

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library  
Digital Library Collections

---

This is a PDF of a folder from our textual collections.

---

**Collection:** Press Secretary, White House Office  
of: Press Releases and Press Briefings  
**Folder Title:** Press Releases: 9378 11/23/1985  
**Box:** 118

---

To see more digitized collections visit:

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/archives/digital-library>

To see all Ronald Reagan Presidential Library inventories visit:

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/document-collection>

Contact a reference archivist at: [reagan.library@nara.gov](mailto:reagan.library@nara.gov)

Citation Guidelines: <https://reaganlibrary.gov/citing>

National Archives Catalogue: <https://catalog.archives.gov/>

7378

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 23, 1985

RADIO ADDRESS  
OF THE PRESIDENT  
TO THE NATION

The Oval Office

12:06 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: My fellow Americans, this has been a busy and eventful week for Nancy and me. Now that the summit in Geneva is behind us, we need to look ahead and ask, where do we go from here?

As I told Congress, we've made a fresh start in U.S.-Soviet relations. Every issue was on the table, and our 15 hours of discussions were tough and lively throughout. I got a better perspective from listening to General Secretary Gorbachev, and I think he went home with a lot to think about, too.

I plan to meet with Mr. Gorbachev again next year in Washington, but between now and then, we have much work to do. Opportunities to address important problems of Soviet-American relations should not be squandered. We must always be realistic about our deep and abiding differences, but we should be working for progress wherever possible.

On arms control, the Soviets, after several years of resisting talks, have now agreed that each side should cut nuclear arms by 50 percent in appropriate categories. And in our joint statement, we called for early progress on this, directing the emphasis of the talks toward what has been the chief U.S. goal all along -- deep, equitable, fully-verifiable reductions in offensive weapons. If there's a real interest on the Soviet side, there's a chance the talks can begin to make headway.

Mr. Gorbachev and I discussed our work on S.D.I. -- America's Strategic Defense Initiative. I told him that we are investigating non-nuclear defensive systems designed to destroy offensive missiles and protect people. Although reluctant to acknowledge it, the Soviets have been carrying forward a research program far more extensive than ours on their own version of S.D.I.

I think it's fair to point out that the Soviets' main aim at Geneva was to force us to drop S.D.I. I think I can also say that after Geneva, Mr. Gorbachev understands we have no intention of doing so. Far from it, we want to make strategic defense a strong protector of the peace.

A research and testing program that may one day provide a peace shield to protect against nuclear attack is a deeply hopeful vision. And we should all be cooperating to bring that vision of peace alive for the entire world.

Regional conflicts were prominent in our discussions, and we'll be watching very closely for any change in Soviet activities in the Third World. Another resounding vote of the U.N. General Assembly has just called for Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. Next month, a new round of talks on this question takes place, also under United Nation auspices. If these talks are to succeed, the Soviets must provide a timetable for getting out, and recognize that the freedom fighters will not be conquered.

MORE

On bilateral and human rights questions, there were some small, encouraging steps before the summit, and in the agreements we reached there, to promote people-to-people contacts. In both areas, we're hoping greater steps will follow. As I also told the Congress, human rights is a true peace issue.

If there is one conclusion to draw from our Fireside Summit, it's that American policies are working. In a real sense, preparations for the summit started 5 years ago when, with the help of Congress, we began strengthening our economy, restoring our national will, and rebuilding our defense and alliances.

America is strong again and American strength has caught the Soviets' attention. They recognize that the United States is no longer just reacting to world events; we are in the forefront of a powerful, historic tide for freedom and opportunity, for progress and peace.

There's never been a greater need for courage and steadiness than now. Our strategic modernization program is an incentive for the Soviets to negotiate in earnest. But if Congress fails to support the vital defense efforts needed, then the Soviets will conclude that America's patience and will are paper thin, and the world will become more dangerous again.

Courage and steadiness are all important for freedom fighters too. I made it clear in Geneva that America embraces all those who resist tyranny and struggle for freedom. Breaking faith with freedom fighters would signal that aggression carries no risk. And this we will not allow.

My fellow Americans, we are entering a season of hope. If we remain resolute for freedom and peace, if we keep faith with God. Then our American family, 238 million strong, will even more -- be even more to be thankful for next year.

Again it's wonderful to be home; so until next week, thanks for listening and God bless you.

END

12:11 P.M. EST