

(NSC/Bakshian/RR)

March 22, 1983

4:00 p.m.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: DEFENSE

My fellow Americans:

Thank you for sharing your time with me tonight. The subject I want to discuss with you -- peace and national security -- is both timely and important -- timely because I have reached a decision which offers a new hope for our children in the 21st century, and important because there is a very big decision that you must make for yourselves. This subject involves the most basic duty that any President and any people share -- the duty to protect and strengthen the peace. ~~And it's about the cost of protecting that peace.~~

At the beginning of this year, I submitted to the Congress a defense budget which reflects my best judgment, and the best understanding of the experts and specialists who advise me, about what we and our allies must do to protect our Nation and theirs in the years ahead.

That budget is much more than a long list of numbers, for behind all the numbers lies America's ability to prevent the greatest of human tragedies and preserve our free way of life in a sometimes dangerous world. It is part of a careful, long-term plan to make America strong again after too many years of neglect and mistakes. Our efforts to rebuild America's defenses and strengthen the peace began 2 years ago, when we requested a major increase in the defense program. Since then, the amount of those increases <sup>we first proposed</sup> has been reduced by half. <sup>due to a number of improvements in management</sup> The budget request that is now before the Congress has been trimmed to the limits of safety.

It simply cannot be cut further without seriously endangering the security of the Nation. The choice is up to the men and women you have elected to the Congress -- and that means the choice is up to you.

Tonight I want to explain to you what this defense debate is all about, and why I am convinced that the budget now before the Congress is necessary, responsible, and deserving of your support. And I want to offer hope for the future.

But first I want to say what the defense debate is not about. It is not about spending arithmetic. I know that in the last few weeks you've been bombarded with numbers and percentages. Some say we need only a 5 percent increase in defense spending. Others say a 3 percent increase would do it. Still others toss around figures like a \$25 billion defense cut this year and a \$40 billion cut next year. The trouble with these numbers is that they tell us little about the kind of defense program America needs, or the benefits in security and freedom that our defense effort buys for us.

What seems to have been lost in all this debate is the simple truth of how a defense budget is arrived at. It isn't done by deciding to spend a certain number of dollars. Those loud voices that are occasionally heard charging that Government is trying to solve a security problem by throwing money at it are nothing more than noise based on ignorance.

We start by considering what must be done to maintain peace, and review all the possible threats against our security. Then a strategy for strengthening peace and defending against those

threats must be agreed upon. And finally our defense establishment must be evaluated to see what is necessary to protect against any or all of the potential threats. The cost of achieving these ends is totaled up and the result is the budget for national defense.

There is no logical way you can say, let's spend X billion dollars less. You can only say, which part of our defense measures do we believe we can do without and still have security against all contingencies? Anyone in the Congress who advocates a percentage or specific dollar cut in defense spending should be made to say what part of our defenses he would eliminate and he should be candid enough to acknowledge that his cuts mean cutting our commitments to allies or inviting greater risk or both.

The defense policy of the United States is based on a simple premise, one that we have held for a long time: The United States does not start fights. We will never be an aggressor. We maintain our strength to deter and defend against aggression.

What this means is that we design our defense program not to further ambitions, but to counter threats to ourselves and to our allies.

Since the dawn of the atomic age, we have sought to reduce the risk of war first and foremost by seeking genuine arms control and, second, by maintaining a strong deterrent.

"Deterrence" means simply this: Making sure any adversary who thinks about attacking the United States, or our allies, or our vital interests, concludes that he could never win. Once he

~~Now this is~~ — Insert Page 4 —

Now this is not to say the Soviet Union is planning to make war on us. Nor do I believe a war is inevitable — quite the contrary. But what must be recognized is that our society is based on being prepared to meet any contingency.

There was a time when we depended on coastal forts <sup>and</sup> ~~to~~ artillery battles became with the weaponry of that day any attack would have to come by sea. This is a different world and our defenses must be based on recognition <sup>and</sup> awareness of the weaponry possessed by all nations.

We can't afford to believe we will never be threatened. There have been <sup>two</sup> ~~2~~ world wars in my lifetime. We didn't start them <sup>and</sup> I indeed did everything we could to avoid being drawn into them. We were ill-prepared for both.

For 20 years the Soviet Union has been ~~accumulating~~ accumulating enormous military might. They didn't stop when their forces exceeded all requirements of a legitimate defensive capability. And they haven't stopped now.

understands that, he won't attack. We maintain the peace through our strength, whereas weakness only invites aggression.

This strategy of deterrence has not changed. It still works. But what it takes to maintain deterrence has changed. It took one kind of military force to deter an attack when we had far more nuclear weapons than any other power; it takes another kind now that the Soviets, for example, have enough accurate and powerful nuclear weapons to destroy virtually all of our missiles on the ground. It took one kind of military force to contain the slow-moving and technologically backward Soviet army of the 1960's; it takes another to contain their far faster and more sophisticated force today.

*Insert*

I want to present three facts about this threat. The first is well-known, but it bears repeating. For 20 years, the Soviet Union has been accumulating enormous military might. They did not stop when the United States and our NATO allies unilaterally restrained our own defense programs. The Soviets did not stop when their forces exceeded all requirements of a legitimate defensive capability. And, despite their rhetoric of peaceful intent, they have not stopped now. Let me give you the facts.

During the past decade-and-a-half, the Soviets have built up a massive arsenal of new strategic nuclear weapons -- ~~these are~~ the weapons that can strike directly at the United States.

[ CHART: ICBMS ]

The United States deployed its last new ICBM, the Minute Man III land-based strategic missile, in 1969, and we are now dismantling our even older Titan missiles. But, since 1969, the

Soviet Union has built five new classes of ICBMS, and upgraded these eleven times, deploying many hundreds of highly-accurate and powerful new missiles. During the same time, we built no new ICBMS, and upgraded only one of our existing systems. ~~The same was true with submarines during a similar period.~~ The Soviet Union built three new classes of submarine-launched ballistic missiles and over sixty new missile submarines. We built two new types of submarine missiles and actually ~~eliminated~~ <sup>withdrew</sup> ten submarines from strategic missions.. The Soviet Union built over two hundred new Backfire bombers and ~~joined by~~ <sup>joined</sup> their new Blackjack bomber is now under development. Not ~~only did we fail~~ <sup>we haven't built</sup> to build a new long-range bomber since our B-52 ~~bombers~~ <sup>bombers</sup> were deployed about a quarter of a century ago, ~~but we have already had to retire~~ <sup>and we've</sup> several hundred of the ~~older ones~~ <sup>age because of old age</sup> ~~and despite~~ <sup>indeed,</sup> what many people think, our strategic forces only cost about 10 percent of the defense budget.

[ CHART: LRINF DEPLOYMENT ]

Another example of the Soviet buildup shows the difference between Soviet words and Soviet deeds. In 1978, the Soviets ~~already~~ had 600 intermediate-range nuclear missiles based on land and were beginning to add the SS-20 -- a new, highly accurate mobile missile, with three warheads. We had none. Now let me show you how the Soviets have strengthened their lead. By the end of 1979, when Soviet leader Brezhnev declared "a balance now exists," the Soviets had over 800 warheads. We still had none. <sup>A year ago this month</sup> In March 1982, Mr. Brezhnev pledged a moratorium or freeze on SS-20 deployment. <sup>But by last</sup> Look what happened: Some freeze! ~~By August,~~

*their 800 warheads had become more than 1200,*  
~~1982~~, they had over 1,200 warheads. We still ~~had~~ <sup>have</sup> none. Soviet Defense Minister Ustinov announced "approximate parity of forces continues to exist." ~~Even now,~~ <sup>But</sup> they are adding an average of three new warheads a week, and now have 1,300. These warheads can reach their targets in a matter of a few minutes. We still have none. So far, it seems that the Soviet definition of parity is 1,300 to ~~zero~~ <sup>nothing</sup>, in their favor. So, together with our NATO allies, we decided to deploy new weapons, beginning ~~in 1983~~ <sup>this year</sup>, as a deterrent to the ~~Soviet missiles~~ <sup>in 55-70's</sup> and as an incentive to the Soviet Union to ~~pursue~~ <sup>meet us in</sup> serious arms control negotiations. We will begin that deployment late this year. At the same time, however, we are willing to cancel our program if the Soviets will dismantle theirs. This is what we have called a zero-zero plan. ~~But,~~ <sup>the Soviets</sup> at least they are at the negotiating table -- and you can be <sup>I think it's fair</sup> sure that without our planned deployments they wouldn't be there.

[ CHART: U.S.-SOVIET WEAPONS PRODUCTION ]

*Now let's look at conventional forces.*  
 It's the same story when we look at the Soviet buildup of ~~conventional forces.~~ Since 1974, the United States has produced 3050 tactical combat aircraft. By contrast, the Soviet Union has produced twice as many. When we look at attack submarines, the United States has produced 27 while the Soviet Union has produced 61. For armored vehicles, including tanks we have produced 11,200. The Soviet Union has produced 54,000, a nearly 5 to 1 ratio in their favor. Finally, with artillery, we have produced 950 artillery and rocket launchers while the Soviets have produced more than 13,000, a staggering 14 to 1 ratio.

There was a time when we were able to offset superior Soviet numbers with ~~our own~~ higher quality ~~weapons~~. But today they are building weapons ~~at least~~ as sophisticated and modern as our own.

91 As the <sup>USSR</sup> Soviets have increased their military power, they have been emboldened to extend that power ~~around the world~~. ~~This is another aspect of Soviet military power that I want to discuss tonight.~~

The Soviet union is spreading its military influence ~~around the world~~ in ways that can directly challenge our vital interests and those of our allies. The following aerial photographs illustrate this point in a crucial area very close to home ~~Central America and the Caribbean Basin.~~

[1st PHOTO: COMMUNICATIONS INTELLIGENCE FACILITY,  
LOURDES, CUBA]

This Soviet intelligence collection facility is the largest of its kind in the world. The acres and acres of antennae fields and intelligence monitors are targeted on key U.S. military installations and sensitive activities. The installation, in Lourdes [LOOR-DAYS] Cuba, is manned by <sup>1500</sup> Soviet <sup>technicians</sup> ~~personnel~~ and the satellite ground station allows instant communications with Moscow. *This facility has grown by more than 60 percent in size and capability during the past decade.*

[2nd PHOTO: SOVIET MIGs -- WESTERN CUBA]

In western Cuba, we see this military airfield and its complement of modern Soviet-built MIG-23 aircraft. The Soviet Union uses this airfield for its own long-range reconnaissance missions and earlier this month two modern Soviet anti-submarine warfare aircraft began operating from this Cuban airfield.



During the past 2 years, the level of Soviet arms exports to Cuba can only be compared to the levels reached during the Cuban missile crisis 20 years ago.

[3rd PHOTO: SOVIET WEAPONRY, NICARAGUA]

This ~~next~~ <sup>third</sup> photo, which is the only one in this series that has been previously released, shows Soviet military hardware that has made its way to Central America. This airfield with its MI-8 helicopters, anti-aircraft guns and revetted hardstands for fighter planes is one of a number of military facilities in Nicaragua which has received Soviet equipment funneled through Cuba and reflects the massive military build-up going on in Nicaragua.

[4th PHOTO: GRENADA, AIRFIELD UNDER CONSTRUCTION]

On the small island of Grenada, at the southern end of the Caribbean chain, the Cubans, with Soviet financing and backing, are in the process of building an airfield with a 10,000-foot runway. Grenada ~~does not need and could not use an airfield of this size.~~ <sup>who is it intended for?</sup> It doesn't even have an air force. <sup>^</sup> But the Caribbean is a very important passageway for our international commerce and military lines of communication. <sup>^</sup> ~~To cite one statistic,~~ <sup>Forty-five</sup> 45 percent of all American oil imports now pass through the Caribbean. The rapid build-up of Grenada's military potential is unrelated to any conceivable threat to the island and totally at odds with the pattern of other ~~Eastern~~ Caribbean States, most of which are unarmed. The Soviet-Cuban militarization of Grenada, in short, can only be seen as power projection into the region.

*I wish I could show you more  
without compromising our intelligence  
sources and methods.*

*most sensitive*

*AD*

These picture<sup>s</sup> only tell a small part of the story. <sup>but</sup> The Soviet Union is also supporting Cuban military forces in Angola and Ethiopia, further complicating an already-troubled region of Africa. They have bases in Ethiopia and South Yemen near the Persian Gulf oil fields. They have taken over the port we built at Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam, and now, for the first time in history, the Soviet navy is a force to be reckoned with in the South Pacific.

Some people may still ask: Would the Soviets ever use their formidable military power? Well, again, <sup>can we afford to believe they won't?</sup> their deeds have given us their answer more than once -- most recently in Afghanistan, <sup>There is</sup> and Poland. The courageous struggle of the Afghan people goes on -- but Soviet intentions have been made brutally clear. In Poland, the Soviets denied the will of the people and, in so doing, ~~they~~ demonstrated to the world how their military power could also be used to intimidate.

The final fact ~~I want to present~~ about Soviet military power is that <sup>the Soviet Union is</sup> they are acquiring what can only be considered an offensive military force. They have continued to build far more intercontinental ballistic missiles than they could possibly need simply to deter an attack. Their conventional forces are trained and equipped not so much to defend against an attack by NATO, <sup>as they</sup> which I'm quite sure they know will never come -- as to permit sudden, surprise offensives <sup>of their own</sup> into NATO territory. <sup>they are</sup>

We formed the NATO alliance to defend against such an attack. Far from being a costly luxury, the NATO alliance is a basic cornerstone of our policy for peace. Without it, our

country's conventional force expenditures would have to at least double just to provide us with the same measure of protection we enjoy today. Our NATO allies have assumed a great defense burden, including the military draft in most countries. We are working with them and our other friends around the world to do more. Our defensive strategy means we need military forces that can move very quickly -- forces that are trained and ready to respond to any emergency.

In fact, every item in our defense program -- our ships, our tanks, our planes, our funds for training and spare parts -- is intended for ~~that~~ one all-important purpose -- to deter conflict. Unfortunately, a decade of neglecting our military forces had called into question our ability to ~~deter~~ <sup>deter</sup>.

When I took office in January 1981, I was appalled by what I found: American planes that could not fly and American ships that could not sail for lack of spare parts and trained personnel; insufficient fuel and ammunition for essential training. Our reserve stocks were so low that we could only cope by deciding that we would only think about short engagements. The inevitable result of all this was poor morale in our armed forces, difficulty in recruiting the brightest young Americans to wear the uniform, and difficulty in convincing our most experienced military personnel to stay on.

There was a real question, then, about how well we could meet a crisis. And it was obvious that we had to begin a major modernization program to ensure we could deter aggression and preserve the peace in the years ahead.

~~All of this meant that for the next few years the United States would have to step up its defense program.~~ We had to move immediately to improve the basic readiness and staying power of our conventional forces, so they could meet -- and therefore help deter -- a crisis. ~~At the same time,~~ we had to make up for lost years of investment by moving forward with a long-term plan to prepare our forces to counter the military capabilities our adversaries were developing for the future.

*I know that all of you want peace and so do I. I know too that many of you seriously believe that a nuclear freeze would further the cause of peace.*  
~~Neither of these important goals can be reached through the nuclear freeze proposed by some. Such a freeze of current Soviet and U.S. forces would make us less, not more, secure and would raise, not reduce, the risks of war. It would seriously undercut our negotiations on arms reduction. <sup>and</sup> It also would reward the Soviets for their massive military buildup, <sup>with their present margin of superiority why should they agree to arms reduction knowing that we were prohibited from catching up?</sup> while preventing us from taking steps necessary to modernize our aging and increasingly vulnerable deterrent systems.~~

Believe me, it wasn't a pleasant ~~prospect~~ for someone who had come to Washington determined to reduce Government spending, and take some of the load off of the American taxpayer. ~~But my Administration had two vital jobs to do -- restore an ailing economy and restore our neglected defense program. There was really no choice.~~ <sup>But</sup> We had to move forward with the task of repairing our defenses or we would lose our ability to deter conflict now and in the future. We had to demonstrate to any adversary that aggression could not succeed, and that the only real solution was substantial, equitable, and effectively



verifiable arms reduction -- the kind we're working for right now in Geneva.

Thanks to your support, and strong bipartisan support from the Congress, we set to work on this long, hard, but necessary, task. We began to turn things around. We developed a 5-year defense program that would fix our immediate problems and meet our long-term needs; that would guarantee security today and maintain it in the future.

➤ Already, we are seeing some very encouraging results. Quality recruitment and retention are up, dramatically -- more high school graduates are choosing military careers and more experienced career personnel are choosing to stay. Our maintenance backlogs are finally going down, and ammunition stocks are being restored. This means our men and women in uniform at last are getting the tools and training they need to do their job.

I said earlier that a defense program can't be reduced to simple arithmetic, and I think the same thing is true about what is happening in our services. Ask around today, especially among our young people, and I think you'll find a whole new attitude toward serving their country. This reflects more than just better pay, equipment, and leadership. <sup>Upon the American people</sup> Americans have sent a signal to these young people that it is once again an honor to wear the uniform. That's not something you measure in a budget, but it is a very real part of our Nation's strength.

It will take us longer to build the kind of equipment we need to keep peace in the future, but we've made a good start.

We had not built a new long-range bomber for 21 years. Now, we're building the B-1. We had not launched one new strategic submarine for 17 years. Now, we're building one Trident submarine a year. Our land-based missiles were increasingly threatened by the many huge, new Soviet ICBMS. We are determining how to solve that problem. At the same time, we are working in the START and INF negotiations, with the goal of achieving deep reductions in the strategic and intermediate nuclear arsenals of both sides.

We have also begun the long-needed modernization of our conventional forces. The Army is getting its first new tank in 20 years. The Air Force is modernizing. We are rebuilding our Navy which shrank from about 1000 to 453 ships during the 1970's. Our Nation needs a superior Navy to support our military forces and vital interests overseas. We are now on the road to achieving a 600-ship Navy and increasing the amphibious capabilities of our Marines who are now serving the cause of peace in Lebanon. And we are building a real capability to ~~deter the Soviet Union~~ and assist our friends in the vitally-important Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf region.

This adds up to a major effort, and it is not cheap. It comes at a time when there are many other pressures on our budget, and when the American people have already had to make major sacrifices during the recession. But we must not be misled by those who would make defense once again the scapegoat of the Federal budget.

[ CHART: DEFENSE & SOCIAL SPENDING ]

The fact is that in the past few decades we have seen a dramatic shift in how we spend the taxpayer's dollar. Back in 1955, payments to individuals took up only about 20 percent of the Federal budget. For nearly three decades, these payments steadily increased and this year ~~they~~ will account for 49 percent of the budget. By contrast, in 1955, defense took up more than half of the Federal budget. By 1980, this spending had fallen to a low of 23 percent. Even with the increase I am requesting this year, defense will still amount to only 28 percent of the budget. So, it just doesn't make sense to blame our deficits on defense.

This is what bothers me most about the calls for big defense cuts so soon after I had thought we learned our lesson from the 1970's. These calls for cutting back the defense budget come in nice simple arithmetic. But they add up to the same kind of policies that endangered deterrence and stifled arms reduction in the last decade -- and they're the same kind of talk that led the democracies to neglect their defenses in the 1930's and invited the military imbalance and aggression that plunged the human race into the tragedy of World War II. My fellow Americans, we must not let that grim chapter of history repeat itself through apathy or neglect.

Yes, we pay a great deal for the weapons and equipment we give our military forces. And, yes, there has been some waste in the past. But we are now paying a bill that must be paid -- the delayed cost of our neglect in the 1970's. We would only be fooling ourselves, and endangering the future, if we let the bills pile up from the 1980's as well. Sooner or later these

bills always come due, and the later they come due, the more they cost in treasure and in safety.

This is why I am speaking to you tonight -- to urge you to tell your Senators and Congressman that you know we must continue along the path we have begun to restore our military strength.

We have already made great strides, but our defense posture is not yet what it must be to meet the very serious challenges ahead.

If we stop in midstream, we will not only jeopardize the progress we have made to date -- we will mortgage our ability to deter war and achieve genuine arms reductions. And we will send a signal of decline, of lessened will, of lassitude, to our friends and adversaries.

One of the tragic ironies of history -- and we've seen it happen more than once in this century -- is the way that tyrannical systems, whose military strength is based on oppressing their people, grow strong while, through wishful thinking, free societies allow themselves to be lulled into ~~neglect~~ and a false sense of security.

Free people must meet voluntarily, through open debate and democratic means, the challenge that totalitarians pose by compulsion.

It is up to us, in our time, to choose, and choose wisely, between the hard but necessary task of preserving peace and freedom and the temptation to ignore our duty and blindly hope for the best while the enemies of freedom grow stronger day by day.



The solution is well within our grasp. But to reach it, there is simply no alternative but to continue this year, in this budget, to provide the resources we need to preserve the peace and guarantee our freedom.

For this high goal, my fellow Americans, I ask for your prayers and your support. Thank you, good night, and God bless you.

[INSERT TO FOLLOW]