



February 8, 1993

The Honorable George Bush
Former President of the United States
10000 Memorial Drive, Suite 900
Houston, TX 77024

Dear President Bush,

Shortly after the election I wrote to you to re-confirm my pride in you personally and in your administration as well. You responded very quickly with a note that I shall always treasure.

Now, at greater ease, it is my wish to say a little more. Your record of service is much longer than mine and your responsibilities were more important. However, throughout twenty-eight years and in my own way, I have "walked in your shoes". I have my personal, dearly held views on what a democracy is all about and how truly endowed we are to be an American. I have had the good fortune to have met five presidents and have comparatively judged their stewardship.

Against that backdrop, my great pride in you and your performance as my President I hope takes on greater weight in your mind. Because you were there as our guiding light I feel great comfort as to our future.

I am certain that you were stunned by the result of the election. If I were you I would have thought of the very, very significant and controversial issues you faced that so heavily affected America and the world. My reaction would have been "don't they know that we are much better off now as a nation than before".

If, indeed, I am close to the mark, let me tell you a story that may help.

During my eight years as Governor we went through a very deep recession. I called half of all the special sessions in our history to re-balance our budget. I cut government costs and raised revenue. At the same time I reformed government more than at any time in our 120 years history.

Also during that period I received more and more criticism from the business community that "government ought to be run like a

business". It was being run that way like never before, but they continued to harp.

Late in my administration my Chief of Staff came back from a meeting with that community with a litany of complaints.

Mr. President, that was my lowest ebb as a Governor. It hung very heavy in my mind all afternoon and into the evening.


Suddenly, I said to myself, "I am not a failure. I know that I did what they had been expecting of government and doing it in spades. They might not know it, but I do". Then I came to peace with myself and have never doubted since.

You are not a failure. Instead you were a glorious success! You made our country safe and you guided it to prosperity. They just do not know it---yet! History will prove you were an exalted success.

This letter is about three times longer than most I have written in my life. However, it is important to me to let you know how I feel about you.

You and Mrs. Bush have my warmest best wishes. It is my sincere hope that we will see each other again.

Sincerely,



Victor Atiyeh