

Radio Address to the Nation on Embassy Security in Moscow and Canada-United States Relations

April 11, 1987

My fellow Americans:

Greetings from California. As you might have heard on the news, yesterday at the World Affairs Council in Los Angeles, I delivered a major foreign policy address concerning our relations with the Soviet Union. As I explained in that speech, I believe there's reason for optimism about the chances for better relations with the Soviets, but we also face some tough, contentious issues that require realism and strength of will on our part.

Secretary Shultz is leaving today for Moscow, where he will meet with Foreign Minister Shevardnadze and other high-echelon Soviet officials. In light of revelations concerning Soviet espionage activities, this meeting will be much weightier than expected. I've instructed Secretary Shultz to make Embassy security a major agenda item during his discussions with his Soviet counterpart. Recent events have made it clear that the Soviets have gone beyond the bounds of reason in their efforts to compromise the security of our current Embassy in Moscow. Unfortunately, no one is suggesting that Soviet espionage is not a fact of life, but what seems to be emerging is the picture of an intense espionage strategy that reflects a callous disregard for the consequences of such actions.

At the site of our new Embassy, sensors and listening devices have been discovered in the materials for the new building. This prompted me to announce this week that our diplomats will not be occupying our new Embassy unless and until I am assured that it is safe and secure. Likewise, the Soviets will not be permitted to move into their new Embassy in Washington, DC, until a simultaneous move can be made by both countries. What the Soviets have done is throw offtrack a bilateral process that has been moving forward since 1969, when an agreement was made, after long negotiations, about new

Embassy sites. Over the years, with several of my predecessors, various agreements and understandings were reached, culminating in construction in 1977 of the new Soviet complex and 1979 of the new U.S. complex. Both the spirit and the letter of those understandings and agreements have been violated.

We do not take this lightly. I have asked former Defense Secretary Melvin Laird, under the general authority of the Secretary of State, to chair a top-level panel to investigate security at our Embassy and to give me a frank assessment. Parallel with this, my Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, under Ambassador Anne Armstrong's leadership, will be examining security and counterintelligence procedures used at our Embassies throughout the world. Both will make reports to me through the National Security Council. The condition of our new Embassy structure in Moscow is being evaluated. A determination will be made whether our new Embassy will ever be secure or whether it's necessary for us to destroy and rebuild it. Secretary Shultz will make certain the Soviets understand that if we're to improve relations such espionage tactics are totally unacceptable.

All this is certainly in stark contrast to the openness and friendship I found on my own diplomatic mission to Canada. Sunday and Monday I visited our northern neighbors and friends. My discussions with Prime Minister Mulroney were warm and, yes, productive. We spoke seriously about the environmental challenge of acid rain, for example, and we're going to do something about it. We also discussed our current efforts to tear down barriers to commerce and establish free trade between our peoples and countries.

The enthusiastic reception I received from the Canadian Parliament suggests that a free trade agreement between Canada and the United States is an idea whose time has come. I pledged to Prime Minister Mulroney and the people in

Canada that we're going all out to make this visionary proposal of the Prime Minister a reality. We'll do it for the prosperity and jobs it will create in both our countries; but just as important, it will be an example to all the world that free and fair trade, and not protectionism, is the way to progress and economic advancement.

What we seek is a world where all countries treat each other with the same spirit of benevolence and trust as is true between the United States and Canada.

Well, that's all for now. Until next week, thanks for listening, and God bless you.

Note: The President spoke at 9:06 a.m. from the Century Plaza Hotel in Los Angeles, CA.

Reagan Presidential Library: University of Texas

<http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1987/041187a.htm>