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THE PENTAGON
WEDNESDAY, AUG. 15, 1990, 11:30 A.M.

AT EASE! \ \ \ THANK YOU, SECRETARY CHENEY AND
GENERAL POWELL. AND THANK YOU, EACH OF YOU, FOR
JOINING US TODAY -- AND FOR YOUR HARD WORK IN DEFENSE
OF FREEDOM AND AMERICA EVERY DAY.

OVER THE PAST TEN DAYS YOU HAVE LAUNCHED WHAT
HISTORY WILL JUDGE AS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT
DEPLOYMENTS OF ALLIED MILITARY POWER SINCE THE SECOND
WORLD WAR.

AS I TOLD THE AMERICAN PEOPLE LAST WEEK, LET NO
ONE UNDER-ESTIMATE OUR DETERMINATION TO CONFRONT
AGGRESSION. IT'S YOU -- THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE -- WHO TURN THESE WORDS INTO
DEEDS THAT TRANSFORM HOPE AND PROMISE INTO REALITY.

I HAVE JUST RECEIVED A BRIEFING FROM SECRETARY
CHENEY AND GENERAL POWELL. OUR OBJECTIVES REMAIN
CLEAR: THE IMMEDIATE, COMPLETE AND UNCONDITIONAL
WITHDRAWAL OF ALL IRAQI FORCES FROM KUWAIT; THE
RESTORATION OF KUWAIT'S LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT; SECURITY
AND STABILITY OF SAUDI ARABIA AND THE PERSIAN GULF; AND
PROTECTION OF THE LIVES OF AMERICAN CITIZENS ABROAD.
WE WILL ACHIEVE THESE HONORABLE GOALS.

WE HAVE WORKED FOR DECADES TO DEVELOP AN INTERNATIONAL ORDER -- A COMMON CODE AND RULE OF LAW THAT PROMOTES COOPERATION IN PLACE OF CONFLICT. THIS ORDER IS IMPERFECT; WE KNOW THAT. BUT WITHOUT IT, PEACE AND FREEDOM ARE IMPOSSIBLE. \\ THE RULE OF LAW GIVES WAY TO THE LAW OF THE JUNGLE. \\ SO WHEN THE QUESTION IS ASKED: WHERE DOES AMERICA STAND? I ANSWER:

AMERICA STANDS WHERE IT ALWAYS HAS -- AGAINST
AGGRESSION.

TODAY, THE BRAVE AMERICAN AND ALLIED FORCES ARE KEEPING WATCH ALONG THE SANDS AND OFF THE SHORES OF SAUDI ARABIA. THEY ARE THERE FOR A PURPOSE: TO SERVE THE CAUSE OF JUSTICE AND FREEDOM -- A CAUSE THE WORLD SUPPORTS. \\

BUT SADDAM HUSSEIN WOULD HAVE US BELIEVE THAT HIS UNPROVOKED INVASION OF A FRIENDLY ARAB NATION IS A STRUGGLE BETWEEN ARABS AND AMERICANS. THAT IS CLEARLY FALSE. IT IS SADDAM WHO LIED TO HIS ARAB NEIGHBORS. IT IS SADDAM WHO INVADED AN ARAB STATE. IT IS SADDAM WHO NOW THREATENS THE ARAB NATION. WE, BY CONTRAST, SEEK TO ASSIST OUR ARAB FRIENDS IN THEIR HOUR OF NEED.

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SADDAM HAS CLAIMED THAT THIS IS A HOLY WAR OF ARAB AGAINST INFIDEL. THIS FROM THE MAN WHO HAS USED POISON GAS AGAINST THE MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN OF HIS OWN COUNTRY -- WHO INVADED IRAN IN A WAR THAT COST THE LIVES OF MORE THAN HALF A MILLION MUSLIMS -- AND WHO NOW PLUNDERS KUWAIT. \\

ATROCITIES HAVE BEEN COMMITTED BY SADDAM'S SOLDIERS AND HENCHMEN. THE REPORTS OUT OF KUWAIT TELL A SORDID TALE OF BRUTALITY.

SADDAM WOULD ALSO HAVE US BELIEVE THAT THIS IS A STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE "HAVES" AND THE "HAVE NOTS." BUT IRAQ IS ONE OF THE HAVES -- NEXT TO SAUDI ARABIA, IRAQ HAS THE LARGEST OIL RESERVES IN THE WORLD. BUT THANKS TO SADDAM'S RUINOUS POLICIES OF WAR AGAINST OTHER MUSLIMS, HE HAS TRANSFORMED WEALTH INTO POVERTY. SADLY, IT IS THE IRAQI PEOPLE WHO SUFFER TODAY BECAUSE OF THE RAW TERRITORIAL AMBITION OF SADDAM HUSSEIN.

OUR ACTION IN THE GULF IS NOT ABOUT RELIGION, GREED, OR CULTURAL DIFFERENCES -- AS IRAQ'S LEADER WOULD HAVE US BELIEVE. WHAT IS AT STAKE IS TRULY VITAL.

OUR ACTION IN THE GULF IS ABOUT FIGHTING AGGRESSION -- AND PRESERVING THE SOVEREIGNTY OF NATIONS. IT IS ABOUT KEEPING OUR WORD AND STANDING BY OLD FRIENDS. IT IS ABOUT OUR OWN NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS AND ENSURING THE PEACE AND STABILITY OF THE WORLD. \\\

WE ARE ALSO TALKING ABOUT MAINTAINING ACCESS TO ENERGY RESOURCES THAT ARE KEY -- NOT JUST TO THE FUNCTIONING OF THIS COUNTRY, BUT TO THE ENTIRE WORLD. OUR JOBS, OUR WAY OF LIFE, OUR OWN FREEDOM AND THE FREEDOM OF FRIENDLY COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD WOULD ALL SUFFER IF CONTROL OF THE WORLD'S GREAT OIL RESERVES FELL INTO THE HANDS OF SADDAM HUSSEIN. \\\

SO, WE HAVE MADE OUR STAND -- NOT SIMPLY TO PROTECT RESOURCES OR REAL ESTATE, BUT TO PROTECT THE FREEDOM OF NATIONS. WE ARE MAKING GOOD ON LONGSTANDING ASSURANCES TO PROTECT AND DEFEND OUR FRIENDS, WHO HAVE THE COURAGE TO STAND UP TO EVIL AND ARE ASKING FOR OUR HELP.

WE ARE STRIKING A BLOW FOR THE PRINCIPLE THAT MIGHT DOES NOT MAKE RIGHT. \\\ KUWAIT IS SMALL. BUT ONE CONQUERED NATION IS ONE TOO MANY.

A HALF-CENTURY AGO OUR NATION AND THE WORLD PAID DEARLY FOR APPEASING AN AGGRESSOR WHO SHOULD -- AND COULD -- HAVE BEEN STOPPED. WE ARE NOT ABOUT TO MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE TWICE.

TODAY, SADDAM HUSSEIN'S IRAQ HAS BEEN CUT OFF BY THE ARAB AND ISLAMIC NATIONS THAT SURROUND IT. THE ARAB LEAGUE ITSELF HAS CONDEMNED IRAQ'S AGGRESSION. WE STAND WITH THEM -- AND WE ARE NOT ALONE. SANCTIONS ARE WORKING. THE ARMIES AND AIR FORCES OF EGYPT, MOROCCO, THE UNITED KINGDOM, AND THE GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL STATES ARE SHOULDER TO SHOULDER WITH US IN SAUDI ARABIA'S DEFENSE. SHIPS OF NUMEROUS COUNTRIES ARE SAILING WITH OURS TO SEE THAT U.N. SANCTIONS -- APPROVED WITHOUT DISSENT -- ARE ENFORCED. TOGETHER WE MUST ENSURE THAT NO GOODS GET IN -- AND THAT NOT ONE DROP OF OIL GETS OUT.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE WITH US. CONGRESS IS WITH US. OUR ALLIES ARE WITH US. AND THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE ARAB PEOPLE ARE WITH US. NO ONE SHOULD DOUBT OUR STAYING POWER OR DETERMINATION.

WE ARE IN A NEW ERA -- ONE FULL OF PROMISE. BUT EVENTS OF THE PAST TWO WEEKS REMIND US THAT THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR AMERICAN LEADERSHIP, AND AMERICAN LEADERSHIP CAN NOT BE EFFECTIVE IN THE ABSENCE OF AMERICAN STRENGTH. \\\

I KNOW THAT THIS STRENGTH DOES NOT COME CHEAPLY OR EASILY. YOU PAY FOR IT EVERY DAY IN THE WORK YOU DO, IN THE SACRIFICES YOU MAKE, IN THE TIME YOU SPEND AWAY FROM YOUR FAMILIES. I AM RELYING ON YOU TO SHAPE THE FORCES OF THE FUTURE -- TO PRESERVE PEACE AND FREEDOM IN THE FACE OF NEW THREATS AND NEW DANGERS.

GENERAL POWELL TOLD ME TODAY THAT IT'S A GREAT HONOR, DURING THESE DANGEROUS TIMES, TO SERVE AS AN AMERICAN SOLDIER. I KNOW IT'S A GREAT HONOR FOR ME TO SERVE AS YOUR COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

I THANK YOU, AND I JOIN PEOPLE EVERYWHERE IN PRAYING FOR YOU, FOR THOSE IN THE FIELD, AND FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

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