

Message to the Congress on America's Agenda for the Future (Excerpts)

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V. EXPANDING THE FAMILY OF FREE NATIONS

In the area of foreign affairs, America will continue to encourage democracy, freedom, and respect for human rights around the world. We will be a strong and reliable ally to our friends, and a firm but hopeful adversary for those who, for now, choose not to be our friends. With the former we hope for continued harmony; with the latter, for progress toward that most elusive of goals, peace.

A Relationship Based on Realism

Our relationship with the Soviet Union must be supported by the twin pillars of hope and realism. The United States and the Soviet Union are not alike; we are not two equal and competing Superpowers divided only by a difference in our "systems." The United States is a free and open society, a democracy in which a free press and free speech flourish. The people of the Soviet Union live in a closed dictatorship in which democratic freedoms are denied. Their leaders do not respond to the will of the people; their decisions are not determined by public debate or dissent; they proclaim, and pursue, the goal of Leninist -revolution."

And so the tensions between us reflect differences that cannot be wished away. But the future is not predetermined. Knowing this, and truly desiring to make the differences between us smaller and more manageable, the United States continues to pursue progress in all aspects of our relationship with the Soviet Union.

Our Administration seeks to ensure that this relationship remains peaceful. We want restraint to be the Soviet leadership's most realistic option and will see to it that our freedoms and those of our Allies are protected.

We seek a secure future at lower levels of arms, particularly nuclear forces, through agreements that are equitable and verifiable. The soundness of our proposals, our renewed military strength and our bipartisan determination to assure a strong deterrent create incentives for the Soviet Union to negotiate seriously.

We can move toward a better, more cooperative working relationship with the Soviet Union if the Soviet leadership is willing. This will require full Soviet compliance with the letter and spirit of both past and future agreements.

There is much work to be done. I will meet General Secretary Gorbachev later this year, and in preparation my Administration will pursue discussions with the Soviet government at all levels. I also hope to see greater communication and broader contact between our peoples. I am optimistic that if the Soviet leadership is willing to meet us halfway, we will be able to put our relations on a more cooperative footing in 1986.

Sustaining Our Strong Commitment to National Defense

In spite of our current discussions, the Soviet leaders are continuing a massive military buildup that threatens the United States and our free world allies. Real arms reductions are possible only if the Soviets and others do not doubt our strength and ability to counter aggression.

Keeping America strong, free, and at peace is solely the responsibility of the Federal Government; it is Government's prime responsibility. We have devoted 5 years trying to narrow a dangerous gap born of illusion and neglect. And we have made important gains.

In the past 5 years, our Administration has reversed the decline in defense funding that occurred during the 1970's and has made significant progress in strengthening our military capabilities. Last year the Congress and I reached a deficit reduction agreement. We pledged together to hold real growth in defense funding to the bare minimum. My 1987 budget honors that pledge. It proposes defense levels that are essential simply to maintain the defense capability that we have achieved in the face of the continuing Soviet military buildup. I am now asking Congress to keep its end of the bargain. With the additional cuts under Gramm-Rudman-Hollings, FY 1986 budget authority for defense corresponds to more than a 5 percent real decline. This simply cannot continue. I am proposing 1987-1991 defense levels which provide the real program growth agreed to in last year's Budget Resolution. It is critical that these levels be supported. The world must know that if America reduces her defenses, it will be because of a reduced threat, not a reduced resolve.

We will continue vigorously to pursue our strategic

modernization program in my 1987 budget-to modernize our bomber, ICBM, and missile-submarine forces so as to assure effective and stable deterrence.

Our Administration will also actively continue research into new technologies in search of secure strategic defense systems. The Strategic Defense Initiative offers the prospect of finding such systems, which threaten no one, to keep the peace, protect the United States and our allies in greater safety, and ultimately to eliminate the threat of nuclear weapons by making nuclear-armed missiles obsolete. We have invited allies to join us in this research effort. We have already agreed with Great Britain to undertake cooperative research and are laying the groundwork for cooperation with others.

We have witnessed in the past 5 years a remarkable improvement in personnel quality and retention throughout all components of the Military Services. My 1987 budget continues to ensure that the high quality of our forces is maintained.

Our Administration is strongly committed to improving management of our defense programs. I look forward to receiving the recommendations of my Blue Ribbon Commission, chaired by David Packard, which has been reviewing this issue. The Department of Defense will continue to root out waste and inefficiency and will aggressively initiate any new improvements necessary to assure that taxpayer dollars are well spent. We will also pursue organizational changes, where appropriate, to ensure the continued effectiveness of our Armed Forces.

While acknowledging the importance of the free flow of knowledge and information for commercial purposes, our Administration will not sacrifice our strategic technological advantages in the area of national security. We will forcefully administer the Export Administration Act.

Our Administration has pressed the governments of Indochina for the fullest possible accounting of the POW/MIA question. These efforts have shown significant progress and will continue. We will continue to pursue, with all resources available to us, reports of Americans who could still be held captive.

We will continue to support the nearly 28 million veterans who have given faithful service in defense of our Nation. We will provide quality medical care, fair and compassionate disability compensation, and other benefits for eligible veterans.

Support for a World of Hope

The United States continues to pursue a world of

hope where people are free to choose the political system by which they will be governed. We seek to roll back the tide of tyranny; we seek to increase freedom across the face of this planet, for serving the cause of freedom also serves the cause of peace. It is for this reason that Americans have always supported the struggle of freedom fighters. It is also why I put forward my "regional initiative" at the United Nations last fall—a three-stage plan for ending a series of dangerous wars that have pitted a series of governments against their own people and their neighbors.

As we have in the past, America must actively wage the competition of political ideas—between free government and its opponents—and lend our support to those who are building the infrastructure of democracy. Failure to sustain other democracies will be very costly in the long run, both materially and spiritually.

In Afghanistan we must continue to help the forces fighting a Soviet invasion and an oppressive Communist regime. As a result of the Soviet Union's military presence and vicious campaign against the freedom fighters, a quarter of the Afghan population has been killed or has fled to refugee camps. The Afghan people will have our support as long as the Soviet Union continues its war against them.

In Latin America the trend toward elected civilian governments continues, with Guatemala as the latest new entry. Over 90 percent of the people of Latin America and the Caribbean now enjoy democratic rule. That compares to less than one-third only 5 years ago. However, Communist subversion and the insidious spread of narcotics trafficking continue to menace the region. In fact, they sometimes work hand in hand, as in Colombia, where insurgents are increasingly linked to drug traffickers and narcotics growers.

The Central American democracies need our help. Our assistance is crucial, as demonstrated by the success of El Salvador in preserving democratic institutions in the face of a Communist insurgency. The levels of economic and security assistance we will request for Central America are the absolute minimum needed to maintain progress toward the objectives set out in the report of the Bipartisan Commission on Central America.

For moral and strategic reasons, we must continue to support those seeking democracy in Nicaragua. The Nicaraguan resistance is fighting not only the Sandinistas, but Cubans armed with Soviet weapons. I will be asking the Congress to provide the Nicaraguan freedom fighters with the moral and material support

they require to continue and expand their struggle. We will continue to press the Sandinistas to negotiate with their own people and to fulfill the promises made to them of genuine democracy. Reconciliation in Nicaragua, based on democratic elections, remains the key to peace in Central America.

In Africa, many countries have experienced deep economic distress and starvation in the past year, brought about in part by the drought and in some cases—particularly Ethiopia—by the brutal policies of a Communist regime. As the human cost of such policies mounts, we encourage African governments to take the lead in moving toward economic and political freedoms.

We are moved by the efforts of freedom fighters such as Jonas Savimbi and the members of UNITA. They deserve our support in their brave struggle against Soviet-Cuban imperialism in Angola. We will work with the Congress to determine the most effective way of providing support.

In South Africa, we stand forthrightly on the principle that the government must achieve freedom and justice for all its citizens. Apartheid, in our view, is doomed. We have a major stake—as elsewhere, both moral and strategic—in encouraging a peaceful transition and avoiding a terrible civil war. This is why we reject the approach of those on both sides who pursue violence and oppression. Our ability to affect the ultimate outcome is limited, but we will continue to employ our good offices—both official and private—to pursue dialogue and negotiation as the best way to change the system while protecting the future of all South Africans.

In Southeast Asia, the United States supports ASEAN in its efforts to aid the struggle of the Cambodian people to free their country from foreign occupation while aiding Thailand, the ASEAN front-line state. As in other regions, we are prepared to contribute to a negotiated settlement of this war, in the context of the proposals I put forward at the U.N. General Assembly last year. We are implementing humanitarian measures in response to the refugee problems in the region.

We are concerned by developments in the Philippines, our long-time ally, and will work to encourage political moderation, fair play, and the strengthening of democratic institutions. Only on this basis can the people of the Philippines check and ultimately defeat an insurgency whose goal is to end democracy.

No discussion of peace and freedom can be complete without a reference to Europe's great and just hope: an end to the artificial division of the continent.

The dividing line between freedom and oppression is one boundary that can never be made legitimate. The most significant way of making all Europe more secure is to make it more free.

We stand for the principles of freedom, democracy, the rule of law, unconditional human rights, and government with the consent of the governed. The cause of Poland's Solidarity continues to arouse the conscience of mankind. Solidarity will not die because its heartbeat is an indestructible truth that resonates in every human heart.

We can help those seeking democracy not only by economic and military aid, but with ideas and the active involvement of democratic parties and institutions. The National Endowment for Democracy has a creative role to play in fostering the ideals that make democracy work.

Alliances and Friendships

America's strength and staying power are the essential prerequisites for strengthening our alliances and friendships and for protecting the values and interests that bind us together. In Europe we have launched, together with our NATO allies, a Conventional Defense Initiative to find more effective means to improve our conventional deterrent; we are also seeking ways, with congressional support, to stimulate armaments cooperation. The alliance remains firmly on course in deploying NATO intermediate-range weapons to counter Soviet SS-20 missiles. We are also continuing alliance implementation of the decision to reduce by 1,400 the number of nuclear warheads available to NATO, bringing our theater nuclear inventory to its lowest level in 20 years; this decision is being carried out despite the absence of reductions by the Soviet Union.

In our relations with Japan, we will expand our efforts to resolve bilateral trade issues through trade liberalizing solutions that open Japanese markets to American goods. We continue to rely on the United States-Japanese Mutual Security treaty as a pillar of Asian peace, and stability.

Our commitment to the security of the Republic of Korea has never been stronger. We have a number of differences on trade issues but believe the market-opening steps being taken or under consideration by the Republic of Korea will alleviate these difficulties.

Elsewhere in Asia I will continue to expand and deepen cooperation with China, and improve our relationships in Southeast Asia and the dynamic Pacific

Basin as a whole. Termination of United States Trusteeship over the Micronesian Territories, which I hope we can achieve this year, will be a landmark in our relations with the emerging Pacific Island nations and a symbol of our support for democracy and freedom everywhere.

One of the areas most critical to our security is the Middle East. Security assistance to the countries of the region is important to maintaining United States influence, to preventing Soviet intimidation and exploitation, and to giving friendly governments the confidence to move toward peace in the face of often violent opposition. We are helping Israel and Jordan to narrow their differences in the peace process. We will continue our efforts to facilitate direct negotiations between Israel and her Arab neighbors. We must also enlarge the gains already made between Israel and Egypt.

In South Asia major strides have been taken in the past year to advance regional peace and prosperity. A new regional association was inaugurated to grapple with the twin killers of narcotics and terrorism. The leaders of India and Pakistan have met frequently to address outstanding differences. The United States stands ready to promote regional peace and reduce the risk of a South Asian nuclear arms race in any way we can.

In terms of our legislative intentions, let me be clear: in all these regions of the world, a strong security assistance program is one of the most effective, and least costly, ways of protecting interests we share with allies and friends. I will work with the Congress to preserve this invaluable policy tool. I will also seek congressional approval of our requests to sell arms to Jordan and other pro-Western governments in the Middle East.

Countering Terrorism and Espionage

Terrorism is a growing threat, as evidenced by the increased targeting of innocent civilians engaged in innocent pursuits. We are taking several measures to increase our capability to deal with this scourge. We are aware that it thrives with the support of nations such as Libya that provide funding, logistics, direction, and safehavens.

The Vice President's Task Force on Combating Terrorism, formed at my direction last July, has submitted its report to me with a series of recommendations. Our Administration has already begun to implement

those recommendations that are within the purview of the Executive Branch. We will increase our intelligence cooperation with friendly nations to share information on terrorist plans and intentions. Our intelligence community will place greater emphasis on collecting information on terrorist groups and their state supporters. And we will increase our readiness to strike back at terrorists where they have been identified and their responsibility for actions against Americans has been determined. Those countries that support and direct the terrorists should know there is no refuge, there is no hiding place, there is no sanctuary that will keep them safe forever.

Our Administration will continue, on its own and in cooperation with allies, with private sector transportation companies, and with international organizations, to take preventive and response measures to counter the brutal, savage terrorist attacks on innocent people. Through the Federal Bureau of Investigation here at home and intelligence services abroad, we will act to head off terrorist incidents before they can occur. Our tightened security measures already include new regulations for checked baggage, cargo, and access to aircraft. We are working with the International Civil Aviation Organization and the International Maritime Organization to enhance security standards worldwide.

Our Administration will ask the Congress for legislation to further improve security measures, enhance anti-terrorism assistance programs and in general enable us to meet our counter-terrorism responsibilities. We are requesting additional funds to improve the security of our diplomatic missions abroad and of foreign diplomats here in the United States. We are also asking the Senate to approve the Supplementary Extradition Treaty with the United Kingdom to allow the return of international terrorists for trial. This treaty will assure that our own courts cannot become a sanctuary for certain terrorists and will serve as a model for cooperation between nations.

Our Administration will continue to counter the threat posed by the worldwide activity of hostile intelligence services such as the KGB and GRU. We will follow a realistic approach to countering illegal technology acquisition, espionage, and the attempt to manipulate public opinion through active measures and disinformation. We will enhance our world effort to identify and neutralize the activity of intelligence services working against American interests or threatening our security.