

# Reagan/Bush Documents

*N.B. All of these documents have been edited to make them more accessible. See bibliographic information for full texts.*

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## Televised Address by Governor Ronald Reagan A Strategy for Peace in the 80s

10/19/1980

### Excerpts:

Good Evening.

Three months ago, in accepting the nomination of my party to be its presidential candidate, I said: Of all the objectives we seek, first and foremost is the establishment of lasting world peace.

Since I spoke those words, I have had the chance to visit with Americans like you, all across the nation. I have brought that same message of peace as our primary goal...

Peace is *made* by the fact of strength economic, military, and strategic.

Peace is *lost* when such strength disappears or just as bad is seen by an adversary as disappearing.

We must build peace upon strength. There is no other way. And the cold, hard fact of the matter is that our economic, military, and strategic strength under President Carter is eroding.

Only if we are strong will peace be strong...

I pledge, if elected President, to take every step necessary to restore the bipartisan tradition in American national security and foreign policy; to work with congressional leaders of both parties to design and conduct a truly bipartisan tradition in American national security and foreign policy. And, I intend to have this bipartisan spirit reflected during my presidency in key foreign and defense policy appointive positions. As in the past, our domestic differences will end at the waters edge.

In the next few minutes, I would like to outline for you nine specific steps that I will take to put America on a sound, secure footing in the international arena. Working closely with the Congress, I propose to accomplish these steps with the support of an informed American public. Here are the steps:

1. An improved policy-making structure;
2. A clear approach to East-West relations;
3. A realistic policy toward our own Hemisphere;
4. A plan to assist African and Third World development;
5. A plan to send our message abroad;
6. A realistic strategic arms reduction policy;
7. A determined effort to strengthen the quality of our armed services;
8. Combating international terrorism;

9. Restoration of a margin of safety in our defense planning.

### **Relations with Friends and Adversaries**

With effective machinery in place, we must first address the conduct of our relations with our allies, with the Soviet Union, and with the Peoples Republic of China.

Confidence and trust in the United States has fallen to an all-time low. This must be reversed. The United States has an important leadership role, and this role can be effective only if our alliances are cemented by unity of purpose and mutual respect.

Worldwide, our allies are stronger, most are robust and healthy. But the challenge of the 1980s is to assemble that strength in a manner which allows us to pursue the objective of peace together. If our alliances are divided, only our adversaries benefit.

With our allies, we can conduct a realistic and balanced policy toward the Soviet Union. I am convinced that the careful management of our relationship with the Soviet Union depends on a principled, consistent American foreign policy. We seek neither confrontation nor conflict, but to avoid both, we must remain strong and determined to protect our interests.

Our relationship with the Peoples Republic of China is in its beginning stages. It is one that can and will grow, and I repeat my intention to assist its rapid growth. There is an historic bond of friendship between the American and Chinese peoples, and I will work to amplify it wherever possible. Expanded trade, cultural contact and other arrangements will all serve the cause of preserving and extending the ties between our two countries.

### **A Realistic Strategic Arms Reduction Policy**

As the next requirement for a program for peace, I would assign a high priority to strategic arms reduction. I have repeatedly said in this campaign that I will sit down with the Soviet Union for as long as it takes to negotiate a balanced and equitable arms limitation agreement, designed to improve the prospects for peace. To succeed at arms control, however, we must first be honest with ourselves so that we can be convincing with the Soviets.

We must honestly face the facts of the arms competition in which we are caught. And, we must have a view of the world that is consistent with these facts and that does not change to suit different audiences. The Carter administration told Congress that the Soviet Union has long been investing about three times as much as we have in strategic arms and is expected to continue doing so, with or without SALT the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, controlled by a Democratic majority, in a narrow vote came out for the Treaty, but only after more than 20 changes had been

made. Then, on December 20, 1979, the Senate Armed Services Committee, also controlled by a Democratic majority, voted 10-0 with seven abstentions to adopt a report which concluded and I urge you to listen closely to these words: that the SALT II Treaty as it now stands, is not in the national security interests of the United States of America. Finally, Mr. Carter could not even muster the necessary votes to pass his SALT Treaty in the United States Senate yes, controlled by a Democratic majority even before the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan.

### **Restoring Our Margin of Safety for Peace**

An important step perhaps the most important of all in a systematic program for peace is to restore the margin of safety for peace in our defense program by working closely with the Congress on a long-term program designed to meet our needs throughout this critical decade.

We must ask ourselves, is America more secure? Are we more confident of peace in the world than we were just four years ago? You know the answer to those questions: it is no.

President Ford left a long-range defense program designed to keep America strong throughout the 80s. He recognized that, after years of negotiation, the Soviet Union was still bent upon surpassing the United States in overall strategic strength.

Wisely, he did not give up on arms control negotiations, but sought to provide us with an insurance policy in the form of a balanced program to keep us from falling behind.

But, the Carter administration, in its haste to make good on a reckless campaign promise to cut defense spending by billions of dollars, insisted on a policy of systematic concessions in defense and in arms control negotiations.

Whether we like it or not, it is our responsibility to preserve world peace because no one else can do it. We cannot continue letting events and crises get out of control, we must through sound management and planning be in control so as to prevent being confronted by a crisis. This requires a sound economy, a strong national defense, and the will and determination to preserve peace and freedom....

You know, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence said it isn't important that we leave wealth to our children, it is important that we leave them freedom. And we can only have that freedom if we continue to have peace throughout the world.

Thank you and good evening.



# Remarks at the Annual Convention of the National Association of Evangelicals in Orlando, Florida- March 8, 1983

*Note: The President spoke at 3:04 p.m. in the Citrus Crown Ballroom at the Sheraton Twin Towers Hotel.*

## Excerpts:

Reverend clergy all, Senator Hawkins, distinguished members of the Florida congressional delegation, and all of you...

But whatever sad episodes exist in our past, any objective observer must hold a positive view of American history, a history that has been the story of hopes fulfilled and dreams made into reality. Especially in this century, America has kept alight the torch of freedom, but not just for ourselves but for millions of others around the world.

And this brings me to my final point today. During my first press conference as President, in answer to a direct question, I pointed out that, as good Marxist-Leninists, the Soviet leaders have openly and publicly declared that the only morality they recognize is that which will further their cause, which is world revolution. I think I should point out I was only quoting Lenin, their guiding spirit, who said in 1920 that they repudiate all morality that proceeds from supernatural ideas -- that's their name for religion -- or ideas that are outside class conceptions. Morality is entirely subordinate to the interests of class war. And everything is moral that is necessary for the annihilation of the old, exploiting social order and for uniting the proletariat.

Well, I think the refusal of many influential people to accept this elementary fact of Soviet doctrine illustrates an historical reluctance to see totalitarian powers for what they are. We saw this phenomenon in the 1930's. We see it too often today.

This doesn't mean we should isolate ourselves and refuse to seek an understanding with them. I intend to do everything I can to persuade them of our peaceful intent, to remind them that it was the West that refused to use its nuclear monopoly in the forties and fifties for territorial gain and which now proposes 50-percent cut in strategic ballistic missiles and the elimination of an entire class of land-based, intermediate-range nuclear missiles.

At the same time, however, they must be made to understand we will never compromise our principles and standards. We will never give away our freedom. We will never abandon our belief in God. And we will never stop searching for a genuine peace. But we can assure none of these things America stands for through the so-called nuclear freeze solutions proposed by some.

The truth is that a freeze now would be a very dangerous fraud, for that is merely the illusion of peace. The reality is that we must find peace through strength.

I would agree to a freeze if only we could freeze the Soviets' global desires. A freeze at current levels of weapons would remove any incentive for the Soviets to negotiate seriously in Geneva and virtually end our chances to achieve the major arms reductions which we have proposed. Instead, they would achieve their objectives through the freeze.

A freeze would reward the Soviet Union for its enormous and unparalleled military buildup. It would prevent the essential and long overdue modernization of United States and allied defenses and would leave our aging forces increasingly vulnerable. And an honest freeze would require extensive prior negotiations on the systems and numbers to be limited and on the measures to ensure effective verification and compliance. And the kind of a freeze that has been suggested would be virtually impossible to verify. Such a major effort would divert us completely from our current negotiations on achieving substantial reductions...

So, I urge you to speak out against those who would place the United States in a position of military and moral inferiority. You know, I've always believed that old Screwtape reserved his best efforts for those of you in the church. So, in your discussions of the nuclear freeze proposals, I urge you to beware the temptation of pride -- the temptation of blithely declaring yourselves above it all and label both sides equally at fault, to ignore the facts of history and the aggressive impulses of an evil empire, to simply call the arms race a giant misunderstanding and thereby remove yourself from the struggle between right and wrong and good and evil.

I ask you to resist the attempts of those who would have you withhold your support for our efforts, this administration's efforts, to keep America strong and free, while we negotiate real and verifiable reductions in the world's nuclear arsenals and one day, with God's help, their total elimination.

While America's military strength is important, let me add here that I've always maintained that the struggle now going on for the world will never be decided by bombs or rockets, by armies or military might. The real crisis we face today is a spiritual one; at root, it is a test of moral will and faith.

Whittaker Chambers, the man whose own religious conversion made him a witness to one of the terrible traumas of our time, the Hiss-Chambers case, wrote that the crisis of the Western World exists to the degree in which the West is indifferent to God, the degree to which it collaborates in communism's attempt to make man stand alone without God. And then he said, for Marxism-Leninism is actually the second oldest faith, first proclaimed in the Garden of Eden with the words of temptation, "Ye shall be as gods."

The Western World can answer this challenge, he wrote, "but only provided that its faith in God and the freedom He enjoins is as great as communism's faith in Man."

I believe we shall rise to the challenge. I believe that communism is another sad, bizarre chapter in human history whose last pages even now are being written. I believe this because the source of our strength in the quest for human freedom is not material, but spiritual. And because it knows no limitation, it must terrify and ultimately triumph over those who would enslave their fellow man. For in the words of Isaiah: "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increased strength. . . . But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary. . . ."

Yes, change your world. One of our Founding Fathers, Thomas Paine, said, "We have it within our power to begin the world over again." We can do it, doing together what no one church could do by itself.

God bless you, and thank you very much.

*Note: The President spoke at 3:04 p.m. in the Citrus Crown Ballroom at the Sheraton Twin Towers Hotel.*

## Address to the Nation on Defense and National Security- March 23, 1983

*Note: The President spoke at 8:02 p.m. from the Oval Office at the White House. The address was broadcast live on nationwide radio and television.*

### **Excerpts:**

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've reached a decision which offers a new hope for our children in the 21st century, a decision I'll tell you about in a few minutes. And important because there's 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...

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 we first proposed has been reduced by half, through improvements in management and procurement and other savings.

The budget request that is now before the Congress has been trimmed to the limits of safety. Further deep cuts cannot be made without seriously endangering the security of the Nation. The choice is up to the men and women you've elected to the Congress, and that means the choice is up to you.

The defense policy of the United States is based on a simple premise: The United States does not start fights. We will never be an aggressor. We maintain our strength in order to deter and defend against aggression -- to preserve freedom and peace.

Since the dawn of the atomic age, we've sought to reduce the risk of war by maintaining a strong deterrent and by seeking genuine arms control. "Deterrence" means simply this: making sure any adversary who thinks about attacking the United States, or our allies, or our vital interests, concludes that the risks to him outweigh any potential gains. Once he understands that, he won't attack. We maintain the peace through our strength; 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. Now, this is not to say that 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 security is based on being prepared to meet all threats...

For 20 years the Soviet Union has been 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. During the past decade and a half, the Soviets have built up a massive arsenal of new strategic nuclear weapons -- weapons that can strike directly at the United States.

As the Soviets have increased their military power, they've been emboldened to extend that power. They're spreading their military influence in ways that can directly challenge our vital interests and those of our allies....

Some people may still ask: Would the Soviets ever use their formidable military power? Well, again, can we afford to believe they won't? There is Afghanistan. And in Poland, the Soviets denied the will of the people and in so doing demonstrated to the world how their military power could also be used to intimidate.

The final fact is that the Soviet Union is 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 as they are to permit sudden, surprise offensives of their own.

Our NATO allies have assumed a great defense burden, including the military draft in most countries. We're 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....

One of the most important contributions we can make is, of course, to lower the level of all arms, and particularly nuclear arms. We're engaged right now in several negotiations with the Soviet Union to bring about a mutual reduction of weapons. I will report to you a week from tomorrow my thoughts on that score. But let me just say, I'm totally committed to this course.

If the Soviet Union will join with us in our effort to achieve major arms reduction, we will have succeeded in stabilizing the nuclear balance. Nevertheless, it will still be necessary to rely on the specter of retaliation, on mutual threat. And that's a sad commentary on the human condition. Wouldn't it be better to save lives than to avenge them? Are we not capable of demonstrating our peaceful intentions by applying all our abilities and our ingenuity to achieving a truly lasting stability? I think we are. Indeed, we must....

What if free people could live secure in the knowledge that their security did not rest upon the threat of instant U.S. retaliation to deter a Soviet attack, that we could intercept and destroy strategic ballistic missiles before they reached our own soil or that of our allies?

I know this is a formidable, technical task, one that may not be accomplished before the end of this century. Yet, current technology has attained a level of sophistication where it's reasonable for us to begin this effort. It will take years, probably decades of effort on many fronts. There will be failures and setbacks, just as there will be successes and breakthroughs. And as we proceed, we must remain constant in preserving the nuclear deterrent and maintaining a solid capability for flexible response. But isn't it worth every investment necessary to free the world from the threat of nuclear war? We know it is.



In the meantime, we will continue to pursue real reductions in nuclear arms, negotiating from a position of strength that can be ensured only by modernizing our strategic forces. At the same time, we must take steps to reduce the risk of a conventional military conflict escalating to nuclear war by improving our nonnuclear capabilities.

America does possess -- now -- the technologies to attain very significant improvements in the effectiveness of our conventional, nonnuclear forces. Proceeding boldly with these new technologies, we can significantly reduce any incentive that the Soviet Union may have to threaten attack against the United States or its allies.

As we pursue our goal of defensive technologies, we recognize that our allies rely upon our strategic offensive power to deter attacks against them. Their vital interests and ours are inextricably linked. Their safety and ours are one. And no change in technology can or will alter that reality. We must and shall continue to honor our commitments.

I clearly recognize that defensive systems have limitations and raise certain problems and ambiguities. If paired with offensive systems, they can be viewed as fostering an aggressive policy, and no one wants that. But with these considerations firmly in mind, I call upon the scientific community in our country, those who gave us nuclear weapons, to turn their great talents now to the cause of mankind and world peace, to give us the means of rendering these nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete.

Tonight, consistent with our obligations of the ABM treaty and recognizing the need for closer consultation with our allies, I'm taking an important first step. I am directing a comprehensive and intensive effort to define a long-term research and development program to begin to achieve our ultimate goal of eliminating the threat posed by strategic nuclear missiles. This could pave the way for arms control measures to eliminate the weapons themselves. We seek neither military superiority nor political advantage. Our only purpose -- one all people share -- is to search for ways to reduce the danger of nuclear war.

My fellow Americans, tonight we're launching an effort which holds the promise of changing the course of human history. There will be risks, and results take time. But I believe we can do it. As we cross this threshold, I ask for your prayers and your support.

Thank you, good night, and God bless you.

Following his remarks, the President met in the White House with a number of administration officials, including members of the Cabinet, the White House staff, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and former officials of past administrations, to discuss the address.

## Farewell Address to the Nation-January 11, 1989

*Note: The President spoke at 9:02 p.m. from the Oval Office at the White House. The address was broadcast live on nationwide radio and television.*

### Excerpts:

My fellow Americans:

This is the 34th time I'll speak to you from the Oval Office and the last. We've been together 8 years now, and soon it'll be time for me to go. But before I do, I wanted to share some thoughts, some of which I've been saving for a long time...

But back in the 1960's, when I began, it seemed to me that we'd begun reversing the order of things -- that through more and more rules and regulations and confiscatory taxes, the government was taking more of our money, more of our options, and more of our freedom. I went into politics in part to put up my hand and say, "Stop." I was a citizen politician, and it seemed the right thing for a citizen to do.

I think we have stopped a lot of what needed stopping. And I hope we have once again reminded people that man is not free unless government is limited. There's a clear cause and effect here that is as neat and predictable as a law of physics: As government expands, liberty contracts.

Nothing is less free than pure communism -- and yet we have, the past few years, forged a satisfying new closeness with the Soviet Union. I've been asked if this isn't a gamble, and my answer is no because we're basing our actions not on words but deeds. The detente of the 1970's was based not on actions but promises. They'd promise to treat their own people and the people of the world better. But the gulag was still the gulag, and the state was still expansionist, and they still waged proxy wars in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Well, this time, so far, it's different. President Gorbachev has brought about some internal democratic reforms and begun the withdrawal from Afghanistan. He has also freed prisoners whose names I've given him every time we've met.

But life has a way of reminding you of big things through small incidents. Once, during the heady days of the Moscow summit, Nancy and I decided to break off from the entourage one afternoon to visit the shops on Arbat Street -- that's a little street just off Moscow's main shopping area. Even though our visit was a surprise, every Russian there immediately recognized us and called out our names and reached for our hands. We were just about swept away by the warmth. You could almost feel the possibilities in all that joy. But within seconds, a KGB detail pushed their way toward us and began pushing and shoving the people in the crowd. It was an interesting moment. It reminded me that while the man on the street in the Soviet Union yearns for peace, the government is Communist. And those who run it are Communists, and that means we and they view such issues as freedom and human rights very differently.

We must keep up our guard, but we must also continue to work together to lessen and eliminate tension and mistrust. My view is that President Gorbachev is different from previous Soviet leaders. I think he knows some of the things wrong with his society and is trying to fix them. We wish him well. And we'll continue to work to make sure that the Soviet Union that eventually emerges from this process is a less threatening one. What it all boils down to is this: I want the new closeness to continue. And it will, as long as we make it clear that we will continue to act in a certain way as long as they continue to act in a helpful manner. If and when they don't, at first pull your punches. If they persist, pull the plug. It's still trust but verify. It's still play, but cut the cards. It's still watch closely. And don't be afraid to see what you see....

.I've spoken of the shining city all my political life, but I don't know if I ever quite communicated what I saw when I said it. But in my mind it was a tall, proud city built on rocks stronger than oceans, wind-swept, God-blessed, and teeming with people of all kinds living in harmony and peace; a city with free ports that hummed with commerce and creativity. And if there had to be city walls, the walls had doors and the doors were open to anyone with the will and the heart to get here. That's how I saw it, and see it still.

And how stands the city on this winter night? More prosperous, more secure, and happier than it was 8 years ago. But more than that: After 200 years, two centuries, she still stands strong and true on the granite ridge, and her glow has held steady no matter what storm. And she's still a beacon, still a magnet for all who must have freedom, for all the pilgrims from all the lost places who are hurtling through the darkness, toward home.

We've done our part. And as I walk off into the city streets, a final word to the men and women of the Reagan revolution, the men and women across America who for 8 years did the work that brought America back. My friends: We did it. We weren't just marking time. We made a difference. We made the city stronger, we made the city freer, and we left her in good hands. All in all, not bad, not bad at all.

And so, goodbye, God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.



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**October 03, 1990**  
**Bush-Kohl Telephone Conversation on the Situation in  
Germany**

**Citation:**

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**Summary:**

Telephone conversation between President George H. W. Bush and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl on the situation in Germany.

**Credits:**

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**Original Language:**

English

**Contents:**

- Scan of Original Document

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

7876

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telephone Call to Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany

PARTICIPANTS: The President  
Helmut Kohl, Chancellor  
Notetaker: Robert Hutchings, NSC Staff  
Interpreter: Gisela Marcuse

DATE, TIME: October 3, 1990, 9:56 - 9:59 a.m.  
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

The President: Helmut! I am sitting in a meeting with members of our Congress and am calling at the end of this historic day to wish you well.

Chancellor Kohl: Things are going very, very well. I am in Berlin. There were one million people here last night at the very spot where the Wall used to stand -- and where President Reagan called on Mr. Gorbachev to open this gate. Words can't describe the feeling. The weather is very nice and warm, fortunately. There were large crowds of young people. Eighty percent were under thirty. It was fantastic.

A short time ago there was enormous applause when our President said that our gratitude was owed especially to our Allied friends and above all our American friends. I share that view. When the parliamentary declaration is made, it will say that all American Presidents from Harry Truman all the way up to our friend George Bush made this possible. I would like to thank you again for all your support for us.

The President: It was covered widely on American television. America is proud to have stood with you through these negotiations, and we identify with the hopes of the German people. I have to run to another meeting, but I wanted you to know what pride we have in standing by the German people.

Chancellor Kohl: Thank you very much.

The President: Good-bye, my friend.

Chancellor Kohl: Tell your Congressmen good wishes and thanks.

-- End of Conversation --