:	Row:	Section:	Shelf:	Position:
<b>G</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>

---

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary  
(Englewood, Colorado)

For Immediate Release

September 15, 1992

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
TO 114TH GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE  
NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES

Salt Palace Convention Center  
Salt Lake City, Utah

9:03 A.M. MDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you all so much. And may I first thank General Ensslin, for being my host here today, and all of you for that wonderful reception. And, of course, I want to single out Utah's Governor, Norm Bangerter, who's just done a superb job for this -- (applause) -- I see we have some Utah Guard folks here. And while you're clapping, Jim Hanson, a member of the United States Congress, doing a great job for our country. (Applause.)

And may I salute all the leaders of the National Guard.

I understand -- with some embarrassment, I understand that some of you may have had to go through room changes to -- (laughter) -- sorry about that. I really feel badly about that. And I apologize for any inconvenience. But I really am very, very pleased to be here with you.

I was thinking of giving a political speech, a real stemwinder with catchy sound bites, the usual biting insults. Then I got to thinking -- I'm not going to do that -- you've already sacrificed enough for your country. (Laughter and applause.)

Instead, I'd like to talk about a more serious subject -- America's national defense and really our place in the world. I firmly believe that just because we face stiff challenges at home -- and we do -- it doesn't mean that America can pull in its wings and ignore the world outside our borders. Think of the world of change that we've seen the past few years. Today, the Berlin Wall, the Warsaw Pact, the Soviet Union itself -- Soviet empire -- all are gone, swept away by the most powerful idea known to man: the undeniable desire of every individual to be free. Remember the communists' claims that history was on their side? Well, today, the "dominoes" all fall in democracy's way.

We must recognize these events for what they were: a vindication of our ideals -- but also, a victory for the men and women who fought for freedom. (Applause.) Because this triumph didn't just happen. Imperial communism didn't just fall -- it was pushed. And the National Guard was pushing every inch of the way. (Applause.)

From Concord and Lexington Green to the sands of Desert Storm, Guardsmen or their forefathers have served with distinction in every major war that America ever fought.

In August of 1990, within days of my decision to draw a line in the sand -- more than 4,000 volunteers from National Guard units all across America were activated, airborne and on the way to the Persian Gulf -- the first of 767 National

Guard units called up during Desert Storm. And when American troops rolled across the Iraqi border -- and I'll never forget that day -- the National Guard was among the very first to cross.

Here at home, when riots ripped South Central, ripped Los Angeles, the California Guard answered the call -- 2,000 in just the first six hours. You went into the streets to protect the innocent against the outlaws, to restore the peace.

Late last month, when Hurricane Andrew roared in -- again, the National Guard answered the call -- delivering 215 tons of food, water, and supplies to Miami in the first 24 hours alone, helping bring hot meals and comfort to people who had lost their homes. And Guardsmen are working right now to bring comfort to the island of Kauai.

You've all seen the pictures of people hugging the Guardsmen in their fatigues. You know one thing for sure, it wasn't to thank them for their cooking. But nevertheless -- (laughter) -- what the Guard is doing in Homestead and Hawaii and in Lafayette Parish is a God-send. It shows us the true meaning of service, of leadership, of love of country.

This is an important task for which the Guard has, and will continue to have, the primary responsibility -- and where we only turn to our active forces for back-up. Indeed, that happened in the Miami situation, as you know. It's happening now out in Kauai as well.

We need to know that the Guard is there. There for the crises at home -- there for the challenges abroad. There when a nation in need looks to you to protect life and liberty.

As all of you know, our Cold War victory means a downsizing in our national defenses -- active, Reserve and Guard alike. But we remain committed to our total force concept: the smallest standing army consistent with our national security, and yet large enough to deal with any likely threat. And for that total force policy to be effective a strong Army and Air National Guard are essential. (Applause.)

Let me be clear -- maintaining strong, capable Reserve and Guard forces will remain essential to our military strategy. You are part of the flexible forces we will need to meet our new military challenges. In fact, we can move certain units or functions from active forces to the reserves to lower costs. And at the same time, we recognize the need to be sensitive to the demands placed on individual National Guardsmen, Reservists and really to their families. As true citizen-soldiers, our Guardsmen must devote time to their families, civilian occupations or education. If we intrude upon you for every trouble, we may find it hard to keep the very best soldiers that characterize the Guard today.

I know that my opponent will be following me today. So you can expect to hear stories about my administration's cutback of the Guard. Of course, the new National Guard will be smaller -- just as our active forces are being reduced. Anyone who tells you different is simply not leveling with you. But as long as I am President of the United States, the National Guard will be well-trained and well-equipped. And as Commander-in-Chief I can assure you, we will never short-change the National Guard. (Applause.)

Yes, I'm cutting back defense spending with the end of the Cold War -- through orderly and deliberate downsizing. But don't forget the facts. My opponent proposes to cut nearly \$60 billion -- beyond which my civilian and military experts believe is responsible -- \$60 billion more than the cuts that I have proposed. Now, let me say this: You cannot cut \$60 billion more from defense and not touch the armed forces. You simply cannot do it.

MORE

We have to be very careful with our defense downsizing. At other times in our history, political leaders rushed to carve apart our military -- we remember that -- leaving only a hollow shell. And then other Americans paid a big price -- paid even with their lives for those mistakes.

The defense budget is more than a piggy bank for folks who want to get busy beating the swords into pork barrels. (Applause.) The President has got to stand up for an America second to none. And he must be able to say: America is safe -- as long as America stays strong.

I learned the value of military strength the hard way -- and some of you might identify with this -- commanders of the Guard units. I learned it the hard way -- by sending our troops into battle. And I am proud of our accomplishments -- thankful that I've been able to give the order so many Presidents longed to give, for many of our nuclear forces to "stand down" from alert. Proud to be the first President in 50 years to lead an America that's not at war, hot or cold. But the fact is: For all the great gains we've made for freedom; for all the peace of mind that we've secured for the young people in this country -- the world remains a dangerous place.

The Soviet bear may be extinct -- but there are still plenty of wolves in the world. Dictators with missiles narco terrorists trying to take over whole countries. Ethnic wars. Regional flashpoints. Madmen we can't allow to get a finger on the nuclear trigger. And you have my word on this: I will never allow a lone wolf to endanger American security. We must remain strong. (Applause.)

No, our work in the world did not end with our victory in the Cold War. Our task is to guard against the crises that haven't caught fire, the wars that are waiting to happen, the threats that will come with little or no warning. I make this promise: As long as I am President, our services will remain the best trained, the best equipped, the best led fighting forces in the world. This is the way we guarantee the peace. (Applause.)

And let me add something else that's really close to my heart. Even as we respond to the new challenges, we must never forget those who flew and fought in face of the old. The one hero we must never forget, is the hero who has never come home. And I pledge to every American family awaiting word of a loved one: We will continue to demand the fullest possible accounting for every POW and MIA. (Applause.) And we will not have normal relations with Hanoi until we are satisfied on that account. (Applause.)

I speak of these matters this morning to this very special group because they are important -- they're important to America, they're important to the world.

Like every nation, America today is challenged by a global economic transition. I have outlined my Agenda For American Renewal -- it's a comprehensive series of actions that we must take to match our military supremacy -- by remaining the world's leading export superpower and economic superpower.

Yet I hope that in our zeal to concentrate on these problems here at home, we do not forget America's unique role abroad. Other nations still look to us for leadership -- military leadership, moral leadership, and economic leadership.

And as one who has held this office for four years -- I hope that when evaluating the two men who want this job -- Americans will not ignore the President's role as Commander-in-Chief.

There's been a lot of controversy swirling around about service to country, about using influence to avoid the military. And I've read a great deal of speculation saying that I was going to come out here and use this forum to attack Governor Clinton. I want to tell you, I do feel very strongly about certain aspects of the controversy swirling around Governor Clinton, but I didn't come here to attack him. I came to defend and support the National Guard and those who serve in it. (Applause.)

Four years ago, Dan Quayle was savagely attacked and ridiculed by the national press for going into the National Guard. His critics attacked the guard as a haven for draft dodgers.

Those critics are wrong. Dan Quayle spent six years in the Indiana National Guard. (Applause.) He was not sent to Vietnam, but some of his fellow Guardsmen were -- and four of them never came back.

No candidate has ever been attacked more unmercifully than Vice President Quayle, but he stood his ground, and he answered every question calmly and with candor. He told the truth. This is service to country, and I am very proud of the Vice President, and I am very proud of the National Guard. (Applause.)

But why do these questions even matter? Why are they part of our national debate? They matter, because despite all our problems at home, we can never forget, that we ask our Presidents to lead the military -- to bear the awful authority of deciding to send your sons or daughters in harm's way.

I remember the night of Desert Storm. Barbara and I had Dr. Billy Graham over for dinner there in the White House. And our family -- we still say the blessing at night. So we said a little prayer together, enjoyed some conversation -- but my mind, I will confess, was thousands of miles away.

And after dinner -- I don't know if you can picture the White House Complex -- I went down the elevator in the White House and then walked across by the Rose Garden over to the Oval Office, waiting to hear the results of the initial strike. And I remember walking along the Rose Garden -- and thinking. I wondered -- I was wondering if our military estimates were really accurate, General McPeak having briefed me in detail -- an amazing briefing of what he was confident the Air Force could do -- wondering if it was accurate -- if our smart bombs were as smart as Tony McPeak and other experts told me they were. But mostly, I wondered how our young men and women in the sands of Kuwait felt -- and about their parents back home.

And in the months after that fateful night, I received letters from proud parents, and I tried to read as many as I could. But I lingered longest on the occasional note from the parent whose son or daughter had not returned.

This summer, I got a letter from a woman in Illinois. And her son had been lost in a helicopter accident, no body ever discovered. And on the day she received word, she received a letter from her son. And he said: "Mom and Dad, don't worry about me -- I love the Marines and I love my country." And this July, the mother wrote to me: "As a Gold Star mother it is difficult to accept my son's death, but he is alive in my heart. And I could be bitter with the military and God, but my son would never want me to." (Applause.)

I know the commanders here know I feel a little emotional about this. But you get letters like these -- and you can almost see the faces -- faces of youth and innocence. And you feel the weight of the job. Sending a son or daughter into combat, believe me, is the toughest part of the presidency.

Most Presidents never learn that lesson because, thank God, most don't have to ask others to put their lives on the line. But every President might.

And does this mean that if you have never seen the awful horror of battle -- that you can never be Commander-In-Chief? Of course not. Not at all. But it does mean, that we must hold our Presidents to the highest standard, because they might have to decide -- if our sons and daughters -- should knock early on death's door.

I hope that I am reelected President this November. And like my opponent, I believe I'm best qualified. But I wish for something else -- even more. I hope that whomever is elected to this office, at whatever time in the future, he doesn't have to face the awful decision that I had to face twice. And I hope that the next four years will pass -- indeed, I hope that the next four decades will pass -- without the blood of young Americans being shed on foreign shores.

And today, we can say this future is possible, but no one can say for sure it will happen. And so I commit to you, the proud members and families of the National Guard -- that as long as I am fortunate to hold this office, I will fight for a strong defense, for a strong America, for an America that -- despite our troubles at home -- remains the last beacon of hope and strength around the world.

The Guard has always been part of America's world leadership, and I know you'll continue to help us lead -- in this new world that we have forged together.

Thank you all, and may God bless the United States of America. Thank you very, very much. (Applause.)

END

9:23 A.M. MDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 14, 1992

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: DAN MCGROARTY *D McGroarty*

SUBJECT: REMARKS TO NATIONAL GUARD

On Tuesday, September 15 at 9 a.m., you will address approximately 4,000 members of the National Guard (from all across America) in the Salt Palace in Salt Lake City, Utah. Your remarks are 16 minutes in length and will be on teleprompter.

McGroarty  
September 14, 1992  
7:45 a.m.  
[utah]

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: UTAH NATIONAL GUARD  
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH  
SEPTEMBER 15, 1992  
2:00 P.M.

Thank you -----, for those kind words.

[Acknowledgements/local color.]

Think of the world of change we've seen. Today, the Berlin Wall / the Warsaw Pact / the Soviet empire -- even the Soviet Union itself: all are gone, swept away by the most powerful idea known to man: the undeniable desire of every individual to be free. Remember the communist's claims that history was on their side? Well, today, the "dominoes" fall in democracy's direction.

We must recognize these events for what they were: A vindication of our ideals -- but also, a victory for the men and women who fought for freedom. Because this triumph didn't just happen. Imperial communism didn't just fall -- it was pushed.

//

And the National Guard was with us every inch of the way.

From Lexington and Concord Green to the sands of Desert Storm, Guardsmen have served with distinction in every major war America's ever fought. //

In August of 1990, within hours of my decision to draw a line in the sand -- more than 2000 volunteers from Air National Guard units in Texas and Mississippi were activated, airborne and on the way to the Persian Gulf -- the first of 500 National Guard

units called up during Desert Storm. And when American troops rolled across the Iraqi border -- the National Guard led the way.

Here at home, when riots ripped Los Angeles, the California Guard answered the call: 2000 in the first 12 hours. They went into the streets to protect the innocent against the outlaws / to restore the peace. //

Late last month, when Hurricane Andrew roared in -- again, the National Guard answered the call: delivering 12 tons of food and water to Miami in the first 24 hours alone, helping bring help and hot meals and comfort to people who'd lost their homes.

You've all seen the pictures of people hugging the Guardsmen in their field fatigues. [[You know one thing, it wasn't to thank them for their cooking.]] // But what the Guard is doing in Homestead and {Louisiana parish} is a God-send. It shows us the true meaning of service. Of leadership. Of love of country.

We need to know that the Guard is there: There for the crises at home -- there for the challenges abroad. There when a nation in need looks to you protect life and liberty. //

[[SECTION ON NATIONAL GUARD LEVELS DURING ERA OF DEFENSE DOWN-SIZING. Yes, the new National Guard will be smaller. But it will be well-trained and well-equipped. As Commander-in-Chief I can assure you: We will never short-change the National Guard.]]

You may be full-time civilians -- but you know there's no such thing as part-time patriots.

I'm proud of our accomplishments -- thankful that I've been able to give the order so many Presidents longed to give, for

many of our nuclear forces to "stand down" from alert. Proud to be the first President in 50 years to lead an America that's not at war, hot or cold. / But the fact is: For all the great gains we've made for freedom; for all the peace of mind we've secured for our kids -- the world remains a dangerous place.

The Soviet bear may be extinct -- but there are still plenty of wolves in the world. Renegade rulers / outlaw regimes / Baghdad bullies. Madmen we can't allow to get a finger on the nuclear trigger. You have my word: This President will never allow a lone wolf to endanger American security. //

But today, I want to ask you to focus on a threat America's Armed Forces face from a different direction. I'm talking about the clear and present danger my opponent poses to America's military muscle. ((You may have heard the other day Bill Clinton was talking about American technology and got his missiles mixed up. Now I won't say he doesn't know a Patriot when he sees one. I'll just say: He may be a Rhodes Scholar -- but he's no rocket scientist. //))

We can and will build down our defenses to fit the new post-Cold War realities. But it makes all the difference in the world whether we pursue an orderly and deliberate downsizing - or gut defense. Bill Clinton plans to pocket the defense cuts I've proposed -- and chop away another \$60 billion on top of that. Well, I've got news: The defense budget is more than a piggy bank for folks who want to get busy beating swords into **pork barrels**. / Someone has got to stand up for an America second to

none. Someone has got to say: America is safe ... so long as America stays strong. //

But what America needs to defend itself is more than a matter of military hardware -- what we need as a nation is an allegiance to the very values America is founded on.

And that brings me to a serious question -- one of the most serious questions in this campaign.

Last week, the Governor of Arkansas said, "Nobody's has a tougher press than I've had. No candidate in history has."

No candidate in history? Somebody tell him to talk to Dan Quayle. / But here's the difference: You never hear Dan Quayle complain, and maybe that's because he's got nothing to be ashamed of.

That's not the only difference between our Vice President and the Governor of Arkansas. Dan Quayle served. // Dan Quayle spent six years in the Indiana National Guard. He wasn't sent to Vietnam, but some of his fellow guardsmen from Company D were -- and four of them never came home. //

In the last campaign, Dan Quayle and the National Guard came under a relentless media assault. But he answered every question, calmly and candidly. He told the truth. He didn't have to change his story. He defended the honor and the patriotism of the National Guard -- and he didn't back down one inch from his decision to serve his country. //

Now what about Bill Clinton? When his time came to confront the draft, he laid it all out in a letter home from Oxford. He was worried, even then, about what his draft decision might do to

a future political career -- about what he called -- and I quote -- "his political viability." / So we know he wasn't making a snap decision, he was choosing his words carefully and he was thinking long-term. And I guess that's why something else in that letter bothers me so much -- when Bill Clinton wrote -- and I quote -- about his "loathing for the military." //

Now I want to make myself clear. The question here isn't who served and who didn't. / You don't have to have served in the military to be Commander-in-Chief. Everyone knows that. /

The question is whether someone who's gone to extraordinary lengths to avoid serving -- can ask our sons and daughters to go to war.

The question is whether someone who "loathed the military" can ever be fit to command it.

But the most important question may be whether -- after all the twists and turns -even now: whether we've got the whole story. //

The issue isn't Vietnam. The issue isn't the draft. The issue here is something else altogether. It's about credibility. Above all, it's about accepting personal responsibility for your actions.

Think back to Vietnam. It was a very difficult and divisive time. People of good will -- people who believed in their country -- disagreed. Millions of young men made a choice. Some went to war. Some left the country. Some said, "Hell, no" ... and willingly went to jail. But whatever they did, the vast

majority accepted responsibility -- personal responsibility.

They made a choice -- and took the consequences. //

I may not have agreed -- but I respect anyone who made their choice -- peacefully, openly and honestly. Anyone who took their stand -- and took responsibility for their actions. //

Every one of you here today has made the choice -- the choice to serve this country as citizen-soldiers. It's a choice you can be proud of for the rest of your life. Whether you're called on to help a neighbor on your street -- or liberate a nation half a world away: You deserve your nation's heartfelt thanks. //

I want to share a story with you -- a story about a Guardsman named Scott Merrick of Oak Hill, Florida, called into duty to help the victims of Hurricane Andrew. In the midst of all the devastation, he took a moment from the task at hand -- and he took an American flag, and jammed it into place between a twisted traffic light and a storm gutter. He did it because -- as he said -- "It said a whole lot about what's happening." I share that story because I truly believe it says a lot about your spirit, your sacrifice, your service. //

In the words of the National Guard motto: You are "Always Ready -- Always There." //

Thank you for this warm Utah welcome -- and may God bless the bravest, freest nation on earth, the United States of America.

# # #

And we saw soldiers who know about honor and bravery and duty and country -- and the world-shaking power of these simple words. //

