

Dec. 31, 1990

Dear George, Jeb, Neil, Marvin, Doro.

I am writing this letter on the last day of 1991./

First, I can't begin to tell you how great it was to have you here at Camp David. I loved the games (the Marines are still smarting over their 1 and 2 record), I loved Christmas Day, marred only by the absence of Sam and Ellie. I loved the movies- some of 'em- I loved the laughs. Most of all, I loved seeing you together. We are ^afamily blessed; and Christmas simply reinforced all that.

I hope I didn't seem moody. I tried not to.

When I came into this job I vowed that I would never ring my hands and talk about "the loneliest job in the world" or ring my hands about the "pressures or the trials".

Having said that I have been concerned about what lies ahead. There is no 'loneliness' though because I am backed by a first rate team of knowledgeable and committed people. No President has been more blessed in this regard..

I have thought long and hard about what might have to be done.

As I write this letter at Year's end, there is still some hope that Iraq's dictator will pull out of Kuwait. I vary on this. Sometimes I think he might, at others I think he simply is too unrealistic- ~~too~~ ignorant of what he might face. I have the peace of mind that comes from knowing that we have ^{had} traded for peace. We have gone to the UN; we have formed an historic coalition; there have been diplomatic initiatives from country after country. And so, here we are a scant 16 days from a very important date- the date set by the UN for his total compliance with all UN resolutions including getting out of Kuwait- totally.

I guess what I want you to know as a father is this:

Every Human life is precious. When the question is asked "How many lives are you willing to sacrifice"- it tears at my heart. The answer, of course, is none- none at all. We have waited to give sanctions a chance, we have moved a tremendous force so as to reduce the risk to every American soldier if force has ~~to~~ be used, ^{at loss of life} but the question still lingers and piques the heart.

My mind goes back to history:

How many lives might have been saved if appeasement had given way to force earlier on in the late '30's or earliest '40's? How many Jews might have been spared the gas chambers, or how many Polish patriots might be alive today?

I look at today's crisis as "good vs. evil"... yes, it is that clear.

I know my stance must cause you a little grief from time to time; and this hurts me; but here at year's end I just wanted you to know that I feel:

- every human life is precious.. the little Iraqi kids' too.
- Principle must be adhered to- Saddam cannot profit in any way at all from his aggression and from his brutalizing the people of Kuwait.

- and sometimes in life you have to act as you think best- you can't compromise, you can't give in, ... even if your critics are loud and numerous.

So, dear kids- batten down the hatches.

Senator Inouye of Hawaii told me : Mr. President, do what you have to do.
If it is quick and successful everyone can take the credit. If it is drawn out , then be prepared for some in Congress to file impeachment papers against you"... that's what he said, and he's 100% correct.

ANd so I shall say a few more prayers, mainly for our kids in the Gulf, and I shall do what must be done, and I shall be strengthened every day by our family love which lifts me up every single day of my life.

I am the luckiest Dad in the whole wide world.

I Love you, *Happy New Year and may God Bless*
every one of you and all the in your family

Devotedly

Dads