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Veterans Briefing [Radio Address to Troops], 3/91

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 26, 1991

MEMORANDUM FOR LEIGH ANN METZGER
JOSEPH SAMORA

FROM: GREG FITCH

SUBJECT: PHONE CALL WITH ALLEN CLARK
Ass't Secy, VA

Allen Clark called back after I told his secretary, Rose, of the new times of the... and our attempt to schedule a time with the Secretary... with the Secretary, and if you could g review the eve

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

2/27/91

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TO:

Christina

FROM:

LEIGH ANN METZGER
Special Assistant to the President for
Public Liaison
Room 193 OEOP, Ext. 7142

The attached is for:

- Information
- Direct Response
- Draft Reply
- File
- Please Return By _____
- Review & Comment
- Appropriate Action
- Signature
- Other

Comments:

FYI for POTUS
remarks to Vets briefing on
3/4/91

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 26, 1991

MEMORANDUM FOR LEIGH ANN METZGER
✓ JOSEPH SAMORA

FROM: GREG FITCH
SUBJECT: PHONE CALL WITH ALLEN CLARK

Allen Clark called back after I told his secretary, Rose, of the new times of the speakers and our attempt to schedule a time with the Secretary tomorrow. He said he just talked with the Secretary, and no meeting is necessary, but would appreciate it if you could give the Secretary a call tomorrow after 1 p.m. to review the event.

He also had a couple of other items:

- 1) The Secretary wants to use some of his 20 minutes on the dias to allow other senior VA officials brief remarks. This would only cut into the Secretary's time.
- 2) Is the Secretary MC of the event? Clark is under impression that Secretary is MC and will introduce Cheney and Scrowcroft but wanted to verify. I said I would have to check on this with you.
- 3) Suggested talking points for the President's remarks:
 - o there must be an immediate return of American POWs from Iraq;
 - o the issue of accountability is important to veterans -- MIAs will not be forgotten by this Administration once war is over; and
 - o we will not forget American veterans even when times are good, and no immediate threat is present.

Clark said these topics are only suggested, but would be well received by the audience.

Grant/Simon
February 28, 1991
3 p.m. / A:VETERANS

**PRESIDENTIAL DROP-BY: VETERANS BRIEFING
ROOM 450 E.O.B.
MONDAY, MARCH 4, 1991
1:45 P.M.**

((Thank you, very much, for such a warm welcome ... I understand you've been briefed by Secretary Cheney and General Scowcroft, as well as our very able Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Ed Derwinski -- and what a tremendous job he's doing. // I'm glad to see the familiar faces from America's top veterans organizations -- (name) of the Veterans of the Foreign Wars; (name) of the Disabled American Veterans; and (name) of the American Legion. Welcome, again, to the White House.))

((You know, when I asked Governor Sununu what day I was going to speak to the veterans, he said, "March fourth." /// I replied, "Don't order me around like that. I just asked what day it was." /// Well, I got ~~that joke~~ ^{Obviously an Army joke} from an Army man. ///))

I want to begin by giving credit where credit is due. From the day that Saddam Hussein first invaded Kuwait, America's veterans stood rock-solid behind our troops, ~~because~~ ^{because} you understood what was at stake: the rule of law and the cause of freedom. You understood, ~~as you did when you answered the call to service in your time,~~ that when the forces of aggression arise, America ^{must} stand ready to do the hard work of freedom.

You understood because you've been there, ~~fighting wars we didn't want against enemies we didn't know.~~ You know how

important the support of the folks back home ^{is} ~~was~~ to our troops.

~~And now~~ Our brave men and women are coming home soon -- home to the respect and gratitude of the American people. ^{And let me tell you. // they've earned it.}

I want all of our ^{troops} ~~new~~ veterans back as soon as possible, every last one of them. We are demanding that Iraq release all coalition prisoners of war immediately. // We will hold Iraq accountable for all soldiers missing in action, ~~and we demand that they be returned home as soon as possible.~~ // ~~And finally,~~

^{and} Iraq must release the remains of all who have fallen. // We are here today to ensure that our nation always remembers those who defended her -- the heroic men and women who stood where duty required them to stand. //

~~Our country's newest veterans have achieved~~ ^{This has been a} a triumph for the 28 nations united against aggression. But as I said in my address to the nation the final night of Kuwait's liberation, this is not a time to gloat or brag, ~~but rather~~ ^{It's a time to be} proud -- proud of our troops, proud of our ^{friends who stood with us,} alliance, and proud of ^{our} the people ^{they were shown} whose strength and perseverance ensured that our success was as certain as our cause.

~~Our next cause is to ensure that our veterans return home to~~ ^{We must} ~~ensure~~ ^{We owe it to} ~~that they~~ ^{that they} ~~return home to~~ ^{in confidence and} ~~a better~~ ^{full of promise} ~~America than ever before.~~ ^{awaits us,} ~~The future awaits us, and so~~ ^{does} ~~the~~ ^{the} hard work of freedom, But the American people are up to the job, as they have always been. Let me close with the words of Abraham Lincoln, who spoke to the nation on this very day in 1865, at the end of ^{a devastating civil war.} ~~the war which brought brother against brother and tore the nation in half:~~

"With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

God bless our valiant soldiers, those who have risked their lives and those who have sacrificed their lives -- may we hold their memory sacred forever. And may God bless the United States of America.

inscribed on the ~~table~~ ^{table} of the memorial which bears his name

These words, ~~from~~ ^{of} Abraham Lincoln's Second Inaugural ~~are inscribed not far from here at in~~ ^{are inscribed not far from here at in} ~~Lincoln's~~ ^{Lincoln's} ~~in the memorial that bears his name.~~ ^{in the memorial that bears his name.}

and were a tribute to the men and women who did the hard work of freedom

They were a fitting call to honor the nation's veterans.

McNally/Simon
Feb. 28, 1991
Draft Two (A:RADIO)

91 FEB 28 PM 5:07

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: RADIO ADDRESS TO U.S. TROOPS IN THE GULF
FRIDAY, MAR. 1, 1991, 9:00 A.M.

Good morning. Never have I been more proud of our troops, or more proud to be your Commander-in-Chief. For today, amid prayers of thanks and hope, the flags of freedom once again fly high above Kuwait City. **And they're there because you and your Coalition Allies put them there. **

Kuwait is liberated. And soon hometowns across America will be welcoming back home the finest combat force ever assembled -- Army, Navy, Coast Guard, Marines, Air Force -- the brave men and women of the United States of America! \\

Saddam Hussein's dreams of an Iraqi superpower -- dominating the Middle East by force of a nuclear arsenal and an army of a million men -- threatened the future of our children and the entire world. And the world was faced with a simple choice: If Iraq could not or would not remove Saddam Hussein from power -- then we had to remove power from Saddam Hussein.

And that's exactly what you did. Throughout seven long and arduous months, the troops of 28 nations stood with you, shoulder-to-shoulder in an unprecedented partnership for peace. Today we thank you -- for the victory in Kuwait was born in the courage and resolve of free men and women. The stunning success of our troops was the result of superb training, superb planning, superb execution -- and incredible acts of bravery. \\

The Iraqi army was defeated. [40 divisions] were put out of action. They lost [almost 4,000] tanks. Almost [2,000] armored

vehicles. More than [2,000] artillery guns. And over half a million Iraqi soldiers were captured, defeated, or disarmed. You were as good as advertised -- you were indeed, "Good to go!" \\\

This is a war we did not seek and did not want. But Saddam Hussein turned a deaf ear to the voices of peace and reason. And when he began burning Kuwait and her people to the ground, the Coalition faced a moral imperative to put a stop to the atrocities in Kuwait once and for all. Boldly, bravely, you did just that -- and when the rubber met the road -- you did it in just four days. \\\

The evil Saddam has done can never be forgotten. But his power to attack his neighbors and threaten the peace of the region is today grievously reduced. He has been stripped of his capacity to project offensive military power. His regime is totally discredited, and as a threat to peace, the day of this dictator is over. And the bottom line is this: Kuwait's night of terror has ended. \\\

Thomas Jefferson said the price of freedom is eternal vigilance. We must remain vigilant to make absolutely sure the Iraqi dictator is never, ever allowed to stoke the ashes of defeat into the burning embers of aggression. The sacrifice of our troops demands nothing less. \\\

Saddam made many mistakes. But one of the biggest was to underestimate the determination of the American people and the daring of our troops. We saw in the desert what Americans have learned through 215 years of history about the difference between

democracy and dictatorship: **Soldiers who fight for freedom are more committed than soldiers who fight to remain enslaved.** \\\

Americans today are confident of our country, confident of our future, and, most of all, confident about you. We promised this would not be another Vietnam, and we kept that promise. The enemies of freedom are now on notice: **The specter of Vietnam has been buried forever in the desert sands of the Persian Gulf.** \\\

Today, the promise of spring is almost upon us, the promise of regrowth and renewal: Renewed life in Kuwait. Renewed prospects for real peace throughout the Middle East. And a renewed sense of pride and confidence here at home. **And we are committed to seeing every American, and every allied P.O.W., home soon -- home to the thanks and the respect and the love of a grateful nation.**

Yes, there remain vital tests ahead, both here and abroad. But nothing the American people can't handle. America has always accepted the challenge, paid the price, and passed the test. **On this day, our spirits are as high as our flag -- and our future is as bright as liberty's torch.** Tomorrow we dedicate ourselves anew, as Americans always have, and as Americans always will.

The first test of the new world order has been passed. The hard work of freedom awaits.

Thank you.. Congratulations. And God bless the United States of America.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

copy M.K.



DATE: March 1, 1991

TO: David Demarest

FROM: **ANDY CARD**

I've sent this to Dick Darman and Ede Holiday for comment; it may be something we might want to include in the veterans speech Monday.

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DRAFT**MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE
DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES****SUBJECT: Return of Desert Storm Participants
to Federal Civilian Employment**

Now that our Armed Forces and their Coalition partners have achieved success in meeting our military objectives in the Gulf region, we can look forward to the return of the valiant men and women who participated in Operation Desert Storm.

Many of these participants are reservists who left their regular civilian employment to join in this national effort, with great disruption to their families and their normal pursuits. In recognition of the sacrifices they have made, it is essential that their civilian employers do everything possible to ease their return to civilian life.

The Federal Government has always been a model for other employers in the protections and benefits provided for military reservists, and I am committed to ensuring that we continue to set an example for the Nation in this regard. Accordingly, I have determined that the following actions by executive departments and agencies are appropriate:

- Military reservists who are returning to civilian employment should be restored to the same jobs they left, and the legal flexibility of placement in equivalent jobs should be used only when absolutely necessary.
- Desert Storm participants who are returning to their Federal civilian employment should be afforded a week of excused absence from their duties, without charge to leave, to assist them in making the transition to civilian life.
- Federal employees who have served in the Armed Forces during this emergency and who qualify for retirement may do so without returning to their civilian employment under 5 U.S.C. 8332(g).

The Office of Personnel Management will be issuing guidance on these matters, and I urge the heads of executive departments and agencies to take all necessary action to provide for prompt implementation.

During this emergency, the Office of Personnel Management took action to ensure that reservists who had been called to active duty would be freed from the requirement to pay normal employee contributions for their civilian health benefits and

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life insurance. Current law limits this protection to one year of military absence. This time limit has not been a problem to date, but in order to ensure that no problem arises in the future, I am directing the Office of Personnel Management to seek necessary legislation to waive the time limit.

As our regular troops return, we can expect many to be seeking civilian employment in the future. I am directing the Office of Personnel Management to take such actions as are appropriate, in cooperation with departments and agencies, to ensure that Federal civilian employment opportunities are made available to the greatest extent possible to these veterans, particularly those who have become disabled as a result of their military service. This will benefit not only the veterans, but also the Federal Government, which will be able to use their skills and abilities.

Finally, we must all recognize the many contributions that have been made to our successful military operations by Federal civilian employees, both in the Department of Defense and elsewhere in the Government. I urge heads of departments and agencies to recognize these accomplishments, and to utilize fully the Federal employee incentive awards program for this purpose.

When I asked my scheduler what day I was going to speak to the veterans, she said, "March 4th." I said, "Don't order me around like that. I just asked what day it was."

or

We're meeting on the day that the Army dreads all year long:
March Fourth.

11:15

DAV

VFW

AL

VETERANS BRIEFING

3/4/a1

Derwinski

Scowcroft

Cheney

1:45 POTUS

3- 3½ pages

from

Bob