

they have to make that determination. But I am pleased with the way the EC has approached this matter, giving priority to the Baker-'Aziz meeting in Geneva. I am very pleased with the comments coming out of the EC by Mr. Poos, just as I was by the comments coming out from Andreotti and De Michelis who had the Presidency—the Italians having the Presidency beforehand. So, I have no hangups on that.

Many people have tried to talk sense to the Iraqis and make them understand what they're facing. So, that's for others to determine. We're not trying to dictate to anybody what they do.

Yes, Rita [Rita Beamish, Associated Press]?

*Republican National Committee  
Chairmanship*

*Q.* Mr. President, have you offered the job of RNC chairman to Clayton Yeutter?

*The President.* You're pinning me down too much, see. Because what I had planned to do is, if we had an announcement to make on that, I would sally forth and announce it. So, I don't want to respond except to reiterate that if Clayton Yeutter were asked to be chairman he would be a superb chairman.

*Persian Gulf Crisis*

*Q.* Mr. President, does your meeting tomorrow with Perez de Cuellar offer some new hope?

*The President.* I can't say that. I don't want to mislead the American people or the people around the world that are concerned and growing increasingly concerned about this situation. But I go back with Perez de Cuellar for a long time. We were Ambassadors at the United Nations together in 1971 or '2. And I've known him, and I know him very favorably, and I have great respect for what he has tried to do, including a trip to that area of the Middle East to make the Iraqis understand that the United Nations was serious.

I talked to him in Paris, and I am very anxious to see him and to compare notes with him. But I don't want to mislead you in answering the question. I don't have in mind any new initiative. But I do think that he stays in close touch with it. I heard

what he had to say yesterday about things he is doing privately, keeping up with the key players on this Gulf situation. And so, I think it's more of a getting together and comparing notes. And he knows of my determination and our coalition position, so I don't need to reiterate that there. But I think it's more getting together, and if some new initiative, he has it in mind, why, I'm most anxious to hear what it might be.

*Q.* Are you ruling out a meeting with Saddam by any American official?

*The President.* I certainly don't have anything of that nature in mind. As I told you, the home and home is off, and this meeting has replaced it.

*Arms Request by Saudi Arabia*

*Q.* Mr. President, isn't this a strange time to be canceling an arms deal for Saudi Arabia?

*The President.* I'm not canceling any arms deal for Saudi Arabia.

*Q.* I thought you had requested a \$7-billion package and that you're not going to go ahead with it.

*The President.* Well, I think the Saudi Arabians are free to make any request they want, and we would recommend it. But I think at this juncture, why, it may not be pushed forward right now. But that would not be without Saudi acquiescence, I can tell you that, because people are free to come in and make various requests, and if we think they're worthy, well, we'll push them. But they've got to satisfy themselves on the timing here.

One last one? Yes. I'm sorry. The frantic—way over—

*Persian Gulf Crisis*

*Q.* One of your key economic advisers, Michael Boskin, has said that the oil situation in the Middle East is putting a major drag on the economy. The fact that you are predicting that the recession will be short-lived—does that mean that you also expect the Gulf crisis to be short-lived and that you will resolve it quickly and decisively through military action?

*The President.* I wouldn't read too much into that. But one of the reasons I don't want it to drag on, one of the reasons, is