

mand out there, from the Navy and the Marines, as well as, of course, the Air Force; I salute him—we dealt a severe setback to Saddam's nuclear ambitions. Our pinpoint attacks have put Saddam out of the nuclear bomb-building business for a long time to come. Allied aircraft enjoy air superiority, and we are using that superiority to systematically deprive Saddam of his ability to wage war effectively.

We are knocking out many of their key airfields. We're hitting their early warning radars with great success. We are severely degrading their air defenses. The main danger to allied aircraft now comes from some 20,000 antiaircraft guns in the Baghdad area alone. And let me say, I am proud of the way our aviators are carrying out their tasks. In head-to-head combat, our jet fighters have destroyed 19 Iraqi jets. And they have hit, at most, one American jet in aerial combat.

Step by step, we are making progress towards the objectives that have guided the world's response since August 2d: the liberation of Kuwait and the restoration of stability and security in the Gulf. And there can be no doubt: Operation Desert Storm is working. There can be no pause now that Saddam has forced the world into war. We will stay the course—and we will succeed—all the way.

As I said on the 3d day of this campaign, war is never cheap or easy. There will be problems. There will be setbacks. There will be more sacrifices. But let me say I have every reason to be very pleased with our progress to date.

Saddam has sickened the world with his use of Scud missiles—those inaccurate bombs that indiscriminately strike cities and innocent civilians in both Israel and Saudi Arabia. These weapons are nothing more than tools of terror, and they do nothing but strengthen our resolve to act against a dictator unmoved by human decency.

Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom said it well yesterday. "Saddam," he said, "may yet become a target of his own people. It is perfectly clear that this man is amoral. He takes hostages, he attacks population centers, he threatens prisoners. He's a man without pity, and whatever his fate may be," said Prime Minister Major,

"I, for one, will not weep for him." No one should weep for this tyrant when he is brought to justice—no one, anywhere in the world.

I watched, along with all of you, that repulsive parade of American airmen on Iraqi television—one more proof of the savagery of Saddam. But I knew as they read their prepared statements criticizing this country that those were false words forced on them by their captors. I saw one of General McPeak's kids—one American pilot yesterday was asked why he was sure the pilots were coerced, their statements false. And he said, "I know that because these guys are Americans." He could well have said the same thing about the other pilots being held—from Britain, Italy, and Kuwait—all men of courage and valor, too.

Tonight, I repeat my pledge to you and to all Americans: This will not be another Vietnam. Never again will our Armed Forces be sent out to do a job with one hand tied behind their back. They will continue to have the support they need to get the job done, get it done quickly, and with as little loss of life as possible. And that support is not just military, but moral—measured in the support our servicemen and women receive from every one of us here at home. When the brave men and women of Desert Storm return home, they will return to the love and respect of a grateful nation. And with that in mind, I'd like to say to every family of every man or woman serving overseas: We're thinking of you, and you are in our prayers.

And that is where I will close—with the aim of protecting American lives and seeing the heroes of Desert Storm return home safe and sound. All life is precious, whether it's the life of an American pilot or an Iraqi child. And yet, if life is precious, so, too, are the living principles of liberty and peace—principles that all Americans cherish above all others, principles that you and your comrades on duty tonight have pledged to defend.

Thank you for this warm welcome tonight and for your strong support. And may God bless the United States of America. Thank you very, very much.