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# WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 8/5/82 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: c.o.b. TODAY

SUBJECT: SPEECH TO VFW CONVENTION IN LOS ANGELES

|                | ACTION                              | FYI                                    |                 | ACTION                              | FYI                                 |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|--|-----------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| VICE PRESIDENT | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>               | GERGEN          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| MEESE          | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>    | HARPER          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| BAKER          | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>    | JAMES           | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| DEAVER         | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>    | JENKINS         | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| STOCKMAN       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>               | MURPHY          | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| CLARK          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>               | ROLLINS         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| DARMAN         | <input type="checkbox"/> P          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SS | WILLIAMSON      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| DOLE           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>               | WEIDENBAUM      | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| DUBERSTEIN     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>               | BRADY/SPEAKES   | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| FIELDING       | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>               | ROGERS          | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| FULLER         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>               | <u>BAKSHIAN</u> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Remarks:

Please provide any edits directly to Aram Bakshian, with an information copy to my office.

Thank you.

Richard G. Darman  
Assistant to the President  
(x2702)

Response:

(Rohrabacher/AB)  
August 5, 1982  
11:00 a.m.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: VFW CONVENTION  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA  
AUGUST 16, 1982

Commander Fellwock, Marion Watson, President of the Ladies Auxiliary, distinguished guests and all of you. I'm especially happy to see my old friend Charlton Heston here. Being with the VFW, you understand what it means to be in a fight. Well, take it from me, Screen Actors Guild politics is as tough as it comes, and it takes real professional courage to make the kind of stands he's been taking. So I'm more than pleased you've chosen to honor Chuck Heston at this convention.

And a special greeting to Commmander Henry Kleeman, Lt. David Venlet, Lt. Lawrence Muczynski and Lt. James Anderson. These fellas did more for the cause of peace in a few minutes over the Gulf of Sidra last year than all the jawboning people have done with that Libyan dictator for the last decade. Pardon the expression, but with men on duty like this, I sleep better at night.

You know there has always been an argument over just which branch of the service is actually the toughest, especially if there is a Marine in the room. Well, I heard a story about a group of Marines who were sent to Fort Bragg, an Army base, for airborne training. An Army lieutenant briefed these Marines about the operation. He told them they were to jump from their plane at 800 feet and once they hit the ground they would regroup and head north. After the briefing, several of the Marines went to the Lieutenant and asked if the plane could be lowered to,

maybe, 500 feet. The Lieutenant explained that if it went any lower it wouldn't allow time for the parachutes to open . . . to which the surprised Marines replied: Oh, you mean we'll be wearing parachutes.

It is certainly a pleasure for me to be with you again.

We were in the midst of the Presidential campaign when I had the honor of being with you at your convention in Chicago. I want each of you to know that I have not forgotten that your organization departed from an 80-year precedent to endorse my candidacy.

Twenty-four months ago does not seem like such a long time. Already our country was plagued with underlying economic ills from which we are still suffering.

The problems we faced required a commitment to seek a fundamental change of direction -- not band-aid solutions or quick fixes. Relying on government to solve every problem, turning to politicians whose only answer was tax, tax and spend, spend had put us on the road to economic oblivion and was undermining the character of our people. Well, during the 19 months of this Administration, we've made an honest attempt to put this country back on the right track. I want to thank you now for all the support you and your office in Washington have been. We've gone through some tough fights, and the VFW's been there when it counted. The struggle isn't over yet, but we're winning it.

One of the most important things we've tried to do is focus America on new ways of approaching problems. Through our Private

Sector Initiative drive, which has been a priority program, we've encouraged people to get directly involved -- to take more personal responsibility for their families, their community and their country.

Your organization, of course, has always been an example of what concerned citizens can accomplish. Last year the VFW and Ladies Auxiliary units contributed over 1-3/4 million hours and \$1-1/2 million to community service projects. Your driver safety and bicycle safety programs as well as your drug abuse projects touch the lives of hundred of thousands of young people. And I understand that over 1,100 Boy Scout troops are sponsored by VFW posts.

All of this is in the finest tradition of American voluntarism, as is the tremendous service you offer your country by watching over the interests of the American veteran. Last year, in V.A. hospitals and offices throughout the country, you donated time worth millions of dollars -- and the kind of sincere dedication that money cannot buy. Your network of accredited service officers are an indispensable part of the system, which all too often is marred by the complexities of government bureaucracy. Through your network, veterans are able to cut the red tape and receive the benefits that rightfully belong to them.

I'm proud to say that during this time of necessary budget reductions, we have not cut back at the expense of those who defended this country. I, for one, do not view veterans' benefits as a social welfare program. No one is giving the veteran anything; these are benefits that have been earned. So

today, let me restate to you that the quality health care offered to our veterans will not be compromised and the programs promised to those who fought for their country remain a solid commitment of this Administration.

Two years ago, when I spoke at your Chicago convention, we were concerned about more than a faltering economy. Sometimes it's difficult to remember the frustration and helplessness we felt then knowing that 50 of our citizens were being held hostage in a distant land. America seemed confused and vacillating. For the first time, one could hear the refrain that we were a Nation in decline, that our best days were behind us. Morale in our military was plunging as were recruitment and reenlistment rates.

What we witnessed was the predictable result of a decade of neglect for the security needs of the United States. During the 1970's, our defense spending, in constant dollars, decreased by 22 percent. As a percentage of our gross national product, it fell from 9 percent in 1960 to 5.3 percent in 1980. This intentional cut back decimated much of our military potential. The Navy, which once could muster a commanding force in any trouble spot, shrunk from more than 1,000 ships in the early 70's to 531 ships in 1980. In too many cases, new weapons systems were simply delayed or deferred -- leaving the Army and Marine Corps with arms and equipment designed in the early 1960's and the Air Force with bombers almost as old as the men flying them.

The last administration, elected on a platform of cutting military spending, turned this decline into a tailspin.

Meanwhile, the Soviet Union launched a massive program of militarization which doubled their military budget over the past 15 years. Today the Kremlin's military commitment takes 12 to 14 percent of the Soviet gross national product. With an economy two-thirds the size of our own, the Soviets are, by some estimates, outspending us militarily by 50 percent; in the last 10 years, their investment in weapons systems, related research and development, and military construction has been about \$350 billion greater than our own.

Considering the deterioration of Western defensive capabilities, what happened in the last decade was one of the greatest voluntary reversals of a global power relationship in the history of man.

When we met in Chicago, I pledged that if I was elected President, I would take the steps necessary to restore America's margin of safety. And, with your help, I have tried to fulfill that pledge.

Just like restoring health to our economy, rebuilding America's defenses is not something that can be done overnight. Yet, we've taken the first, vital steps on the long road back to peace and security.

We have reversed some of the more damaging decisions made by the last administration. Rather than cutting back, we are moving forward. Among our decisions was the revival of the B-1 bomber and the neutron warhead, important weapons cancelled by the last administration -- weapons that could well play an important role in deterring aggression and maintaining the peace. Beyond

weapons and spending, we've also ended the self-flagellation and damaging attacks on America's intelligence community. Instead, we've let the dedicated men and women who provide this vital service know that we're proud of them and grateful for the job they are doing.

And that is true for all those who play a role in defending this country. During the last decade, the military became the whipping-boy for those who were confused and uncertain about America's role in the world. It is a tribute to their patriotism and dedication to duty that our men and women in uniform remained faithful even in the face of a seemingly ungrateful Government.

I am proud to report to you today that in this Administration the brave men and women who defend this country are being given the respect and consideration they deserve.

During the last decade, military pay and benefits were permitted to seriously erode; righting this wrong was one of our first orders of business. This, coupled with a commitment to provide our personnel with the tools and weapons they need, has shown dramatic results.

A few months ago, I got a letter from our Ambassador to Luxembourg. He had been up on the East German border where the Second Armored Cavalry regiment is stationed. And he wrote to tell me what a fine spirit he found among our troops. He said, as he started to leave, one 19-year-old lad followed him over to the helicopter and wanted to know if the Ambassador could get a message to me. As Ambassador, he is the President's representative, so he replied he could do that. The soldier



said, "Well, will you tell him for us that we're proud to be here and we ain't scared of nothing?"

Well, the spirit reflected by that young man is only one of many indicators that we've turned a very serious situation around. The all-volunteer military, the system most consistent with our tradition as a free society, is working, and working well. All of the services are meeting their recruiting goals and there's a high level of reenlistment. Furthermore, test scores have improved dramatically and a larger share of the recruits are high school graduates. In short, we're attracting more and better people to the military service.

These fine young Americans have proved that they are willing to do this hard and often dangerous job, now that they know their country stands behind them and that their sacrifice is appreciated. If for nothing else, I am proud that during my 19 months as President, I have been permitted to play a part in restoring respect for the dignity and honor of those who defend this country.

Rebuilding our defenses, of course, takes more than reviving morale; it also requires money. Two decades ago President Kennedy said, "Peace and freedom do not come cheap." Now increasing Government spending for any reason is a painful task for this Administration.

That's why I appointed a man in whom I have exceptional trust, a man of talent and judgment, to head the Department of Defense. An undeniably important part of Cap Weinberger's job -- and he's told me this on many occasions -- is getting control of

the cost of our defense, realizing that to maintain a consensus for national security, the people must be aware that their resources are not being wasted.

And while it hasn't made much news, major reforms have been instituted. Over the next 6 years, for example, \$21 billion will be saved by improvements in the acquisition process and management operations of the Department, all part of a reform package that will save the taxpayers over \$52 billion in that same time period. However, no matter how good the management, the cost of defending this Nation is still an expensive proposition. How much to spend, and on what, is a matter for honest discussion. But, we cannot and will not compromise the security of this country or the safety of our servicemen in the name of free economy.

Our security rests on more than the morale of our troops and the efficiency of their equipment. When I last met with you, we talked about the need for a more coherent foreign policy. Certainly, today's world is not without a broad array of problems and conflicts, but I suggest the leadership we've offered in the last 19 months is more consistent with maintaining peace than what preceded us. Do any of you believe we were more secure or more respected with a liberal foreign policy that glossed over differences with the Soviets and never stood firm with our allies? No, kiss-on-the-cheek foreign policy did not bring us closer to peace.

There are those who criticize us for blocking American involvement in construction of the Soviet gas pipeline. Well, at

a time when their troops slaughter Afghan freedom fighters, at a time when the Soviet pressure and threats resulted in Polish repression, at a time when their arms production continues unabated, it's no time to offer them credits so even more of their resources can be channeled into making weapons -- it's no time for our friends to fall into a dependency on Soviet gas.

There are those who point to our selling of grain, suggesting our stand is inconsistent and self-serving. Well, let's take a serious look at that argument. We are not selling anything to the Soviets on credit. In fact, the more grain they buy from us, the less money they will have left for weapons production. Secondly, we are not becoming dependent on them -- it's the other way around.

Finally, let me say: Leadership does not always mean going along, even with friends. It means doing what is right. In this case, I am convinced our pipeline decision was right, and unless there is a tangible sign from the Soviets, the decision sticks.

But let there be no mistake, standing firm should not be interpreted as belligerency. I say to you who know the ultimate importance of preserving peace, you who have seen the tragedy of war firsthand, who have seen friends die on the battlefield, we desire peace with all our hearts. But to realize that objective, we must use our heads as well as our hearts. There are those who pound on their chest shouting for peace. They would make agreements even if it leaves the Western Democracies weak and militarily vulnerable. They act on the blind hope that militaristic regimes will respect our sincerity and compromise.

As morally superior as that may make them feel, it does not make conflict in the real world any less likely.

Teddy Roosevelt had something to say about this. "The voice of the weakling," he said, "counts for nothing when he clamors for peace; but the voice of the just man armed is potent. We need to keep in a condition of preparedness . . . not because we want war, but because we desire to stand with those whose plea for peace is listened to with respectful attention."

No, we don't gloss over our differences with the Soviets. We are proud of our free system and we are not afraid to say it. We oppose Soviet tyranny, and we are not afraid to say that either. Yet this does not mean we cannot -- even while realizing our differences -- deal with the Soviet Union or anyone else on a mature basis in order to prevent armed conflict, which is, of course, in the interests of all the nations of the world.

To this end, we are engaged in serious strategic arms negotiations. We've offered proposals to eliminate intermediate-range missiles in Europe and to reduce the total number of strategic arms to verifiable, equal and agreed-upon levels.

I'd like to thank the VFW for your support of our arms reduction efforts and for your vocal opposition to what is known as the nuclear freeze movement. This so-called freeze undermines our negotiating position with the Soviets and, to the extent it is successful, would freeze us into a position of permanent inferiority. In short, it would reward the Soviets for their

massive buildup and guarantee them nuclear superiority over this country. That is not the way to achieve a tranquil world.

Perhaps the freeze movement, and I don't doubt these people's honest convictions, but perhaps this is just another lingering reaction to the Vietnam conflict, which left so many disillusioned with their own country. You might remember that I mentioned Vietnam the last time I was with you. In fact, that was about the only thing anyone in the media remembered for weeks after that. Yet, no matter how that tragic war is remembered, let us today confirm that a tremendous wrong, a breach of faith, was done to those who fought that war and came home only to suffer the brunt of the anti-military sentiment being fanned by the emotions of the day.

The VFW is doing a tremendous job letting Vietnam veterans know that their sacrifice is not taken lightly. Your contributions to the Vietnam memorial project are most appreciated. When I entered office, a man had been waiting for years to receive a decoration he earned by his bravery in Vietnam. He'd been waiting because some people thought honoring him would revive memories of that conflict. Well, it was my privilege to personally award Sergeant Roy Benavidez the Congressional Medal of Honor.

We can and will make up to the Vietnam vets the ingratitude some showed them on their return. We must also pledge that in the future those who defend this country will know that, if they are called upon to risk their lives, their Government and fellow countrymen will have the courage to back them up.

One of the greatest tragedies of Vietnam was that the United States cannot be certain, even to this day, that the treaty we signed to disengage ourselves from the conflict was fully complied with in regards to our Prisoners of War and Missing in Action. We have no confirmed evidence, but we have enough information not to rule out the possibility that some of our unaccounted-for servicemen could still be held alive in Indochina. We will continue to use all means available, including the full intelligence apparatus of the United States, to get to the bottom of this matter. Should we discover these reports are true, we are prepared to take appropriate action to ensure that no American remains a captive. Simultaneously, we are continuing our efforts to insure the remains of those American prisoners still in Indochina are returned home.

Many of you fought in the Second World War, an epic struggle that to this day affects our lives in so many ways. A thousand stories emerged from that conflict; one of them, a tale of British POW's used as slave labor to build a Japanese railway bridge in Western Thailand -- a story made famous by the book and film, Bridge on the River Kwai.

Well, there actually is a River Kwai. Near its banks is a cemetery, the final resting place for those who died building that railway. Many of the grave markers are inscribed with nothing more than a name and service number. Yet, now and then there is a small monument, built by a mother or father, or a wife, who trekked half way around the world to the rugged Thai-Burmese border region, searching for a marker with a very

special service number. On one of those monuments, erected by a loved one, are the following words: To the world, he is just a number; but to us, he was all the world.

Let us today reaffirm that those who serve this country are more than numbers. When discussing the defense of the United States, let us never forget we are talking about the sacrifice of individuals upon whose shoulders rests the future of our independence and freedom. We know they will not let us down, let us make certain we do not let them down.

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Thank you very much, Commander, Fellwock, for that kind introduction. I'm not sure I know how to possibly live up to it. You may recall the story about Admiral Nimitz and General MacArthur, who were fishing together off the PHilippines during the second World War, when a sudden squall capsized their boat and sent both men into the water. When they finally managed to climb back on, the admiral turned to the general and said, "Now, Mac, I hope you won't mention this to a soul. I'd be disgraced if the men of the Navy ever found out I can't swim".

And to this, the general replied, "Don't worry, admiral. Your secret is safe. Besides, I'd hate to have my men discover I can't walk on water."

Now, when you find yourself addressing an audience in the wake of President Reagan, you don't really expect to walk on water - you're pleased just to be listened to at all. I think our President did us all very proud yesterday morning... and from your reaction to his message, I suspect you agree with me.



Two years ago, the people of this country signaled their desire to turn away from the path of diplomatic retreat and unilateral disarmament. They said they wanted America re-armed - not may -be, not just a little, but re-armed to a level that would deter future aggression and prevent any adversary from confusing our hunger for peace with a taste for appeasement.

At the same time, here at home, they demanded an end to the pickpocket school of government, an end to double digit inflation, an end to the ocean of federal red ink threatening to capsize us all. The man and the moment met, and today, we are once again making good on the promise of America.

That, of course, is but one of many priorities you and this Administration have in common. Together, we envisage an America where government is the people's servant, and not their master. We see an America whose people can afford to enjoy the fruits of their labor -- instead of surrendering that bounty to the voracious appetite of tax collectors and bureaucratic regulators.

In the last 19 months, President Reagan has done much to make that vision become reality. Thanks to his leadership -- and thanks to the vocal support of millions of citizens like yourselves -- we are giving this country back to the people who make it great, and defended it bravely. We have launched the greatest relief program ever -- for the American taxpayer. We are putting \$\_\_\_\_\_ billion back into your pockets -- and we are entrusting you to make the decisions that will move our economy off dead-center.

We have finally begun to tighten the belt on Washington -- while continuing to care for those in genuine need. For any who doubt that commitment, I would call their attention to the 95 million Americans who will eat a federally-subsidized meal tomorrow -- or the 5 million college students aided by federal dollars in pursuit of a degree -- or the one million aspiring jobholders being trained with federal funds -- or the 3½ million who live in federally-subsidized housing.

This Administration is not abandoning its obligation to the needy -- only accepting the honest fact that government can no longer spend with reckless abandon, and that when it does it only burdens every citizen with an unbearable load of taxes, inflation and unemployment. No we have a different idea. We

are cutting taxes -- cutting the rate of growth in spending -- reducing excessive regulation -- and pursuing a stable economic climate within which to make plans. We are doing all this because the old ways have failed. And because we want something better than paternalism for the poor -- we want to offer them a hand up not just a hand out. We want a hard pressed middle class to keep more of what it earns. As they grow to adulthood, we want our children to have the same opportunity to enjoy the independence that comes with self-support.

Most of all, we want them to inherit a world at peace, where no one rattles a sword and no one drags a chain. And that brings me to yet another priority which you and this administration share.

Perhaps no audience in America better understands the distinction between defensive and offensive weapons. Surely, none has been more generous in its support for an America whose defense is adequate to her needs. For you understand that great nations must shoulder great responsibilities. They must be willing to spend dollars for defense, unless they want to spill blood on some distant battle field. You understand the difference between outlaws and the law-abiding -- not only in our own neighborhoods, but in the global community. You

understand strength as a deterrent to wrongdoers. And you have never hesitated to go public with that realistic assessment of the dangerous world in which we live.

And so it is, that this evening, in the midst of a worldwide debate on arms and arms control, I would like to spend a few minutes on this country's position and this President's efforts to halt the rush to doomsday.

Last November 18th, 1981 President Reagan called for the "Zero Option as far as theater nuclear forces for Europe were concerned; that is, withdrawal of U.S. Pershing II and ground-launched cruise missiles to be matched by the dismantling of Soviet SS-20's, SS-4's, and SS-5's already in place.

On May 9th of this year, our President unveiled his long-awaited strategic arms reduction proposal:  
ICBM warheads down by About 50% to 5,000 for each side and all ballistic missiles -- land or sea-based -- down to one half of the existing U.S. inventory.

Finally, on June 10th President Reagan called for sharp, mutual reductions over a seven year period of the opposing forces on NATO's central front - to down to 700,000 for Warsaw Pact and NATO ground forces and 900,000 for ground and air forces.

In each of these three dramatic Presidential proposals -- strategic weapons, theater nuclear weapons, and conventional force levels -- certain bed-rock, non-negotiable principles were evident. We insist that any reductions be mutual, equitable, verifiable, and significant in scope.

Of course, President Reagan is a man of peace. But he seeks a true peace, one that will endure over time. We reject the peace of Poland, an Afghanistan, or a Finland. We reject peace at any price - because we know it can become the first payment on an installment plan for war.

Such a form of American strategic surrender, however muted or disguised, will never occur so long as Ronald Wilson Reagan leads this Nation we love. Some who "freeze now and count later". Well, I invite them to drop their placards, discard their slogans, and remember this: negotiation, like marriage, takes two. It has little hope of success without incentives for both sides to negotiate in good faith. No one more than Ronald Reagan hopes for an early end to the endless stockpiling of weaponry. But to freeze weapons at their existing imbalance would achieve nothing but a global stamp of approval on the Soviets' nuclear superiority. Or, to use a domestic comparison it would be the ultimate example of taking guns away from those who have them only for self-defense -- while leaving them bristling in the trigger-happy hands of international law-breakers.

There is nothing new in the popular desire to spend less on national defense. During a debate on the subject in 1789, in our constitutional convention, one delegate got to his feet and moved that " the standing army be restricted to 5,000 men at any one time." This prompted George Washington, as presiding officer, to suggest an amendment of his own -- to provide that no foreign enemy shall invade the United States with more than 3,000 troops at any time.

Freezing an imbalance of arms would be just about as effective as that original freeze on the size of standing armies. It would put pressure on this country and little or none on the Soviets. It would not materially advance the cause of nuclear disarmament -- on the contrary, it would all but destroy the justification for any genuine arms reduction. No -- the nuclear status quo is too deadly to enshrine permanently. President Reagan understands that thoroughly, and that is why he is inviting the Soviets to invest more commitment and less propaganda in stemming the arms spiral.

The Soviets claim to harbor strictly defensive notions. Tell that to the people of Afghanistan. Tell it to the residents of Warsaw and Gdansk. In fact, this "strictly defensive" military machine has been expanding at an alarming rate for the past 15 years. As a land power, you wouldn't think that Soviet defense requires maritime superiority -- yet that's what they've spent

tens of billions of dollars to achieve. Equipped with a land army already considerable larger than our own, you wouldn't think that Soviet defense would require adding scores of fresh divisions and four times as many tanks -- and yet that's exactly what they've done. As a nation saddled with economic woes, whose people are deprived of consumer goods and basic necessities, you wouldn't think that Soviet defense alone could justify spending \$85 billion more than the U.S. over the last ten years. And yet, that's exactly what they've done.

And what have they gotten for their money? An empire whose cracks are showing. A guerilla war in the rugged mountains of Afghanistan. An expansive solar system of economically impoverished satellites. And rising hostility wherever people value freedom and the opportunity to create a better life for themselves. The Soviets portray their military buildup as a necessary response -- a circling of the wagons, if you will, to protect the motherland from hostile forces ranged around her borders. In fact, their paranoia is directed less at outside forces than those within. The only thing greater than their fear is their ambition. And so it is that the Reagan Administration finds itself confronted with a drastically different balance of power than anything known in the last twenty-five years.

Those pacifists who march in European streets have an understandable interest in protecting their homelands from a nuclear holocaust. But they must not forget in their zeal for peace

that it is not strength but weakness which tempts the aggressor. They of all people should understand the lessons of Munich and the locust years that followed. And they should likewise grasp the dangers of a world in which the United States lowers, not only her voice, but also her flag. We, no less than they, must come to terms with a world in which American resolve is all that stands between a tense balance and a global reign of terror. Either we accept that burden, or we place every value we hold dear in peril.

The American people expressed their own concern about our future course 19 months ago. They elected President Reagan with a clear mandate to rebuild our defenses. And the President has responded with a series of decisions designed to ward off would-be aggressors.

Now I'd be remiss if I didn't point out the myth being perpetrated by our detractors - the idea that somehow we're depriving social programs of dollars so that weapons can be built and defenses restored. But look at the record of the last few years. In the 1950's and 60's, defense spending accounted for nearly half the national budget, and between 8 and 9% of our GNP. Today, by contrast, for all the talk of a build-up, the Defense Department spends less than 29% of the total budget, and just over 6% of the GNP. Yet the Soviets have gone on spending 2½ times that level - over \$400 billion more than this country allotted to its defense needs during the 1970's alone.



The end product of this imbalance is painfully obvious to all but those blinded by their own sloganeering.

The sad but inescapable truth is that virtually every part of our strategic forces is in need of both modernization and strengthening. The Minuteman system for missile basing was decided on more than 20 years ago. The mainstay of our present bomber force, the B-52, was chosen some 30 years ago, forcing our pilots to fly planes older than themselves.

Much has been said about the U.S. military build-up. What exactly, does it consist of? Basically, it contains five mutually reinforcing elements:

- FIRST -- We plan long neglected improvements in our command and control systems. This will enable us to better-operate all parts of the triad: land, sea and air.
- SECOND -- We will modernize our strategic bomber fleet to replace our 30-year-old B-52's, so we can continue to have an ability to penetrate Soviet air defenses by manned bombers.
- THIRD -- We will deploy new, heavier, and far more accurate submarine-launched ballistic missiles -- in many ways, the most survivalbe of all defense systems.
- FOURTH -- We will undertake a step-by-step plan to improve the strength and accuracy of the new MX land-based missiles (which are far more accurate and which carry 10 warheads apiece). We will also seek out ways to reduce the vulnerability of the MX.

-- FIFTH -- We will improve our strategic defenses as yet another means of discouraging and deterring attack.

We will not neglect our conventional capabilities - far from it. We intend to place special emphasis on those areas which have suffered the most during the long years when our defenses were allowed to decay. That means improving the overall readiness, sustainability, and moderniation of our forces. It means bolstering our military's ability to respond to conventional challenges. It means getting on with the unglamorous yet critical task of providing more spare parts, more ammunition, more fuel and more training so that those who must be proficient in the use of weapons can have the time they need to develop their skills properly.

In rebuilding our land forces, we will not neglect those who fly our flag on the vast oceans and the inland seas. For access to the seas is vital if we are to protect our interests abroad as well as the crucial lines of supply that now bring us scarce materials from all over the world. A strong Navy is the only way to insure this ability -- and we are rebuilding ours so that it will be very strong indeed. We are also upgrading the rapid deployment force.

And we are finally rewarding our men and women in uniform with more than pretty words and empty gestures. Last October, our military personnel received a pay raise of 14.3%. It was long overdue, and well-deserved. And it's no coincidence that the President not long ago was able to announce that all four services have met their manpower quotas for the first time since the all-volunteer force was introduced in 1973.

Because of the President's leadership in changing our national attitudes about those who serve, recognition of military service for what it is - the protection of our freedom - and appreciation for the men and women who perform those jobs is growing as rapidly as is their level of pay. Our enlistment and reenlistment rates are significantly improved. The importance of this cannot be exaggerated. Because history has proved again and again, that the tenacity and character of a nation is reflected in those who wear its uniform and carry its arms.

I could not leave this hall without paying special tribute to some of the bravest Americans I know -- those who represent some 535,000 Vietnam veterans in your proud organization.

In 1980, the President described the war you fought with gallantry and heroism as a "Noble Cause". And despite the tragic divisiveness of that war here in America, a careful

survey of those who actually did the fighting shows that 91% take pride in having served our country. 90% of those who saw "heavy combat" expressed the same sentiment. And sixty-six percent stated they would serve again.

I sense these courageous young American veterans know something that some other Americans never knew -- or have forgotten.

What they know is summed up in a few lines scrawled in a bunker at Khe San:

"For those who fought for it,  
Freedom has a flavor that  
the protected will never know".

At the birth of our republic more than two centuries ago, Thomas Jefferson said the same thing in slightly different language ... "Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom must ... undergot the fatigues of supporting it."

You who fought in Vietnam, like all your colleagues who have given distinction to the uniform of American fighting men, have undergone the fatigues foreseen by Jefferson. Because of you, the rest of us know the blessings of freedom. We will not sacrifice what you have achieved. We will not embrace short-term popularity at the expense of long-range survival. We will not turn our backs on our friends -- and we dare not turn our backs

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in the presence of foes. We will keep the peace -- but a peace of equals. We will insure American power -- along with a sense of American purpose. We will not lower our voice; we will never lower our flag. And the men of Khe San, like their predecessors at Guadalcanal, Anzio, the Ardennes, and Gettysburg, will know that their sacrifice is honored, their nation secure, and their children safe to assume their own responsibilities in the 200 year struggle for freedom -- wherever it thrives, and especially, wherever it is threatened. You have never let us down' we will not let you down.

Thank you and God bless you all.

ll

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

TO: *Morton*  
FROM: Diana Lozano  
SUBJECT:

The attached is for your:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Review & Comment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Direct Response  | <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate Action          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> EHD Draft Letter | <input type="checkbox"/> Signature                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> File             | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                       |

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

*Good occasion to speak - ll*

*4/22*

INVITATION CHECKLIST

EVENT: Veterans of Foreign Wars/National Convention

REQUESTED DATE: August 17, 1982

Type of Participation

Keynote Speech \_\_\_\_\_  
Formal Speech \_\_\_\_\_  
Informal Speech \_\_\_\_\_  
Drop-by \_\_\_\_\_  
Briefing \_\_\_\_\_  
Reception \_\_\_\_\_  
Panel Participation \_\_\_\_\_  
Attend Only \_\_\_\_\_  
Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Type of Organization

Major National \_\_\_\_\_  
National \_\_\_\_\_  
Regional \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_  
Local \_\_\_\_\_  
Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Required Travel

Local D.C. \_\_\_\_\_  
D.C. Metro Area \_\_\_\_\_  
In-and-out \_\_\_\_\_  
Overnight \_\_\_\_\_  
Regional Swing \_\_\_\_\_

Support In Favor of Event

Personal (EHD/Senator) \_\_\_\_\_  
White House (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Admin. (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
RNC (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Travel Budget

White House \_\_\_\_\_  
RNC \_\_\_\_\_  
Federal Agency \_\_\_\_\_  
N/A \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation

ACCEPTANCE:

Top Priority \_\_\_\_\_  
Okay, but not crucial \_\_\_\_\_  
Personal Preference \_\_\_\_\_

REGRET:

OPL Surrogate \_\_\_\_\_  
WH Speakers Bureau \_\_\_\_\_  
Presidential Message \_\_\_\_\_  
Thank You \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

EHD: \_\_\_\_\_  
ACCEPT: \_\_\_\_\_

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766-  
7900  
1440

APR 12 REC'D

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS  
OF THE UNITED STATES  
FOUNDED 1899



V. F. W. MEMORIAL BUILDING  
200 MARYLAND AVENUE, N. E.  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20002

ARTHUR J. FELLWOCK  
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

April 9, 1982

*BONAVENTURE*  
*213-624-1800*  
*Sch + Signers*  
*LA*  
*90071*

Mrs. Elizabeth Dole  
Assistant to the President  
for Public Liaison  
The White House  
Washington, D. C. 20500

TO: Diana 4/12  
PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR RECOMMENDATION/  
COMMENTS ON THE FOLLOWING REQUEST.  
RETURN TO OFFICE 4/14

Dear Mrs. Dole:

As National Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, I am most honored to invite you to address the delegates attending our 83rd National Convention to be held in Los Angeles, California, during the period August 13-19, 1982.

Schedule permitting, we would like for you to address the delegates attending the General Business Session on Tuesday, August 17, at 11 A.M. in the Los Angeles Bonaventure Hotel. With past Conventions as my certain guide, you may expect an audience of approximately 3,000 of your fellow Americans. We realize the Ladies Auxiliary to our organization will be honoring you with the presentation of its "United American Award" at 10 A.M. on the same date.

I realize, Mrs. Dole, the great demand on your time but I am hopeful you can arrange your busy schedule in order to devote a few hours to attend our Convention. If an acceptance is received from you, Cooper T. Holt, Executive Director of our Washington Office staff, will be in touch with your office to work out the necessary details.

Looking forward to receiving a favorable reply, I am

Sincerely yours,

*Arthur J. Fellwock*

ARTHUR J. FELLWOCK  
Commander-in-Chief