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(Smith/Garmey)
8 A.M.
August 15, 1990
VFW

SUGGESTED REMARKS: VFW ADDRESS
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND
MONDAY, AUGUST 20, 1990
10 A.M.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is a privilege to join you. And a deep personal pleasure to renew old ties -- and to greet new friends. // My thanks to all of you -- but especially to Walter Hogan, doing a great job as your Commander in Chief. Following a legend like Cooper Holt isn't easy -- but you've picked a superb replacement. To both Walter and Cooper, a heart-felt salute. //

I also want to mention today's honorees. Major General James Fretland, Bud Dudley, and also somebody I've spent some time with over the years. // Any of our kids will tell you she's the five-star general in our family. Believe me, when she gives the orders, an entire division clears out. // My wife, Barbara. //

Finally, I want to thank my V.A. Secretary and fellow VFW member Ed Derwinski. // Ed's got so much going on -- but I'm especially happy to see the work he's doing to improve our veterans' hospitals. // All of us know U.S. vets deserve only the finest medical care. Here's a promise: Under the leadership of Secretary Derwinski, that's exactly what they'll receive. //

As a fellow Veteran, I want to salute the VFW on its 91st year. And all of you who embody the essence of America's national security -- an organization both growing and constantly renewing -- more than 2.1 million members strong. //

((We meet amid great challenges -- foreign and domestic. First, domestic. I have been deluged by a flood of recent inquiries. In response, I want everyone to know that Millie is fully recovered from a brief brush with lead poisoning. //

((Barbara was pretty concerned -- but as all who work with John Sununu know, it wasn't the first time the words "get the lead out" have been heard around the White House.)) //

((Second, on the foreign scene, it takes something like the Middle East to put things into perspective. When an aide burst into my office in early August and said, "There's a dictator on the rampage," I replied, "I thought the Yankees already solved the Steinbrenner problem.")) //

~~But~~ Seriously, I would like to discuss today a ~~far greater~~ ^{serious} problem: the crisis in the Persian Gulf. And let me begin by noting how the Chinese word for "crisis" is formed from two characters. // One brush-stroke stands for "danger"; the other, "opportunity." In this case, the opportunity to build real peace. The kind of peace which lasts. //

Over the past year, we have seen real peace sweep the globe from Hungary to Nicaragua, ^{from} and Panama to Poland. Evoking what American GI's fought for from Khe Sanh to Normandy: ^{to Viet N} The right to live where you want -- to work as you choose -- and to live your life without tyranny and fear. //

The Revolution of '89 was historic, but not unprecedented. It is was not unlike America's Revolution of 1776. Both showed that real peace doesn't spring, as the old song goes, through

"Wishing and hoping." // Each proved that liberty requires
 (patience, planning, and at times, personal sacrifice). And that **no**
one walks away from appeasing an aggressor. He only crawls. //

Twelve days ago, these beliefs prompted me to take action
 in the Middle East to preserve the sovereignty of Kuwait and
 deter the aggression of a renegade regime threatening the vital
 interests of the United States. I acted knowing that our cause
 might not be easy -- but would always be right. // And that
 while one should not underestimate the desperation of cowardly
 thugs -- an even greater mistake would be to underestimate
 America's commitment to freedom ^{when} ~~wherever~~ freedom is imperiled. //

Today, the outcome is not yet decided. Hard choices remain.
 But of this we are certain. We will do what it takes to preserve
 economic independence. We will not be bullied -- America will
not be deterred. // We will act to promote a common code and rule
 of law that promotes ^{cooperation} community instead of conflict. Above all,
 when some ask: **Where does America stand?** Our answer is: **We**
stand against those who would brutalize the family of Nations. //

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maim a peaceful Nation. He met, you recall, the RAF. A people
 made of iron. And Winston Churchill, who said, "I am always
ready to learn, though I do not always enjoy being taught." //

~~((Well, over the last few days, Saddam Hussein's begun to be
 taught what I meant when I told the American people, "The day of
 the dictator is over." // Though he's been a bit slow in
 getting the message. So we sent a little two-by-four we call the~~

By 1995, we estimate that our security needs can be met by an active force 25 per cent smaller than today's -- the lowest level since 1950. Yet reduction in numbers must ^{not} never mean reduction of force. // That is why we must shape our defense capabilities to changing strategic factors. And focus on these priorities: Exerting our presence in key areas. Responding effectively to crisis. Instead of reliving past contingencies, preparing for the challenges of the 1990s and beyond. //

Last week, the Commander of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Powell, spoke to this when he praised "the finest peacetime forces in the history of America." Fewer in troop strength, but restructured, purposeful, and proud. // For proof, look at how Operation Desert Shield has linked manpower with need -- through the 18th Airborne Corps, command ship LaSalle, and First Tactical Fighter Wing, and Marines in Saudi Arabia. Adroitly, and flexibly, they show that as long as the darker instincts of mankind's human nature are sustained, so must we sustain our commitment to a strong national defense. //

This brings me to the third lesson of the past twelve days -- the means to make this commitment real. The strategist Robert Thompson has said, "National strength equals / manpower plus applied resources / times will." As Desert Shield has shown: If the best way to ensure war is for democracies to be militarily weak, today's "applied resources" can help America ensure the peace that comes from democracies being militarily strong. //

that as our national defense policies have helped us gain the peace -- we need a strong defense today to maintain that peace. //

((Let me tell you a story -- occurred earlier this year -- about why I feel so strongly. I was talking to some of the young soldiers who liberated Panama -- and I asked one of them -- a medic -- about the action he'd seen. He told of withering fire - but not of what he'd done. So his commanding officer told the rest of the story. This medic had been wounded, but repeatedly endured fire to pull out other wounded -- and was awarded the Silver Star for Bravery. Listening, I thought to myself: I will never -- ever -- let Americans like this down.)) //

Ask that shy medic. He'll tell you real peace cannot withstand cuts in the military which would betray our heritage as guardians of freedom. Or his buddies. They know that victory after victory on distant battlefields deserve more than surrender by the United States Congress. // Instead, they know that real peace will require America's will, manpower, and unparelled resources -- acting not alone, but in concert, as soldiers for democracy -- fighting harder to preserve their freedom than soldiers of a dictator will fight to remain enslaved. //

This, perhaps, is the final lesson of the past twelve days. By itself, America can do much. With other allies, America can help freedom do more. // Think back to World War II, where together allies confronted an evil which embodied hell on earth. Or Korea, where United Nations forces sought to rid a people of totalitarianism. Or today, where -- increasingly -- Nations have

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joined to become ~~(policemen)~~ for peace -- a co-operative force that will not stand by while one country mugs another. //

Gone are the days when America was the only cop on the block -- responding alone to cries of help from victims of attack. // For instance, look at our oldest ally -- a bulwark of Desert Shield. I salute Great Britain for dispatching fighter planes and the destroyer HMS York to the Persian Gulf. // Look at France, Canada, and Austria. I salute those Nations. To Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Jordan, Syria, Turkey, and Egypt: The cause of human dignity is in your debt. // To the members of the U.N. Security Council: Your support of sanctions has burnished the morning star of freedom. // Finally, I salute the Soviet Union -- where Desert Shield shows how fists once clenched in animosity can become hands joined in stability and peace. Who would have thought it -- even one year ago? The U.S. and U.S.S.R. -- two Nations once allied, and now affiliated again. We know that while a new era of peace has arrived with the closing of the American-Soviet gulf, a threat to our security remains as long as self-determination is challenged in the Persian Gulf. //

too strong?

Over the past twelve days...

Over the past twelve days, we have launched what history will judge one of the most crucial deployments of allied power since World War II. ~~A period that for Saddam Hussein, has been~~ The Dirty Dozen. ~~And for America, what one might term~~ The Twelve Days of Freedom. // In my speech of two weeks ago, I demanded the complete and unconditional withdrawal of all Iraqi forces from

Kuwait and the restoration of Kuwait's legitimate government.

Today, I say: Those objectives are, and will remain, unchanged.

Will it take time? Of course. For we are engaged in a cause larger than ourselves. It is the cause of liberty -- what Americans fought, and died for, at Bunker Hill, Gettysburg, at Anzio, and Inchon. A cause perhaps best shown by a moment many of you remember -- and that I'd like to close with: D-Day -- June 6, 1944. As Dwight Eisenhower addressed the sailors, soldiers, and airmen of the Allied Expeditionary Force. //

"You are about to embark," he told them, "upon a great crusade -- the eyes of the world are upon you. The hopes and prayers of liberty-loving people everywhere march with you." And then Ike spoke this moving prayer: "Let us all beseech the blessing of almighty God, upon this great and noble undertaking."

Fellow veterans, more than half of all VFW members fought in World War II. Many of you serving -- as I did -- under Dwight David Eisenhower. // You know how America remains the hope of "liberty-loving people everywhere." Loving freedom in peacetime -- preserving it in wartime -- so that the community of Nations might build a more safe and civil world. //

For 214 years, real peace has been America's mission. It remains -- must always be -- America's goal today. Thank you for your help in achieving it, and your sacrifice and prayers. Thank you for the privilege of sharing today. And may God bless the land we so deeply love -- these United States of America.

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8/15/90
11:15

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Finally, I want to thank my V.A. Secretary and fellow VFW member Ed Derwinski. // Ed's got so much going on -- but I'm especially happy to see the work he's doing to improve our veterans' hospitals. // All of us know U.S. vets deserve only the finest medical care. Here's a promise: Under the leadership of Secretary Derwinski, that's exactly what they'll receive. //

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Like you, these heroes know that real peace doesn't spring, as the old song goes, through "Wishing and hoping." But through patience, planning, and at times, personal sacrifice. // Like

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you, they know that America must use its strength to make fragile peace strong -- and temporary peace permanent. And that **no one walks away from appeasing an agressor. He only crawls.** // They

Twelve days ago, these beliefs prompted me to take action in the Middle East to preserve the sovereignty of Kuwait and deter the aggression of a renegade regime threatening the vital interests of the United States. I acted knowing that our cause might not be easy -- but would always be right. // And that while one should not underestimate the desperation of cowardly thugs -- an even greater mistake would be to underestimate America's commitment to freedom wherever freedom is imperiled. //

Today, the outcome is not yet decided. Uncertainty lingers; hard choices remain. But of this we are certain. We will act to preserve our economic independence. We will not be bullied -- America will not be deterred. // We will act -- not for ourselves, but FOR the world -- to promote a common code and rule of law that promotes community instead of conflict. Above all, when some ask: **Where does America stand?** Our answer is: **We stand against those who use force to brutalize the family of Nations.** //

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A second lesson of the past twelve days is closely linked to the first. That is: Although the size of America's armed forces will be smaller -- thanks to less immediate threat to Europe and less threat of global war -- America's defense capacity must be, and is, "a lean, mean fighting machine."//

By 1995, we estimate that our security needs can be met by an active force 25 per cent smaller than today's -- the lowest level since 1950. Yet reduction in numbers must never mean reduction of force. // That is why we must shape our defense capabilities to changing strategic factors. And focus on these priorities: Exerting our presence in key areas. Responding effectively to crisis. Instead of reliving past contingencies, preparing for the challenges of the 1990s and beyond. //

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the best way to ensure war is for democracies to be militarily weak, today's "applied resources" can help America ensure the peace that comes from democracies being militarily strong. //

Now, I know: Some folks don't understand this. Not to be specific -- but let's look at the Congress. // Here, many still believe the more impotent we are, the safer we are. That's why they haven't supported any new weapons since the slingshot and the pea-shooter. // Too often, they react like Pavlov's Dog -- barking the mindless chant, "Cut Defense" -- no matter the facts, or the needs of our troops abroad. Fellow veterans, do you agree? [NO]. // What an enlightened crowd. // Ask our soldiers in the Middle East. They'll tell you: The big Penagon cutters are as much in tune with our vital defense needs -- and with reality -- as Roseanne Barr is with the National Anthem. //

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You know better, and so do most Americans. You know that when it comes so national defense, finishing second means finishing last. So you oppose what the House Armed Services Committee recently enacted: A \$24 billion cut from our defense budget for Fiscal Year 1991. // You know that one of Desert Shield's few weak links has been the strain imposed on the U.S. military because of insufficient airplanes and ships. So you support funds for transport planes and reserve ships. // You know that giving peace a chance does not mean taking a chance on peace: So you endorse what ultra-liberals have tried to kill: The M-X, Midgetman, B-2, and Strategic Defense Initiative. // You want arms negotiations to succeed -- knowing that an historic

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START treaty isn't feasible without these weapons systems. So recalling the adage, "Dance with the one who brung you," you know that as our national defense policies have helped us gain the peace -- we need a strong defense today to maintain that peace.//

Real peace cannot withstand cuts in the military which would betray our heritage as guardians of freedom. So I vow: Just as our military is dedicated to defending the interests of America, I am dedicated to defending the legitimate needs of our military. // Nor -- despite victory after victory on distant battlefields -- can real peace endure defeat in the United States Congress. // Instead, it requires America's will, manpower, and unparelled resources -- acting not alone, but in concert, as soldiers for democracy -- fighting harder to preserve their freedom than soldiers of a dictator will fight to remain enslaved. //

This, perhaps, is the final lesson of the past twelve days. By itself, America can do much. With other allies, America can help freedom reap more. // Think back to World War II, where together allies confronted an evil which embodied hell on earth. Or Korea, where United Nations forces sought to rid a Nation of totalitarianism. Even more today, we live in an era where most of the world has become policemen for peace -- a co-operative force that will not stand by while one country mugs another. //

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and the destroyer **HMS York** to the Persian Gulf. // Look at France, Canada, and Austria. I salute those Nations. To Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Jordan, Syria, Turkey, and Egypt: The cause of self-determination is in your debt. // To the members of the U.N. Security Council: Your support of sanctions has burnished the morning star of liberty. // Finally, let me salute the Soviet Union -- where Desert Shield shows how fists once clenched in animosity can become hands joined in stability and peace. Who would have thought it -- even one year ago? The U.S. and U.S.S.R. -- two Nations once allied, and now aligned again. We know that while a new era of peace has arrived with the closing of the American-Soviet gulf, a threat to our security remains as long as our interests are challenged in the Persian Gulf. //

Don't emphasize 'our'

focus

Over the past twelve days, we have launched what history will judge one of the most crucial deployments of allied power since World War II. A period that for Saddam Hussein, has been The Dirty Dozen. And for the America, what one might term The Twelve Days of Freedom. // Two weeks ago, I called for the complete and unconditional withdrawal of all Iraqi forces from Kuwait and the restoration of Kuwait's legitimate government.

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Today, I say: Those objectives are, and will remain, unchanged.

Will it take time? Of course it will. For we are engaged in a cause larger than ourselves. The cause of liberty -- what Americans fought, and died for, at Bunker Hill, and Gettysburg, and Anzio, and Inchon. It is a cause perhaps best shown by a moment many of you remember -- and which wrote a glorious page in

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American history. A moment I'd like to close with: D-Day -- June 6, 1944. As Dwight Eisenhower -- formerly, beloved Ike -- addressed the sailors, soldiers, and airmen of the Allied Expeditionary Force. //

"You are about to embark," he told them, "upon a great crusade -- the eyes of the world are upon you. The hopes and prayers of liberty-loving people everywhere march with you." And then Ike spoke this moving prayer: "Let us all beseech the blessing of almighty God, upon this great and noble undertaking."

Fellow veterans, more than half of all VFW members fought in World War II. Many of you serving -- as I did -- under Dwight David Eisenhower. // You know how America remains the hope of "liberty-loving people everywhere." Loving freedom in peacetime -- preserving it in wartime -- so that the community of Nations might build a more safe and civil world. //

For 214 years, real peace has been America's mission. It remains -- must always be -- America's goal today. Thank you for your help in achieving it, and for your sacrifice and prayers. Thank you for the privilege of sharing this occasion. And may God bless the land we so deeply love -- these United States of America.

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Fellow veterans, more than half of all VFW members fought in World War II. Many of you serving -- as I did -- under Dwight David Eisenhower. // You know how America remains the hope of "liberty-loving people everywhere." Half-a-century ago, the world had the chance to stop an aggressor, and missed it. I pledge to you: We will not make that mistake again. //

For 214 years, peace has been America's mission. It remains -- must always be -- America's goal today. Thank you for your help in achieving it, and your sacrifice and prayers. Thank you for the privilege of sharing today. And may God bless the land we so deeply love -- these United States of America.