

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON
January 11, 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR ROBERT MCFARLANE
DAVID GERGEN
RICHARD DARMAN
BEN ELLIOTT
ALLEN MEYER

FROM: ANTHONY R. DOLAN *AD*
SUBJECT: Soviet-American Relations Speech

The upcoming Soviet-American relations speech is a good opportunity to stress the President's moderation in international matters and his record on peace initiatives. The speech, however, will lose its impact if it is seen as a divergence from the President's unequivocal candor about the Soviet Union and its international activities.

If there is even a hint in the press guidance that the President is trying to backtrack on his former position -- something I am certain the President would never want said -- it will set off a long debate and the President will ultimately be forced to step in. I don't think there is any doubt about where he will come down on the question. But this will only lead to stories about the President's reaffirmation of his view of the Soviet Union as an evil empire and it seems to me that for tactical purposes this is exactly the point he does not want to have to emphasize at the moment.

Second, It should also be borne in mind that the President's defense and national security policies have been successful because they have developed behind them a wide political consensus. This consensus, which was voiced in the 1980 elections and has gathered momentum in the subsequent years, is due in large part to the President's realism about the Soviet Union -- something the American people felt was desperately lacking in the national leadership for a couple of decades. The President's policy has been entirely coherent: he has stressed that Western statesmen have a moral obligation to speak candidly about the Soviet Union and its intentions -- for our own sake, for the sake of those who suffer under Soviet rule, for the sake of realistic negotiations with the Soviets. If the President is perceived as

suddenly back tracking, it will damage the perception of policy coherence the public finds so reassuring.

I make these recommendations:

a) That the press guidance be very clear in this matter. The President adheres to his long-held view of the Soviet Union, indeed that he feels America's foreign policy must have a moral center i.e. speaking out about the nature of Soviet rule and the human suffering it causes. (The President has reaffirmed as recently as the People Magazine interview his belief in the "evil empire." In Time Magazine as well, he seems to be saying it is not necessary to emphasize a point already made and implicitly understood.)

b) I would suggest the following insert in the speech:

"Candor about the Soviet Union and its international activities, far from hindering the peace process, actually enhances it. History has shown that when the Soviets realize that their counterparts in negotiations, have no illusions about the true nature of their system and its ultimate intentions that they settle down to the hard business of serious negotiations. As I have said before, while the democracies have their own serious injustices to deal with this should not prevent us from making the crucial moral distinctions between a system which attempts to deal with its problems forthrightly and a system that justifies wrongdoing done in the name of the state. Our willingness to speak out about injustice is at the heart of our foreign policy, indeed forms its moral center. To fail to enunciate the differences between totalitarian and democratic systems of government would be to forsake this moral high ground. Equally as important, it would persuade the Soviets we are once again in the grip of self-delusion. This would only tempt them to exploit negotiations rather than work towards results beneficial to both sides.