

stood up at the General Assembly of the United Nations and stood against the resolution that so overwhelmingly passed condemning Iraq. So, there will be no linkage, put it that way.

Q. Mr. President?

*The President.* Yes, Brit [Brit Hume, ABC News].

Q. Tariq 'Aziz, on the subject of the letter, suggested that it was rude in its use of language and somehow inappropriate to a diplomatic communication. I wonder, sir, if you are willing to release the letter, now that it has run its course, apparently? And if, whether you are or not, would you characterize it for us and tell us what it said?

*The President.* Well, let me first describe why I wanted to send a letter. It has been alleged, fairly or unfairly, that those around Saddam Hussein refuse to bring him bad news or refuse to tell it to him straight. And so, I made the determination that I would write a letter that would explain as clearly and forcefully as I could exactly what the situation is that he faces. The letter was not rude. The letter was direct. And the letter did exactly what I think is necessary at this stage.

But to refuse to even pass a letter along seems to me to be just one more manifestation of the stonewalling that has taken place. We gave him 15 dates for the Secretary of State to meet with him. And he's off meeting with Mr. A and Mr. B and Mr. C and has no time for that.

So, the letter was proper—I've been around the diplomatic track for a long time—the letter was proper, it was direct, and it was what I think would have been helpful to him to show him the resolve of the rest of the world—certainly of the coalition.

In terms of releasing it, Brit, I haven't given much thought to that. It was written as a letter to him. But let me think about it. I might be willing to do it; I might not. I just don't know. If I thought it would help get the message out to him in an indirect way maybe it makes some sense, although we've been saying essentially the same thing over and over again that was in the letter.

Q. Well, Mr. President, was the refusal by the Ambassador here to even accept the

letter—was that prior to or simultaneous with the refusal of Tariq 'Aziz? I mean, is it your impression—

*The President.* I think it was after he had made that—I think it was after the letter had been rejected at the table there in Geneva. Just one more effort to try to get this direct communication to him. I'm not sure on that, but I believe that's correct.

Q. Mr. President, there are reports that you are considering a callup of up to a million reservists to reinforce the forces that are serving in the Persian Gulf. What can you tell us about that?

*The President.* I can tell you nobody has ever suggested that to me.

Q. Is there any reserve callup being contemplated at this point?

*The President.* I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll ask the Secretary of Defense to respond to that question when I get finished here.

Q. Can you tell us what your attitude now is about the use-of-force resolution that you asked for yesterday with the Congress?

*The President.* Well, I had a good meeting with certain Members of Congress. I've talked to all four leaders this afternoon—Senator Mitchell, Senator Dole, Speaker Foley, Congressman Michel—I talked to him in person here. And I'm not sure where it stands. I am anxious to see and would certainly welcome a resolution that says we are going to implement the United Nations resolutions to a tee.

I don't think it's too late to send a consolidated signal to Saddam Hussein. And I think that would be a consolidated signal. I think it would be helpful still. I've told the Congressmen back in December, as I think I told everyone in this room, that I would have welcomed a resolution back then, provided it would send this solid signal. But if it can do it today, I would welcome it.

So, I don't know exactly where it stands, but I know that there is a good feeling up there. I think people see that the American people are supportive of the policy of this country. I think they see that we have tried the diplomatic track. I hope they know that I am as committed to peace as anyone. But I hope they also know that I am firmly determined to see that this aggression not stand. And I think they're backing me in