



# PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH:

Reflections on President Reagan's  
Guiding Principle for our National Defense

Edited by Keeghan Sweeney  
and Roger I. Zakheim

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The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute (RRPFI) is the non-profit, non-partisan organization established by President Reagan whose mission is to promote his legacy by convening, educating and engaging people around the world in his core principles of freedom, economic opportunity, global democracy and national pride. The Ronald Reagan Institute in Washington, DC – an entity of RRPFI – promotes President Reagan’s ideals, vision, and leadership example for the benefit of generations to come through substantive, issue-driven forums, academic and young professional programming, and scholarly work. The Reagan Foundation sustains the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum. At the dedication of the Reagan Library in November 1991, President Reagan defined its purpose by describing it as a living institution where scholars interpret the past and policy makers debate the future.

In memory of Senator John McCain,  
an American statesman and self-proclaimed “foot soldier” in the  
Reagan Revolution whose determination and courage strengthened  
the security of the American people and advanced freedom across  
the United States and around the world.

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## Peace Through Strength Award Recipients

Senator Carl M. Levin represented the state of Michigan in the U.S. Senate for 37 years (1978-2014), making him the longest serving senator in the state's history. Senator Levin served as Chairman of the Armed Services Committee from 2007-2015.

The Honorable Robert M. Gates served as the 22nd U.S. Secretary of Defense (2006-2011). Mr. Gates is the only secretary of defense in U.S. history to be asked to remain in that office by a newly elected President.

The Honorable Leon E. Panetta served as the 23rd Secretary of Defense (2011-2013), the 3rd Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (2009-2011), and the 18th White House Chief of Staff (1994-1997).

Senator John S. McCain III (1936-2018) represented the state of Arizona in the U.S. Senate for thirty-two years (1987-2018). Senator McCain served as Chairman of the Armed Services Committee from 2015-2018.

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice served as the 66th Secretary of State (2005-2008) and the 20th National Security Advisor (2001-2004), making her the first woman to serve in that position.

Congressman Adam Smith was first elected to represent Washington's 9th district in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1997 where he continues to serve today. Congressman Smith is the Ranking Member of the Armed Services Committee.

The Honorable Richard B. Cheney served as the 46th Vice President of the United States (2001-2009), the 17th U.S. Secretary of Defense (1989-1993), a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (1979-1989), and the 7th White House Chief of Staff (1975-1977).

The Honorable Ashton B. Carter served as the 25th U.S. Secretary of Defense (2015-2017) and the 30th Deputy Secretary of Defense (2011-2013).

Senator John ("Jack") F. Reed was elected to represent the state of Rhode Island in the U.S. Senate in 1996 where he continues to serve today. Senator Reed is the Ranking Member of the Armed Services Committee.

The Honorable George P. Shultz served as the 60th U.S. Secretary of State (1982-1989), the 62nd U.S. Secretary of the Treasury (1972-1974), the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (1970-1972), and the 11th U.S. Secretary of Labor (1969-1970).

# Preface

By John Heubusch

Executive Director,

The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute

The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation & Institute created the Ronald Reagan Peace Through Strength Award to honor individuals whose courage and leadership in support of our nation's armed forces, at home and abroad, have contributed to the security of the American people and the advancement of freedom. Upon receiving the award at the Reagan National Defense Forum, recipients deliver remarks reflecting on the meaning of peace through strength. These speeches, printed for the first time in this publication, stand as a testament to the continued relevance of President Reagan's guiding principle for our nation's defense.

Since its inception in 2013, a Vice President, four Secretaries of Defense, two Secretaries of State, two U.S. Senators, and a Member of Congress have received the Award. At the 2018 Reagan National Defense Forum, two more distinguished public servants, former Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson and General Jack Keane (USA ret.), will join this distinguished group of recipients.

The rationale for this award and this publication extends beyond the celebration of these individuals. All ten recipients possess a living memory of the decisive role President Reagan's national defense policies played in ending the Cold War and promoting a more peaceful and stable world. As Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher remarked in her eulogy of President Reagan, "We have one beacon to guide us that Ronald Reagan never had. We have his example." By publishing these extraordinary leaders' reflections on peace through strength, we hope to advance President Reagan's wisdom to a new generation of policy makers.

In that spirit, our board of trustees established the Ronald Reagan Institute in Washington, DC to promote President Reagan's ideals, vision, and leadership example through initiatives such as this publication. President Reagan believed that, "America's best days are yet to come, that our proudest moments are yet to be, and that our most glorious achievements are just ahead." We believe that these reflections on the meaning and value of President Reagan's legacy will ensure his hope for America becomes a reality.

# Introduction

By Roger Zakheim\*

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\* Director, Ronald Reagan Institute in Washington, DC

In 1964, sixteen years before the inauguration of our 40th President, Ronald Reagan's Time for Choosing address warned that "freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction."\*\* To preserve this freedom, he continued, it "must be fought for, protected and handed over to our children to do the same." If we are to successfully preserve our nation's freedom, we must instill another principle from our 40th President: peace through strength.

This volume endeavors to explore the meaning and relevance of peace through strength by publishing a collection of speeches given at the Reagan National Defense Form by the recipients of the Ronald Reagan Peace Through Strength Award. The award recognizes those who have applied, with constant purpose, a strategy to strengthen our armed forces, support our military men and women serving around the world, reinforce our nation's defense systems, and safeguard the lives and interests of the American people.

The Ronald Reagan Peace Through Strength Award is represented by a bronze eagle set upon a black granite base. The eagle symbolizes the strength, courage and wisdom of both President Reagan and the country that he loved so dearly. Captured within the eagle's talon is a piece of the Berlin Wall; this serves as a powerful reminder that what separates American strength from other powers is its unwavering pursuit of peace and freedom.

President Reagan first invoked peace through strength during the 1980 Presidential election to suggest that insufficient investment in American strength had emboldened our adversaries. President Reagan taught that history shows that only by deterring the ambitions of would-be aggressors through unassailable military might

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\*\* Reagan, Ronald. "A Time for Choosing". Ronald Reagan Presidential Library - National Archives and Records Administration, 27 Oct. 1964.

could we secure true peace. In his words, “We maintain the peace through our strength, weakness only invites aggression.” President Reagan trusted America with military strength because he firmly believed that “peace is the highest aspiration of the American people.”

As Secretary Robert Gates (p. 19) noted, President Reagan was not the first American leader to promote the merits of military strength and that his “commitment to peace through strength provides strategic continuity going back to our first President.” In his first Inaugural Address, President George Washington argued that, “To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace.” For Secretary Gates, peace through strength dates to our Founders and is an American tradition worth continuing.

Under President Reagan’s leadership, America restored its strength through the largest peacetime military buildup in US history, ended a Cuban-backed coup in Grenada, deployed Pershing II and Ground Launched Cruise Missiles to Europe, introduced new MX Strategic Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles to counter the Soviet’s nuclear forces and committed to the development of a visionary, paradigm-shifting missile defense system, the Strategic Defense Initiative. These decisive actions exposed the Soviet’s inability to compete with the US thereby enabling President Reagan to negotiate with General Secretary Gorbachev from a position of strength.

As Vice President Cheney (p. 43) recalls, “[t]here was simply no way the Soviet Union was going to defeat an America so confident in its purposes, and so determined to defend itself against nuclear terror. “True peace”, Reagan argued, “Is not the absence of conflict. It is the ability to handle conflict by peaceful means.” President Reagan led America to victory in the Cold War, in the words of Margret Thatcher, “without firing a shot.”

These speeches herein articulate how President Reagan's words 38 years ago continue to influence the thinking and decision making of some of our most distinguished public servants. These speeches offer an array of perspectives on the lessons to be drawn from President Reagan's example and guiding principle.

At the first Forum, Senator Levin (D-MI) (p. 12) emphasized that American strength is dependent on the "credible belief among friends and potential adversaries" that we are willing to use our unmatched military might. He continued that our greatest strength is "our constant desire to harness our might...for the benefit of all of our people and to bring peace to a troubled planet."

Other speakers reflect on the ever-changing complexities of our political and security environment. Secretary Robert Gates warned that the changing nature of war brought about by aerial vehicles with long-range and precision munitions necessitate an even more cautious implementation of our armed forces. He remarked that that despite his emphasis on strength, President Reagan always exercised circumspection "about putting or keeping American troops and America's credibility at risk." Only through this prudence, can we maintain our principled strength throughout the world.

Secretary Condoleezza Rice (p. 35) explained the historical context for peace through strength and the international order it defends and preserves. America's actions abroad are strategically unified in the defense of a system that is underpinned by two principles, "free markets and free peoples." "Peace," Secretary Rice continued, "is not just the absence of war, but a condition in which these freedoms can be obtained." President Reagan believed, and it remains true today, that "hard American military power" is necessary to uphold these foundational pillars.

To preserve the strength that protects the liberal international order, Secretary Panetta (p. 25) argued, “America must be the leader in a troubled world.” Secretary Panetta maintained that we “cannot allow evil to prevail” and that the U.S. must remain “unified and not divided in war.” The former Secretary of Defense concluded that our “most formidable weapon” is our nation’s commitment “to freedom, to human dignity, to the rule of law, and to the rights that all people must embrace if we are truly to have peace in our time.”

Reflecting on an era where our politics is seized with gridlock and partisanship, Congressman Adam Smith (D-WA) (p. 39) commended the wide support for maintaining our military strength. He remarked, “In a Congress where this doesn’t happen often, we actually work together to solve problems.” As evidence, he highlighted the Congressional Armed Services Committees often overlooked record of bi-partisan cooperation through the repeated passage of the National Defense Authorization Act. He maintained that this cooperation on defense is instrumental to peace through strength.

Shifting from the politics at home to the challenges we face abroad, Secretary Ash Carter (p. 51) argued that the recipients of this award are representative of the continuity that peace through strength provides to our defense policy as we transition “through strategic era to strategic era.” According to Secretary Carter the cornerstone of peace through strength are the 3 million “soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines” stationed across the globe. Because of their continuing service, “Americans can enjoy the freedoms upon which this country was built.”

Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) (p. 54) argued that in an era of revanchist authoritarian regimes, peace through strength requires a return to Ronald Reagan’s resolute advocacy for “human dignity, democracy, and the freedom

of sovereign nations to choose their own paths.” For if our “servicemen and woman pledge to defend America and its values”, then we must “speak clearly in support of those values.” Alluding to the Irish Poet Seamus Heaney, Senator Reed closed by remarking that, “Under the leadership of President Reagan and Secretary Shultz, hope and history rhymed.” If we remain true to our principles and do our duty, “hope and history will rhyme once more in our lifetime.”

Unique amongst the recipients, Secretary George Shultz’s (p. 61) remarks offer a firsthand account of President Reagan’s understanding and application of peace through strength. He emphasized the clear moral leadership that President Reagan brought to US national security policymaking and its impact on the men and women he led. Secretary Shultz recounts watching Paul Nitze, the Special Advisor to the President on Arms Control, being asked during Senate testimony how he could serve in an administration where the President would call the USSR an Evil Empire. Nitze responded, “Senator, have you considered the possibility that the statement might be accurate?” Despite criticism from both the right and left during his tenure, President Reagan had the strength to act upon his convictions.

Also drawing upon lessons from the Reagan Presidency, Vice President Cheney’s commentary emphasizes the historic significance of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). The project gathered “American idealism, American ingenuity, and American optimism” into an “unbeatable combination” that forced the Soviets to the negotiating table. The impact of President Reagan’s vision for SDI, Vice President Cheney continued, “is testimony to the power of ideas to shape events.”

Finally, we include the remarks of Senator John S. McCain who left us earlier this year. From his extraordinary courage in a Hanoi prison to his practice

of putting principle over political expediency, Senator John McCain was an especially valiant champion of peace through strength.

Describing himself as a “foot soldier” in the Reagan Revolution, Senator McCain (R-AZ) (p. 31) remembered first encountering President Reagan’s inspiring message of belief in America while incarcerated in a Vietnamese prison camp. He recounted, “When walls were all I had for a world, [President Reagan’s] faith in our country gave me hope in a desolate place.” Senator McCain’s speech called for a marshaling of this faith and to continue the defense of the liberal world order. Like President Reagan, he argued that America’s interests are “inextricably bound” to the prosperity of our values and the free world.

And it is in honor of this “foot soldier” of the Reagan Revolution that we dedicate this volume: few, if any, did more than Senator McCain to ensure the next generation understands the meaning and importance of peace through strength. On behalf of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute, we sincerely hope this small volume will stand as convincing testimony to the continued importance of President Reagan’s governing principle for our national defense.



## Remarks by Senator Carl M. Levin\*

SENATOR LEVIN: Fred thank you so much and to the Foundation, thank you for this extraordinary honor and I'm very deeply grateful to the Foundation and to my wife, Barbara, who's with me here tonight, who's been with me in the Senate all those years, but long before that.

We've been married 52 years, and much of that has been in public life. We talk about military families and it's true we must always remember them, but people who are in public service also have families that need to be remembered for their support because it makes our lives possible.

It's an honor to be given an award that bears the name of Ronald Reagan. It's an honor to be here tonight with Bob Gates, one of the wisest and most dedicated public servants that I've known.

Predictions are often dangerous, as Chairman Dempsey told us earlier today, but this prediction history will judge Bob Gates as one of the truly great leaders of our generation.

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\* Delivered on November 16, 2013 during the first Peace Through Strength Dinner at the Reagan National Defense Forum in Simi Valley, California.

Thank you for that service over so many decades. Thank you for your very generous words about me. I treasure our relationship.

Chuck Hagel, thank you for your great service. Thank you for the words that you uttered here tonight. Thank you for your friendship.

My memoirs, by the way, are not yet written, but I've picked up some pretty good anecdotes here today. Some of them are very embarrassing to some of you and I can assure you that I will put those very promptly in a very prominent position in my book to help my sales.

Buck McKeon, Adam Smith, the Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Armed Services Committee are here tonight. Of course, Buck thank you for your leadership in the House for defense and for this amazing forum. You have been able to, I know with the help of others, gather together an extraordinary group of wise people and we are in your debt and I hope and really believe that this will be the first of many forums that you will be leading here at the Reagan Library.

I am also here tonight with a couple of my colleagues in the Senate. Jack Reed, I believe is still here, he is my seat mate. We travel together frequently. Jeff Sessions, I believe is still here, he is a very valued member of the Armed Services Committee.

Jim Inhofe was of course scheduled to be here, my ranking Republican, Senior Republican on the Committee. It's only because of a very very tragic loss of his son in an airplane crash that he is not here tonight. But I know how much he was looking forward to being here tonight. And I hope I haven't overlooked any of my Senate colleagues.

There are, of course, many House colleagues of Buck's and Adams' here tonight.

The fact that we are here in our numbers and the fact that so many of you with different visions, different experiences from the different parties - many of you don't belong to either party - is really going to strengthen the tradition of working in a bipartisan manner to support our national defense and our men and women in uniform and their families.

With partisanship on the rise in so many corners of the Capitol, the fight to keep bipartisanship is our guiding star in security matters in a fight that we must consistently wage and win on behalf of our troops. As we meet here tonight, many of them are in harm's way in Afghanistan and other places around the world. They are also delivering lifesaving assistance to the people of the Philippines.

We are in a unique position to provide that assistance to them.

All these colleagues here remind me of the work we have to do when we get back to Washington and that in turn reminds me of a story that President Reagan used to tell, and we Democrats can steal Reagan's stories just as well as Republicans can steal Reagan's stories.

President Reagan liked to tell of a time during World War II when Winston Churchill was visited by some ladies from the Temperance League. One of them scolded Churchill saying, "Mr. Prime Minister, it is said that if all the brandy that you have drunk since the war began were poured into this room, it would come all the way up to your waist." Churchill looked at the floor, looked at his waist, looked at the ceiling and then said, "Yes madam, so much accomplished and so much more left to do."

Well we have spent the day here discussing peace through strength as a hallmark of the Reagan legacy and I think President Reagan would want us to remember, as has been

mentioned, that strength is important, not for its own sake, but as a means to peace.

He said, “While we remain strong, we must always be ready for reconciliation, ready to resolve differences with our adversaries, and to resolve them peacefully at the negotiating table.” That is why a President who spoke as forcefully as any about the evils of communism and the dangers of Soviet expansion could, as Chuck Hagel mentioned, negotiate one of the most far reaching nuclear arms reduction treaties of the Cold War, the first agreement to reduce rather than stabilize the number of warheads in our arsenals.

I believe the path to peace through strength surely begins with a powerful military, but that’s only a beginning.

Strength requires policy that produces the credible belief among friends and potential adversaries that we are willing, when necessary, to use that strength. Strength requires working with allies and partners around the world.

Strength requires exercising our power and influence in harmony with deeply held values, especially our belief in democratic government and universal human rights.

Strength surely requires putting aside our domestic political differences to focus on our national interest.

Today, we have what is unquestionably the most capable military on the planet, a military whose power is first and foremost based on the magnificent men and women who serve America so bravely and well. Our challenge is to match their dedication with the required resources through steady and stable budgets.

For more than a year now, we’ve been operating under budget sequestration, mindless, automatic spending cuts

that have done real damage to national security and domestic priorities alike. We have received repeated, urgent warnings from our top military leaders about the impact of these cuts, particularly on readiness.

When the Chief of Staff of the Army says that fewer than 25% of the combat brigades are fully trained, when the Air Force can't hold its red flag exercise, the Navy can't provide a carrier strike force ready to respond to a crisis or the Marines readiness is being cut, our strength and our security are being sapped.

It is also true that large budget deficits weaken us. President Reagan once said that he wasn't worried about the budget deficit because it's big enough to take care of itself. Of course, he said that jokingly. I am working with colleagues to replace these across the board cuts with a balanced deficit reduction plan. This will include prioritized discretionary spending cuts, entitlement reforms, and yes, additional federal revenues, particularly on closing unjustified tax loopholes. This is the same balanced model, by the way, that President Reagan followed in 1984 and 1987 to reduce the deficit.

Strength also requires the credible belief among our allies and adversaries that we are willing to use our military power when necessary.

A credible military threat is important in dissuading Iran from going nuclear. It is vital that Iran believes, when determining its choice, that it believes President Obama's repeated statements that all options are on the table, including the use of our military force and hopefully others if necessary, to stop them from going nuclear. The use of force needs, as Secretary Gates said, to be a last resort.

When the threat to use military force is made, that threat must be credible.

Strength means acting in unity with our allies, friends and even with countries who are not often partners of ours. It sends a powerful signal when the United States is able to unite the international community, including Russia and China, and enforce wide ranging and debilitating economic sanctions against Iran until that country takes itself unalterably and verifiably off the road to nuclear weapons. If there is hope of a peaceful resolution with Iran, it is surely because we are able to pull together a world community behind those sanctions.

Maintaining that unity requires that Congress avoid taking actions that are likely to disrupt negotiations. It is one thing for us to make clear to Iran that additional sanctions await if it refuses good faith offers from the world community to resolve this matter.

It would be quite another thing, and a mistake in my view, for Congress to impose additional sanctions at this time during negotiations before we give diplomacy a reasonable chance to bear fruit.

Strength also requires us to uphold our nation's most cherished values. Those values include abiding by the laws of war regarding the treatment of detainees. One of our greatest challenges is to follow those laws while fighting a terrorist adversary that ignores them. But doing so is what separates us from them and doing so is also critically important to protecting the well-being of our troops.

We are working in the most divisive period of my 35 years in the Senate. If we want our country to remain an indispensable force for peace and stability in the world, we must be unrelenting in our determination to bridge the partisan divides that hamstring us.

Amid all of our faults, failings and missteps, the United States remains mankind's best and mankind's brightest hope for peace and progress. Time and trials have not

diminished the beacon America continues to shine. Of all of our strengths, our greatest is our constant desire to harness our might, our influence and our passion for freedom for the benefit of all of our people and to helping bring peace to a troubled planet.

My thanks again to all of you who have helped to organize this extraordinary defense forum. And again, my thanks for this wonderful award which I shall always treasure.

Thank you.



## Remarks by Honorable Robert M. Gates\*

SECRETARY GATES: The timing for this event is right because my memoir is coming out in January and I don't expect to be on a lot of invitation lists after that.

Chuck, thank you for being here and for all that you are doing and I would say under difficult circumstances. I'm glad Chuck was able to get away from the Pentagon to be with us tonight. Whoever thought that a Secretary of Defense would seek sanctuary in California.

Chuck's been on the job about nine months, which speaking from personal experience means that he is just starting to find his way around the Pentagon. After four and a half years, I still needed someone to guide me to the barber shop and get me back to my office.

Newsman David Brinkley used to tell a story of the early days of the Pentagon. A woman visiting told a guard she was in labor and urgently needed help in getting to a hospital. The guard said, "Madam you should not have come here in that condition." She answered, "I wasn't in this condition when I got here."

When it comes to telling funny stories about government,

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\* Delivered on November 16, 2013 during the first Peace Through Strength Dinner at the Reagan National Defense Forum in Simi Valley, California.

no one could touch Ronald Reagan who once said, “Politics is supposed to be the second oldest profession. I have come to realize that it bears a very close resemblance to the first.”

This was a President who said of his schedule, “I have left orders to be awakened at any time in case of a national emergency, even if I’m in a cabinet meeting.”

President Reagan was very much awake in an Oval Office meeting I attended in November of 1985. As Deputy Director of the CIA, I led a team of analysts to brief the President on the situation in the Soviet Union before his first meeting with Mikhail Gorbachev.

I was seated to his left in the Oval Office and a minute or two into my briefing a high-pitched screech came out of the President’s left ear. It was his hearing aid. If I could hear it, I knew how painful it must be for him. His eyes got wide. He reached up and adjusted the hearing aid, and I resumed my briefing. A couple of minutes later the screeching noise started again and was even louder. The President, with some disgust reached up, plucked the hearing aid from his ear, pounded it in his palm.

As he was putting it in his ear he leaned over and whispered to me, “It’s my KGB handler trying to reach me.”

In a Washington, full of the thin skin and self-important, Reagan never took himself too seriously. That characteristic, in the end, served a serious purpose. The resulting affection and respect for Reagan, on both sides of the aisle, not to mention the disarming of critics, helped him achieve a good deal more than would have been the case otherwise.

Keeping a sense of humor, and with that a sense of proportion and civility, is one major lesson of Ronald Reagan’s that is too often forgotten.

When it comes to national security there are several other timeless lessons from his presidency that I worry are not being heeded sufficiently today. Above all is the importance of peace through strength.

That earlier story about the hearing aid took place in a briefing President Reagan received before his first meeting with Gorbachev at the 1985 Geneva Summit. Reagan was often accused by liberal critics of shunning engagement with the Soviet Union. The President only half-jokingly responded that it was kinda tough to engage with the Soviets when their leaders kept dying on him.

Finally, Gorbachev came to power and Reagan had somebody to deal with.

The tough-minded Reagan had the insight and the sense of the historical moment to know when it was time to sheath the sword, soften the tone and re-engage, even with our most implacable enemy. He knew that being principled was not incompatible with being willing to engage, negotiate or even compromise as circumstances change and when it is in the national interest to do so.

President Reagan's Administration also holds important lessons about the use of force. Reagan would send in the military when necessary, most notably in Libya, Grenada and, to his regret, Lebanon. But overall, Reagan was circumspect about putting or keeping American troops and America's credibility at risk without a clear mission and strong odds of success.

Rather than provoke a direct military confrontation with the USSR, President Reagan's approach was to use a variety of approaches: restoring our military strength, as well as diplomacy and intelligence operations, to impose ever stiffer costs on the Soviet Union around the world. Though he had not seen combat, President Reagan understood that wars are a lot easier to get into than get out of.

My time as Secretary of Defense reinforced my belief that in recent decades American Presidents, when confronted with tough problems overseas, have been too quick to reach for a gun as the first choice rather than the last resort. From the left, we hear about the responsibility to protect. From the right, a failure to strike means an abdication of American leadership or at worst Munich style appeasement.

We must always be prepared to use American military force when America's security and vital interests or our allies are threatened or attacked. The power of our military's global reach has been an indispensable contributor to peace and stability in many regions and must remain so.

But not every outrage, every act of aggression, every oppression, every crisis should elicit an American military response. Resisting these tendencies becomes all the more difficult given the dramatic improvements in aerial vehicles, long-range strike and precision munitions, where a button is pushed in Nevada and seconds later a pick-up truck explodes halfway around the world.

As a result, the barrier for entry for using lethal force has dramatically lowered. For too many in the American Republic as well as defense experts, members of Congress and executive branch officials, war has become a kind of arcade video game or action movie.

In reality, war is inevitably tragic, inefficient and uncertain.

I believe, as did President Reagan, that military force should be the last resort with objectives clearly and realistically defined. Leaders must be more willing and skillful in using the full toolkit of national power and international influence, as did President Reagan. Doing so is not a sign of weakness as long as the United States

has sufficient military power, capacity and capability to allow us always to operate from a position of strength and credibility.

President Reagan's first priority as President was to build up a U.S. military that had been decimated after the Vietnam War and risked falling behind the Soviets in critical areas. Restoring America's military superiority was the necessary precursor for later diplomatic arms control breakthroughs.

Tragically it appears the key Reagan lesson about military strength is being ignored, if not lost all together.

I don't need to explain to this audience the damaging consequences of sequestration. There may be a more stupid way to cut the budget, but I can't think of one. My worry is that the White House, the Congress and the general public will not grasp the consequences of mindless and massive across the board defense cuts because of sequestration in the form of cancelled training, deferred maintenance, delayed modernization and the potentially massive loss of experienced young officers and NCOs until it's too late.

It's time for both political parties to make the necessary compromises to end the sequestration of defense dollars and protect military capabilities that are as necessary today as they have been throughout the last century.

Because, as Ronald Reagan knew, if history teaches us anything it is that there will always be evil in the world and people bent on aggression, oppression, satisfying a lust for wealth, or power, or territory or determined to impose an ideology based on the subjugation of others.

We must never forget that the ultimate guarantee against the success of aggressors, dictators, and terrorists in the 21st century, as it was in the 20th, is hard power. Put

simply, the size, strength and global reach of the United States military.

As President Reagan said just over a quarter of a century ago, “It’s up to us, in our time to choose, and choose wisely, between the hard but necessary task of preserving peace and freedom and the temptation to ignore our duty and hope for the best.”

In his First Inaugural Address, George Washington said, “To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace.” The commitment of our 40th President to peace through strength provides strategic continuity going back to our 1st President.

I only hope that our current and future leaders are as wise, as realistic and as farsighted.

Thank you very much for this award.



Remarks by Honorable Leon E. Panetta\*

SECRETARY PANETTA: Thank you very much Fred. Thanks to all of you that were involved in the decision to provide this award to me and to my friend, John McCain. I am deeply honored to be honored with John, who I have had the opportunity to serve with in the House and to also work with in my various positions in the Administration. I've had the chance to work with him and I've always found John to be a true patriot in terms of his concern about this country. I thank you for all of your service and your friendship.

I also want to acknowledge, obviously, Secretary Hagel. Thanks for being here. Thanks for your kind words. I wouldn't trade with you for the world right now.

Secretary Gates, another dear friend, I really appreciate his presence as well. I've had many opportunities to work with him on some tough decisions, but I always found Bob Gates to be someone truly dedicated to what was best for this country.

I also want to acknowledge Jake Johnson who's here. I know he was lonely today up on that stage, but I want you to know, Jake, that I think speaking for both Bob Gates and

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\* Delivered on November 15, 2014 during the second annual Peace Through Strength Dinner at the Reagan National Defense Forum in Simi Valley, California.

myself, we'd have you for a damn lawyer anytime, any day of the week. You're a good man and dedicated person.

Also to Buck McKeon, I told Buck, I said there is life after so I suspect that Buck will find some tremendous opportunities once he has the opportunity to get into the private sector. His wife will love it because he'll finally be able to pay some of the bills. But the fact is that Buck has also been someone totally devoted to doing the right thing for this country in his position as Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, which is tough.

The reality is that for all the paralysis and dysfunction in Washington, and I say this both in regard to John McCain as well as Buck McKeon, the fact is that one of the bills that always passes in each Congress has been the Defense Authorization. And through thick and thin, through all the problems, they always manage to get it together.

And it doesn't happen by miracle. It happens because there happens to be great leadership on both sides of the aisle that work that issue through the Congress. Buck, I think, can hopefully leave the Congress knowing that every year he was able to do what was important for the defense of this country and passing that authorization bill. So Buck thank you for your service.

I'm honored to receive this award as a Californian, born and raised in California. I'm particular proud of getting an award named in honor of another great Californian, Ronald Reagan. I'm also honored because I too had the opportunity to work with President Reagan.

When I was in the Congress, I worked on a number of budget issues, worked on reconciliation during the time that President Reagan was in office and also worked on immigration reform. For those of you that may have forgotten, we did pass immigration reform.

I think it was 1988 and it was done on a bipartisan basis. I spent about two weeks in a room negotiating with both Republicans and Democrats on issues related to the Immigration Reform Bill. Those were the days when Democrats and Republicans really did sit down in a room and try to come to an agreement. The President was very supportive of that effort and as a result we accomplished a lot during that Administration in a number of areas because he was willing to work with Democrats as well as Republicans.

I am also honored because, in particular, President Reagan was devoted to a strong defense for this country and all of his work and all of his vision was something I've benefited from as Secretary of Defense. And it still is what goes to the heart of what makes the United State of America strong.

Listen to his words and I quote, "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it onto our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected and handed on for them to do the same."

Another great quote, "No arsenal, no weapon in the arsenals in the world is as formidable as the will and courage of free men and women." That is a weapon our adversaries in today's world do not have.

And finally, "In the final analysis, it is our military, industrial and economic strength that offers the best guarantee of peace for America in time of danger."

We live in a dangerous time in the world. We live in a time when terrorism is on the rise again. We went after Al Qaeda for what they did on 9/11. We undermined their leadership, but terrorism has metastasized to ISIS to Boko Haram to Al Shabab to other elements of terrorism that threaten this country.

We live in a time when North Korea still represents a

real nuclear threat to the United States and to the Pacific region.

We live in a time when Iran has 30,000 centrifuges that can produce enriched fuel and that obviously engage us and destabilize by promoting terrorism throughout a great part of the world. We hope that we can ultimately limit their ambitions but make no mistake, their goal is to continue to destabilize our world.

China is a country that we have economic ties to – the president engaged in some very important decisions last week – but at the same time they are increasing their defense and they increased their territorial claims throughout the South China Sea. Russia and Putin are thoroughly engaged in a new chapter of the Cold War.

Added to that, cyber-attacks have threatened to paralyze our country and that could literally wind up taking down our power grid systems, our financial systems and our government systems.

So we live in a dangerous world. In confronting those dangerous threats, I think it is important for America to remember that we have to be committed to the core principles that were defined by the courage and sacrifice of great leaders in our country, like Ronald Reagan and others, and by the men and women in uniform that fought and died for this country. Let me just quickly state what I think are those core principles.

Number one, America must be the leader in a troubled world. As recent events have made clear, if the United States does not lead, no one else will.

Secondly, America must remain the strongest military power on Earth. I recognize that we do have our fiscal responsibilities, but at the same time we can maintain a strong defense that is critical to our credibility, to our

diplomacy and to our ability to defeat our enemies.

Thirdly, America cannot allow, as I said today, evil to prevail in our world. We cannot ignore, or appease, or forget that there are those who would want to attack our country. I believe that we have a responsibility to use every capability in our arsenal, both military and intelligence and diplomatic, to be able to ensure that we defeat that enemy.

Fourthly, America must be unified and not divided in war. It is the responsibility of the president and both parties, in my opinion, to bring our nation together when we confront our enemies and to ensure that we stand as one to these threats that we confront.

Lastly, America must always be true to the values that we are all bound: to freedom, to human dignity, to rule of law, and to the rights that all people must embrace if we are truly to have peace in our time.

As Ronald Reagan said, that is the most formidable weapon that we have.

Ladies and gentlemen, I know that we have been exhausted by thirteen years of war. It is tough. We worry about engaging in conflict again, but we must never turn our backs on crisis.

This is no time for friend or foe to question the strength of our democracy. This is no time to reduce our readiness by undermining our defense and intelligence capabilities with uncertain budgets and with political gridlock. This is no time for what Thomas Payne called sunshine soldiers and sunshine patriots.

If men and women in uniform are willing to fight and die for America, I don't think it's too much to ask our elected leaders to take a little bit of that same risk in order to

govern this country.

In the words of Isaiah, from the Old Testament, Isaiah wrote that the Lord said, “Who will go for us, whom shall I send? And I said, here I am Lord, send me.” That is the trumpet call that calls all of us to duty in this country.

It called President Reagan to duty. It has called those of us who are in responsible positions to duty, but it has called all Americans to the challenge to fight for a strong America, for that freedom that we cherish and for the effort to always preserve a government of, by and for all people.

God Bless you and God Bless our country.



## Remarks by Senator John S. McCain III\*

Thank you, Fred, for this tremendous honor. And let me thank everyone at the Reagan Library for organizing this important conference.

I also want to recognize Secretary Hagel, and my fellow honoree, Secretary Panetta. I am honored to call you friends, and I want to thank you for your service.

Let me also thank Buck McKeon for his leadership in this conference, and his many years of partnership and loyal service. We will miss you, Mr. Chairman.

It is a pleasure to be here today with so many old friends, and enemies.

There are few benefits that come with my advanced age, but one of the more valuable ones is a sense of perspective.

I was a foot soldier in the Reagan revolution. I was fortunate to be a new House member, and then a junior Senator, when Ronald Reagan was president. And what I most admire about him is not only what he did for the Republican Party or conservative principles. It is what he did for America and the good of the world: He completed

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the bipartisan mission, begun by Harry Truman and advanced so ably for five decades by presidents and legislators of both parties: the containment, and eventual defeat, of the arsenal of communism.

These leaders realized that America, at its best, does not define its interests simply as our own safety and material well-being. That may be how nations normally behave. But America does not play a normal role in the world. We play an exceptional role, an indispensable role. And we see our national interests as inextricably bound up in the success and sustainment of a Liberal world order—a world where the rule of law is the beginning of justice ... where all nations multiply their prosperity through free markets and free trade ... where might does not make right ... and where wars of aggression are relegated to the bloody past.

This broader understanding of America's interests, this ideal of world order, has defined our global leadership since 1945. But what Reagan and America's best leaders have also understood is that our ideals do not advance or defend themselves. That takes realism. And it takes power and influence of all kinds—diplomatic, economic, moral, and yes, military. Because when aggressive rulers or violent fanatics threaten our ideals, our interests, our allies, and us—what ultimately makes the difference between war and peace, tragedy and triumph, is not good intentions, or strong words, or a grand coalition. It is the capability, credibility, and global reach of American hard power.

Put simply, America has never faced a problem from being too strong. Indeed, that is how we prevent wars, and deter adversaries, and reassure allies, and add leverage to our diplomacy. That is how, in the words of Margaret Thatcher, Reagan won the Cold War without firing a shot. That is peace through strength.

For the past seven decades, these principles—peace

through strength, the indispensability of U.S. global leadership, defense of a Liberal world order—have formed the basis of a proud bipartisan tradition of American foreign policy. All of us are here today—Republicans, Democrats, independents—because we identify with this tradition. And all of us know that it is being tested as never before.

It is being tested by a very complex array of global challenges. From North Africa to the Middle East, the heart of Europe to the seas of Asia, our present dangers are not just challenges to our interests. Taken together, they pose fundamental challenges to the Liberal world order for which we stand, and from which so many peoples benefit, but none more so than Americans.

This bipartisan tradition is also being tested by an old belief here at home—perhaps no longer ascendant, but still too prevalent—that America needs to do less in the world, that we should let others worry about the fate of the world order, that America should only be moved to action by threats to our homeland, and that the troubles of the world are no longer sufficient justification to maintain a peerless and costly defense.

I know none of us believe this. But we have a lot more work to do with the American people. And that is work that all of us need to do together over the next two years. We need to educate our fellow citizens and colleagues in the Congress about the challenges we face in the world. We need to replace budget-driven defense strategies with strategy-driven defense budgets. We must—we must—repeal sequestration, and let me assure you that I have no higher priority. We need to rebuild the political center in Washington in favor of U.S. global leadership, an internationalist foreign policy, and the principle of peace through strength. In short, we must lead, and we must draw on the example of Ronald Reagan to inspire our leadership.

I've told this story before, but tonight is an appropriate occasion to tell it again.

As many of you know, I worked for many years in another profession before politics. When I was their involuntary guest, the North Vietnamese went to great lengths to restrict news from home to the statements and activities of prominent opponents of the war. They wanted us to believe that our country had forgotten us. They never mentioned Ronald Reagan to us, or played his speeches over the camp loudspeakers. No matter. We knew about him. New additions to our ranks told us how Governor and Mrs. Reagan were committed to our liberation and our cause. And in hushed conversations and taps on walls we communicated our appreciation of him.

We came home to a country that had lost a war and the best sense of itself; a country beset by serious social and economic problems. And the world anticipated the collapse of our global influence. The great, robust democracy that had given its name to the century appeared exhausted.

Ronald Reagan believed differently. He possessed an unshakeable faith in America and her ideals that proved more durable than the prevailing political sentiments of the time. His confidence was a tonic to men who had come home eager to put the war behind us and for our country to do likewise. His was a faith that shouted to tyrants, 'tear down this wall.' And when walls were all I had for a world, his faith in our country gave me hope in a desolate place.

Let us take faith again in his faith, and marshal the power and purpose of a great, free people in its defense.

Thank you.



## Remarks by Honorable Condoleezza Rice\*

SECRETARY RICE: Well thank you very much, Ben, for the wonderful introduction. Thank you very much for the very warm welcome. When you serve on the college football playoff committee, you can never take a warm welcome for granted in any audience and so I'm glad to be among friends.

I'd like to thank the Ronald Reagan Foundation, the Library, and my great friend Nancy Reagan, who is not with us tonight but is always in this room in spirit, for this tremendous honor to receive this Ronald Reagan Peace Through Strength Award.

It is a phrase that has so become associated with President Reagan that I sometimes think it is important to go back and understand the context in which he uttered those words.

It was a time when the United States seemed to be challenged on many fronts. The Soviet Union seemed to be on the march and Ronald Reagan understood that peace indeed did come through strength. But he did not mean peace as simply the absence of war. He meant peace as a condition in which free peoples and economic freedom

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\* Delivered on November 7, 2015 during the second annual Peace Through Strength Dinner at the Reagan National Defense Forum in Simi Valley, California.

could flourish. After all, for Ronald Reagan, the belief that the future would indeed belong to free markets and free peoples would set the core of his understanding of what a peaceful and prosperous world would be.

In that way, he was following a tradition that had been established after World War II. When those great men who looked upon the fallen and terrible circumstances at the end of World War II, decided that they were going to create a new international order with two elements and one fact.

The two elements would be free markets, a growing international economy, not one in which you would have the beggar-thy neighbor policies of the earlier years, the years between World War I and World War II. When the Great Depression had come of those policies, they decided they would build an international economy that would grow. It would be one based on free trade, open economies, an international fund, a world bank, and a general agreement on tariffs and trade. There would be institutions that would promote economic growth and economic freedom.

They believed too that free peoples would be more peaceful and so they went to great lengths to make sure that the vanquished were not just the vanquished but that they had a chance at freedom and a chance at democracy.

So rather than Winston Churchill's maybe affable statement about the Germans - when Churchill was asked what was to be done about Germany, Churchill is said to have said "I like Germany so much, I want as many of them as possible". In other words, divide it up and keep it weak. But the American view was to allow Germany to prosper and become democratic. Indeed, that dream became true.

Then Japan, a country with no democratic tradition, created a peace constitution to give them too a chance at

freedom. And so peaceful people would be free peoples and they would live in harmony and prosperity. Those were the principles, free markets and free peoples, but the fact was they would all be protected by American military power. And unlike we had done after World War I, when we returned to our shores only to return a couple of decades later to fight again, this time we would make a firm and permanent commitment to the defense of free peoples.

Whether it was the mutual agreements to defend Japan or the NATO treaty with that remarkable phrase, “an attack upon one is an attack upon all”, the United States would commit permanently to the defense of free peoples.

That is the international order that Ronald Reagan inherited from those great people after World War II. And it is the international order that he defended. It is the international order that he restored. And it is the international order that we must fight each and every day to make certain that we’re doing all that we can to assure that free markets and free people triumph. And that peace is not just the absence of war but it is indeed a true condition of peace and prosperity.

I’m so very grateful to be the recipient of this award. I’m thankful to you, Mr. Deputy Secretary, for being here. I am incredibly honored to share this award with you, Congressman Smith. I know of your great efforts to do what our founders hoped that we would do. To use our political institutions to resolve our differences. Not to go to our corners, but to find a way to overcome our differences through civil behavior, civil discourse and a great love of country.

Oh by the way, there is one other thing that Ronald Reagan understood fully. The best American presidents are not just presidents who tell us what we must do, they are presidents who tell us who we are.

He understood that this is a country of optimists. A country born in hope, built on hope and seeking the continuation of hope. He understood that we are exceptional, extraordinary. Not that we are perfect, but that the United States of American has always been held out for peoples seeking a better life. A place where people just try harder every day.

And for that, we should be grateful for the memory and legacy of Ronald Reagan.



## Remarks by Congressman Adam Smith\*

CONGRESSMAN ADAM SMITH: You can definitely do some damage with that award, but I'm very honored to have it. I really think of it as me accepting this honor on behalf of a lot of people.

My staff does not like to be named. They like to lurk in the background, so I won't name them, but let me just say that the staff on the Armed Services Committee from both parties does an amazing job for all of the members. They make us all look good and I know this is especially true in my case. So, I certainly want to thank the staff members who have been so helpful to me over the years.

Also, that staff exemplifies something that was mentioned in the remarks, the bipartisan nature of our committee.

In a Congress where this doesn't happen very often, we actually work together to solve problems. It is not that we don't, as you probably noticed this afternoon, occasionally disagree. It is just that we know that we are working on behalf of the men and women who are fighting to protect our country.

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\* Delivered on November 7, 2015 during the third annual Peace Through Strength Dinner at the Reagan National Defense Forum in Simi Valley, California.

We - the people who serve on the committee and the staff, never forget that. We are all focused on that singular objective.

Then there's the fact that we produce a product every year which not even the appropriators have been able to say for the last five years. (Laughter) They're always picking on us so I had to throw that out there.

In fact, as Chairman Thornberry has joked, he actually passed the National Defense Authorization Act not once, but twice this year. As I understand it, there might have to be a third time.

I really want to thank Mac and Buck McKeon, who started this [conference] and was also the chair when I first became ranking member. Both worked incredibly well with me and made sure that they maintained the bipartisan nature of our committee that has existed for many chairs before them. So I thank Buck and Mac for their great leadership and for the partnership that we have.

I do want to thank the senators, something else you don't hear from House members very often, but I really think that this year in particular Senator McCain, Senator Reed, Congressman Thornberry and I worked very well together on the NDAA (National Defense Authorization Act) and we worked with all of the members of the committee to produce a product. That is a great working relationship across chambers which doesn't exist very often. I very much appreciate that working relationship.

Its great, because believe it or not, I'm not a terribly ideological person. I got into politics because, well, I like politics. I like working with people to solve problems and that's the way I have always viewed politics.

The reason I ran in the community I grew up in was

because I knew those people. I had grown up with them. I simply wanted to make the community a better place. I wanted to work together with people to solve problems which sounds absolutely nothing like what people think of politics these days.

But it is, at its core, what it is supposed to be.

On the Armed Services Committee, I am blessed to have the opportunity to do that. On a lot of committees that is not the case. That is ultimately what I think we need to get back to if we are going to get our approval ratings above whatever pathetically low number it is that they are at right now.

We need to show the American public that politics is not about partisan advantage, or jokes, or negative ads, or billion dollar add campaigns or any of that stuff. It is about solving problems. Now we are going to disagree about how we get there, there's a lot of different ways. But if we actually work together, solve problems, and make the community a better place to live, then we are doing our job.

That is what we do at the arms services committee. That is why I am privileged to come out to this bipartisan event.

I will say that my district has changed a bit. I used to have a 50 50 district. I represented Fort Lewis, huge military presence. They plumped me all the way up by Seattle and I now have a 65% Democratic district. Not sure if we're going to put this on the website, we'll debate with the communications staff on that one. But I think if we spin it right, it will work.

Because I do honestly believe in peace through strength. I think you do, in this world today, have to have a very strong military and a very forceful presence in the world, with clear stated objectives, in order to make the world a

more peaceful and stable world. I do believe that.

And I think that this award is perfectly appropriate for the people who have received it and for the broader message of peace through strength. That is what national security is supposed to be all about.

Last, I want to say that it is an unbelievable honor to receive the award with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

I know the Huskies aren't quite going to make that four thing but I am interested to see how you're going to vote on the whole Stanford thing because that's a little closer to call and there might be a little bias there. I share the bias. I think Stanford is a great football team. They certainly beat the heck out of us.

It is an honor to share this stage with such a great national security leader. Again, I thank you for the honor of this award.



## Remarks by Vice President Richard B. Cheney\*

VICE PRESIDENT CHENEY: There was, Bill Buckley said, a single “conclusive factor” that protected America from Soviet aggression in the 1980s. That factor was the character of President Ronald Reagan. With Reagan in the White House, Buckley said, the policymakers of “the Soviet Union [knew] that the ambiguists with whom [they] so dearly love[d] to deal [were] not in power [during those crucial years.]” And no one could doubt the confidence of America’s leader, or his utter determination to protect the freedom and security of the American people.

This is one of the reasons that average Americans always trusted Ronald Reagan -- even the keepers of conventional wisdom -- even when they viewed him in contempt. My friend, Lou Cannon, who covered Reagan for more than 30 years, has noted that many who once looked down on the man now admire him -- that even Mikhail Gorbachev calls him a “very great political leader.” It’s the consensus view now -- but as Lou Cannon points out, “it was always the view of the guy in the bar.”

Americans also trusted Reagan because he knew -- they knew he trusted them. He believed in the basic decency, patriotism, and common sense of this country. And like

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\* Delivered on March 11, 2008 at the Heritage Foundation Dinner Commemorating the 25th Anniversary of President Reagan’s Strategic Defense Initiative.

his hero, Franklin Roosevelt, Reagan always took his case directly to the people in plain and forthright terms. He once said, “When all you have to do to win is rely on the good judgment of the American people, then you’re in good shape -- because the American people have good judgment.”

I’ve always thought that for Ronald Reagan, his faith in the American people was like a suit of armor. It allowed him to enter the toughest debates with confidence -- knowing that he might be assailed but trusting that things would come out right in the end. And he certainly showed that confidence during the extraordinary month of March, 1983.

Twenty-five years ago today, the speech announcing the Strategic Defense Initiative was still being drafted. But in political and diplomatic circles, the news media, and academia, everyone was talking about a speech Reagan had given three days earlier. In Orlando on March 8th, the President had labeled the Soviet Union the “focus of evil in the modern world,” and gave a powerful rebuttal to those who advocated a fad called the nuclear freeze. “I would agree to a freeze,” Reagan said, “if only we could get a freeze in the Soviets’ global desires.”

The President argued the competition of the superpowers was not a chess game between two moral equals. Rather, it was a critical chapter in the age-old conflict of good versus evil. To “call the arms race a giant misunderstanding” and declare “both sides equally at fault,” he said, was to “ignore the facts of history and the aggressive impulses of an evil empire.” And he refused to yield to those who would “place the United States in a position of military and moral inferiority.”

Not surprisingly, the speech filled the front pages, and the editorial pages. And much of the commentary ranged between scornful and brutal. Elite opinion was perhaps

best captured in the words of a prominent historian who said, quote, “It was the worst presidential speech in American history, and I’ve read them all.” I know that historian.

But years later, we would learn how much the speech had actually rattled the confidence of the Soviet leadership. And after his release from the Siberian gulag, the dissident, Natan Sharansky, told of the joy and the hope that Reagan’s comments had brought to his fellow captives. They had spread the word to each other throughout the prison, even using the toilet pipes so the guards wouldn’t hear them. At the height of the Cold War, Ronald Reagan had spoken the truth and insisted on moral clarity -- and in doing so he brought comfort to the afflicted and shamed their oppressors. Today, a quarter-century afterwards, it’s clear that in Orlando, Ronald Reagan gave one of the best and most significant presidential speeches in history.

And then came the speech of March 23rd -- another pivotal moment, and the reason for our gathering here tonight. From his desk in the Oval Office, President Reagan announced an initiative to build strategic defenses for the United States -- with a system to intercept and destroy ballistic missiles in flight. He noted that the doctrine of nuclear deterrence -- preventing aggression by the promise of retaliation -- had been successful. And yet he regarded deterrence as “a sad commentary on the human condition.” The human spirit, he said, “must be capable of rising above dealing with other nations and human beings by threatening their existence.” So he challenged the scientific community to undertake a long-term effort -- which he candidly said would probably take decades -- to “give us the means of rendering these nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete.”

Once again, Reagan had committed an offense against orthodoxy -- and once again criticism was sharp and dismissive. The New York Times said Reagan’s vision was

a “pipe dream, a projection of fantasy into policy.” Some critics took another tack, saying such strategic defenses would be inherently destabilizing. Such was the logic of many in the establishment -- the notion that a purely defensive measure against nuclear-armed missiles would be a threat to others.

As for the Soviets, they walked away from arms control talks after Reagan kept his pledge to deploy Pershing and cruise missiles in Western Europe. But SDI had gotten their attention, and they sought a return to the bargaining table in order to undermine President Reagan’s policy. When the President met Gorbachev at Reykjavik, Gorbachev demanded that the United States commit to never deploying SDI. Reagan refused.

Some believed Reykjavik was a public-relations disaster. The President could not have cared less. He went on national TV and said he would never shrink from his responsibility to defend the American people. At Reykjavik, Reagan said, “Everything was negotiable except two things: our freedom and our future.” It was without question one of the finest hours of his presidency, or any other.

History moved swiftly after that. As Soviet leaders tried to prevent the collapse of a militarized economy and a costly totalitarian empire, they eventually gave up their demands on SDI, Gorbachev and Reagan agreed to eliminate mid-range ground-launched missiles with the INF Treaty, and then in 1991 came the START Treaty and the end of the Cold War.

Reagan’s vision of missile defense surely helped accelerate our victory in the Cold War. There was simply no way the Soviet Union was going to defeat an America so confident in its purposes, and so determined to defend itself against nuclear terror. This outcome alone is enough to place Ronald Reagan among our greatest presidents.

The world has changed dramatically since the Reagan years. There is no more Soviet Union, and Russia is no longer an enemy. Yet President Reagan would also recognize the other dangers that have emerged, and the urgency of defending ourselves against those dangers. Yes, he would say, the world has changed, but the need for missile defense is still great. And today America does have a President who is strongly committed to a full range of ballistic missile defenses to protect America, our friends, our interests, and the peace of the world.

One of the obstacles President Bush pledged to remove was the old ABM Treaty, signed in 1972. The Treaty was out of date, and one of the signatories no longer existed. And over the years, as weapons technology progressed, the ABM Treaty put unrealistic and unsafe restrictions on our ability to defend America. I remember this from my time as Secretary of Defense. We would be thinking ahead to the biggest challenges of the 21st century, and the proliferation of ballistic missiles was always high on the list. And it was clear that the ABM Treaty was going to tie our hands in the years ahead.

The Treaty did permit either party to withdraw on six months' notice. But politically that wasn't so easy to do. Several generations of arms-control experts were highly invested in the ABM agreement. They were convinced that American withdrawal would bring nothing but bad consequences. But in 2000, George W. Bush campaigned on a promise to build missile defenses, and in 2001, he made the wise decision to withdraw from the ABM Treaty. It was an act of great courage, and it opened the way for major advances in our ability to stand up a defense against missile attack.

The decision made even more sense in light of the attacks of September 11th. As President Bush said, 9/11 "made all too clear [that] the greatest threats to both our countries come not from each other, or other big powers in the

world, but from terrorists who strike without warning, or rogue states who seek weapons of mass destruction.”

To protect ourselves, we have to understand the world as it is -- and to face our challenges squarely. In 1972, nine countries had ballistic missiles. Today, it is at least 27 -- and that includes hostile regimes that oppress their own people, seek to intimidate and dominate their neighbors, and actively support terrorist groups. On the Korean peninsula, we all want to see the six-party talks conclude in the complete, verifiable dismantling of Kim Jong Il's nuclear weapons. Yet the fact remains that North Korea today is developing an intercontinental ballistic missile with the potential of striking the American mainland with a nuclear warhead. The North Koreans also today possess a large force of missiles that threaten America's closest allies in Asia and our forces deployed in the region.

North Korea is one of the world's most active proliferators of ballistic missile technology. Pyongyang is a missile supplier to rogue regimes that have provided arms to terrorist groups, whose increasing military capabilities, combined with their aggressive intentions, pose a growing danger to the peace of the world.

Iran is engaged in a long-running effort to build up its missile forces and capabilities. This includes North Korean assistance on medium-range ballistic missiles. Existing Iranian missile and rocket capabilities already threaten U.S. forces in the Middle East, as well as Israel and our Arab partners. Tehran continues to develop technologies that could lead to its building an ICBM capable of striking the United States -- perhaps as soon as late -- in the next decade. Given all we know about the Iranian regime's hatred of America, its vow to destroy Israel, and its ongoing efforts to develop the technology that could be used for a nuclear weapon, that is a danger every one of us must take seriously.

Syria is receiving assistance from North Korea in building up its missile forces. And Iran has used Syria for years as a transit point to build up the military capabilities of the Lebanese terrorist group, Hezbollah. As we saw in the summer of 2006, Hezbollah now possesses a sizeable rocket force -- one that many analysts believe could be capable of targeting some of Israel's major cities. And, of course, as we have all seen in recent weeks, Tehran may increasingly be turning its sights to inflaming the situation in the Gaza Strip, now controlled by the terrorist group, Hamas. In Gaza, crude, home-made weapons meant to terrorize Israeli civilians are being augmented by more advanced, longer-range weapons that are clearly smuggled in from outside.

It's plain to see that the world around us gives ample reason to continue working on missile defense. In the ongoing political campaign, there's been discussion recently about 3 a.m. phone calls. We all hope that a commander in chief never has to pick up the line and be told that a ballistic missile is heading toward the United States. In such an instance, catastrophe would be minutes away. And the best tool we can leave to a future commander in chief is a weapon of defense to blow that missile out of the sky.

When President Bush and I took office, our country had no capability to defend the American people against long-range ballistic missiles -- and, we believed, not enough money was going into R&D and testing of potential defenses. And so, after retiring the ABM Treaty, the President acted to make missile defense operational. Instead of waiting for the perfect shield, he decided to begin deploying capabilities as soon as possible, and then add to it in the future as technology progresses. By the end of 2004, we had an initial capability in place to defend against limited missile attacks by rogue states, or an accidental launch. And missile defense technology continues to advance. The Patriot system that we all

remember from the Gulf War is still in use, but is now much improved, and our sea-based Aegis missile defense system continues to perform very well in its intercept test program. From tests we've conducted in the Pacific, we now believe we have a credible measure of protection against long-range threats from Northeast Asia. The next step is to deploy long-range missile defense in Europe, to protect our friends and allies.

There is still a great deal yet to accomplish in the field of missile defense. But we're a lot farther along than we would have been if Ronald Reagan hadn't set this effort in motion 25 years ago. At the end of his address to the nation, Reagan said, "Tonight we're launching an effort which holds the promise of changing the course of human history. There will be risk, and results take time. But I believe we can do it." Well, time has shown that he was right. We can do this. We are well along in making good on the promise of strategic defense. The project gathers together American idealism, American ingenuity, and American optimism. And that is an unbeatable combination.

Ronald Reagan's successful presidency is testimony to the power of ideas to shape events. Our 40th President understood the impact of words fitly spoken and truths plainly stated. He knew that a speech can make a difference -- but he also knew that conviction, perseverance, and confident action are what truly carry the day. President Reagan didn't lead to see -- didn't live to see his vision fulfilled, and he didn't expect to. But we're getting there. And it's already a better world because of the things he said and did as President of these United States.

So this evening it's most fitting that we recall some of his greatest contributions to the security of our country. The nation is forever proud of Ronald Reagan. And we're filled with gratitude for his lessons, and for his legacy. Thank you.



## Remarks by Honorable Ashton B. Carter\*

SECRETARY CARTER: Good evening, everyone. This speech is not going to be about physics or medieval history, but thank you, Ann [Korologos], I appreciate it. And thanks to everyone at the Reagan Foundation. For this award, I'm pleased to join its distinguished group of recipients, and my wife Stephanie and I are pleased to be with you all – all of you this evening.

The Reagan Forum is always an opportunity to see some of the many colleagues past and present, public servants, and leaders, who've continued to ensure the greatness of America's military.

You've honored one of those leaders tonight. Vice President Dick Cheney, congratulations. Now, I see Dick's portrait out in the Secretary of Defense Hallway every day at the Pentagon, but it's good to be here with him, and with our new U.S. Representative-elect, Liz.

Even in that hallway of paintings, amid some of the giants and the history makers who've led the Defense Department, Dick Cheney stands out for the breadth and depth of his service to our country. Through strategic era after strategic era – whether at the White House or

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\* Delivered on December 2, 2016 during the fourth annual Peace Through Strength Dinner at the Reagan National Defense Forum in Simi Valley, California.

in Congress, on the E-Ring or as Vice President – Dick has helped ensure the continued, continued excellence of our military today, which I'm privileged to lead.

We haven't done – neither of us have had to do that alone. This award and this evening represent the continuity and the excellence, which I spoke about earlier today. For decades, we've worked with many of you here in this room for "peace through strength."

While we Americans may disagree at times on specifics, together, with many of the people in this room and many others, we've all worked under the belief that America is most secure and the world is most peaceful when the United States and its military have the strength to lead, to defend our country, and to make a better world.

And I am confident, confident, and hopeful, that we can continue to come together to ensure that ours remains the finest fighting force the world has ever known. And that's because every day – and on every trip like the one I'm about to take to the Asia-Pacific, the Middle East, and Europe – I see soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines who are helping to defend this country during, like I said earlier, a time of strategic transition.

Today, as we are here this evening, there are almost 3 million of them serving across this country and around the clock, in every time zone on earth, and in every domain – all in service to our great nation.

Because of their continued excellence, we can be confident we'll meet the challenges of today's strategic transition and also the uncertain future.

All of them are defending not only the United States and its people; they're also defending the values and principles that define us, and which are why we have so many friends and allies around the world and our antagonists

have few.

And because of their continued excellence, Americans can celebrate these upcoming holidays with family and friends. They can live their lives, they can dream their dreams, and they can enjoy the freedoms upon which this country was built, and for which so many generations of Americans have fought, and leave a better world for their children.

DoD's people make all that possible. And at a time when not as many serve, we need to make sure they know – and Americans know – that we don't take them for granted. Stephanie and I begin every day thinking of them. So I thank you – I thank you for this award, and I thank you for all the support you give our men and women in uniform.

But above all, I want you to cast your thoughts in this upcoming holiday season to those 3 million wonderful, talented, dedicated people. Keep them in your thoughts, keep them in your words so that others who don't know, but should know, can understand what they do – the significance of it and the fact we can't take any of it for granted.

Bless them. Bless all of you in this holiday season. And of course, above all, bless the United States of America.

Thank you so much.



## Remarks by Senator John F. Reed\*

SENATOR REED: I want to thank the Reagan National Defense Forum for honoring me this evening with the Peace Through Strength Award. I have had the privilege of attending nearly every one of these events and have always found these discussions to be marked by thoughtfulness and insight.

Previous award recipients include two of the most dedicated Senators that I have ever had the privilege of working with on the Armed Services Committee, Senator Carl Levin and Senator John McCain. I am humbled to be here tonight, or as Senator McCain would point out, how could someone without a college education receive this award?

The Senator is an Annapolis graduate and he does not consider a West Point diploma a diploma. (Laughter).

It is an immense honor to receive this award alongside Secretary George Schultz who played a monumental role in guiding U.S. foreign policy at the height of the Cold War. Starting as a United States Marine, he went on to serve in the Office of Management and Budget, as the Secretary

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of Treasury under the Nixon Administration and then as President Reagan's Secretary of State. For nearly seven years, he has been an inspiration to all who seek to serve this nation.

The profound sense of duty, dignity and decency that both President Reagan and Secretary Schultz brought to their service contributed to their success. They invested their offices with respect and in return they receive the respect and admiration of their countrymen and the world. Their example is more important today than in any time in our history.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of President Reagan's famous speech in Berlin in which he challenged Mikhail Gorbachev to tear down the wall dividing East and West. What lessons can be drawn from that historic address in 1987?

First, President Reagan clearly understood the importance of principled U.S. leadership and global competition between free societies and the forces of domination and destruction. In this struggle, the United States served as the guardian of a rules based international order that kept the peace since the end of World War II. In Berlin, President Reagan stressed that our values as a free society are a source of American strength. He was well aware that his audience was on both sides of the world. He appealed to the universal desire for freedom. He said, "We believe that freedom and security go together and that the advance of human liberty can only strengthen the cause of world peace."

President Reagan also understood that the United States is stronger standing with our partners and allies. He remarked that by standing firm together, the Western nations had forced the Soviets back to the negotiating table after they had walked away years earlier. President Reagan spoke of a community of freedom and warned

that the Soviet Union could either join or end up becoming obsolete.

Finally, President Reagan understood the importance of balancing a strong defense with our commitment to promoting peace. In Berlin, President Reagan said, “We must maintain defenses of unassailable strength. Yet we seek peace; so we must reduce arms on both sides.”

This reflects the same wise advice given by Secretary Shultz to the Senate Armed Services Committee a few years ago when he advised that we needed to be realistic and strong. And then in his words, “Don’t be afraid to engage with your adversaries, but do it on your own agenda and from your strengths.” President Reagan was not afraid to pursue diplomatic efforts to promote peace and lessen the nuclear threat.

As a result of this vision, President Reagan cultivated a relationship with Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev across four summits: Geneva, Reykjavik, Washington, and Moscow. The Reagan-Gorbachev diplomacy laid the groundwork for unprecedented arms control agreements. The wisdom of President Reagan’s words is as compelling today as it was thirty years ago.

Today, we confront a security challenge in Europe that many hoped had disappeared forever with the fall of the Berlin Wall. The Kremlin is seeking to rewrite the end of the Cold War. It’s seizure of Crimea is the first reordering of international boundaries in Europe, by military force, since the end of World War II. Russia is modernizing its military and using hybrid warfare, propaganda and subterfuge to undermine Western institutions, divide the alliance, and coerce its neighbors.

The Kremlin has targeted democracy in the United States and across Europe. While recognizing that Russia cannot defeat the United States and its allies militarily, Putin has

weaponized information using cyber hacking bots, trolls and disinformation to launch attacks against the key institutions of our free societies including our elections.

Today, unlike during President Reagan's day, American institutions have let down their guard against foreign propaganda and fake news. And we have not yet seen sufficient leadership emerge from the Administration to push back against these Russian maligned influence activities. Russia is just one of a number of actors seeking to fracture the existing international order and exploit these rifts for their own gain.

North Korea threatens stability in the Pacific with its nuclear saber rattling. China inhibits freedom of navigation in the South China Sea and coerces its neighbors economically.

Iran has worked to destabilize the Middle East and supports the murderous Assad regime in Syria and non-state actors like Al Qaeda and ISIS commit horrific violence in the name of their ideology across the Middle East, Africa and elsewhere.

In light of these unprecedented and complex challenges, how do we ensure the cause for peace goes forward?

First, we need to remain resolute in support of our fundamental American values. No one was more resolute than Ronald Reagan. We must be equally firm in advocating the principles of respect for human dignity, democracy, and the freedom of sovereign nations to choose their own paths. We must reject foreign propaganda that asserts a moral equivalency between Western democracy and autocratic states. Our military men and women pledge to defend America and its values with their lives. We need to speak clearly in support of those values.

Second, ensuring the cause of peace requires that our military remains strong, as President Reagan so often reminded us. A credible, capable military is necessary to convince our adversaries that they are better off choosing peaceful engagement over confrontation.

However, this will not be achieved on the cheap and should not be put on the credit card.

The mindless budget cuts of the last several years under the budget control act and sequestration have harmed our military readiness, prevented needed investments and delayed needed adjustments to our force structure. The results have been costly and, in some cases, tragic. We must recognize our duty to fully support our military personnel both during their service and in the decades after they return to civilian life.

Third, we must stand with our allies in opposing foreign efforts to undermine the international order. We must assure the world that we will uphold our alliances and pledges, including under article five of the NATO treaty and our commitments to Japan and South Korea.

Fourth, ensuring peace requires that our military strength is matched by diplomatic capabilities, a lesson both President Reagan and Secretary Schultz demonstrated in words and deeds. Unfortunately, in the past year we have seen the decimation of the ranks at the Department of State and this must stop. If we are going to ask our men and women in uniform to take military action and our allies to stand with us in conflict, we must first be able to assure them that we have exhausted every diplomatic avenue for peace.

Finally, we have strong resolve when we come together in a bipartisan way to tackle our foreign policy and national security challenges. Despite the ever-growing partisanship that we see in Washington, we must continue to work with

responsibility and respect for public discourse.

Under Senator McCain and Chairman Thornberry's leadership, Congress passed last month, for the 56th year in a row, the National Defense Authorization Act. This unparalleled record of success reflects a long-standing bipartisan commitment to protect our military and offers an example for Congress to work together on other issues which we must.

The American people need to recognize that our national security and the integrity of our democracy depend on building our resilience to those who seek to exploit our differences to weaken our nation. This is not a Republican or Democratic issue, it is an issue of national security. Ultimately our strength lies in our ability to engage with each other respectfully and honestly and to work for the common good.

Now, no one would confuse President Ronald Reagan and Jack Reed. I, for one, am a man of normal height. He was unusually tall, but he coped with it. I respect him for that. But we do have something in common, we are both Irish. The fact is that he is of the optimistic Irish clan, a minority.

But I believe that President Reagan would share my appreciation and indeed would embrace the words of another famous Irishman and renowned poet Seamus Heaney who wrote,

“History says, don't hope  
On this side of the grave,  
But then, once in a lifetime  
The longed-for tidal wave  
Of justice can rise up  
And hope and history rhyme.”

Three decades ago, under the leadership of Ronald Reagan and Secretary George Schultz, hope and history rhymed.

If we remain true to our principles and ideals and do our duty, hope and history will rhyme once more in our lifetime.

Thank you very very much.



## Remarks by Honorable George P. Shultz\*

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Thank you, Pete. It is a great honor to have an award that carries the name Ronald Reagan on it. I had the privilege of serving with him for a long time and my admiration for him and what he did for our country is absolutely unbounded.

And to have an introduction by Pete Wilson, who was one of the greatest governors we ever had in California, was also a treat. And to have it in conjunction with Senator Reed is a great joy for me. So I thank everybody and I am very grateful and honored.

I thought I would make a few comments about peace through strength. As I watched Ronald Reagan exercise strength, how did he do it?

I'll just tell a few stories. Not long after he became President, the air traffic controllers went on strike and he took a strong position. He said, "They took an oath of office and they violated it. They're out!" And all the people said, "Is he crazy? These are the people who keep the planes flying." But he knew from his eight years as governor of California that part of governance is knowing how to execute.

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He had a man as his Secretary of Transportation who had been the chief executive of a large transportation company. So he understood the problem, and he and the President worked together. They manned the towers with management people. They got some military help and started a very aggressive recruiting and training program. They kept the planes flying. And all over the world people were saying, "Hey, watch your step! This guy plays for keeps." So Ronald Reagan developed strength.

Not a shot was fired. But it showed principle and it showed a capacity to execute. So all of a sudden, there was a lot of strength there.

I told him a story once which he liked and lived by instinctively. I said, "When I was at boot camp in the Marine Corps at the start of World War II, I remember the day the sergeant handed me my rifle. He said, 'Take good care of this rifle, this is your best friend. And remember one thing: never point this rifle at anybody unless you're willing to pull the trigger.'" No empty threats. Boot camp wisdom.

I can remember many times sitting in the situation room and somebody would say, "That's unacceptable." President Reagan would say, "How are you going to respond if they do it?" No answer. He would say, "Well then, don't say it's unacceptable because you accepted it."

Be careful in your choice of words so that when you say something, you mean it. Pretty soon people will see that you mean it. The clearer that is, the less likely you will have to use force. He took that lesson to heart.

I remember that when we took office, the military morale was down. People didn't even wear their uniforms into the Pentagon. He said, "Come on, stand up, be proud. Wear your uniform, we're proud of you." And all of a sudden, they started to perk up. Of course, he had the major

defense buildup so they were doing a little better.

Then the Cubans invaded Grenada, and the democratic states in the Caribbean were very worried. We were worried, too, but we were even more worried because the Cubans were establishing a Soviet base. Furthermore, we had about 300 Americans on that island attending a school there and we tried to get them off. We offered a plane. No. We offered a ship. No. As a matter of fact, they were hostages, so we were worried. We got a request from their formal organization to help them. In diplomatic and legal terms, that's what you need in order to act.

On the other hand, President Reagan knew that Margaret Thatcher wanted to be consulted because this was a commonwealth country, and the U.S. Congress wanted to be consulted. President Reagan also knew that if he did all that consulting he would lose time and it would be much more difficult. He went ahead and authorized us to go ahead in Grenada.

He had the element of surprise. He understood that was part of strength, and we were on that island before they even knew we were coming. We had a clear quick military victory and then we knew what we wanted to do once we had succeeded.

We reinstalled the democratically elected government, helped them fix up things here and there to increase their tourist business, and we left.

Of course, I was the guy who was designated on the day of the invasion to tell the House and Senate about it, and I didn't get a kind word.

On the other hand, the first American to get off the plane, a hostage, knelt down and kissed the ground. I said to the President, "The fat lady just sang." The next day, Howard Baker called me. He was our Democratic leader in the

Senate. He said, "George, there's a whole different mood down here." I said, "Was I so persuasive, Howard?" He said, "No, they've heard from the folks back home."

The folks back home loved it. So the Beltway had to turn around a little bit.

Margaret Thatcher criticized us but she let it go. I was at Buckingham Palace once at a reception and I'm over in the corner talking to Margaret Thatcher when Princess Margaret comes up and says, "That was such a wonderful thing you did in Grenada. Thank you very much." Margaret Thatcher didn't say a word.

That use of military force was done effectively, if a little controversially, from the standpoint of everybody who wanted to be consulted. But President Reagan knew that the element of surprise would be a big element in showing that strength. So he had his way of thinking about strength that in some ways was subtle and untraditional but very, very effective.

When we talk about the Cold War and how it came to an end, let me tell you how that story goes. The Soviets had deployed intermediate-range nuclear weapons that could hit European targets, that could hit China, that could hit Japan, but not us. Their diplomatic ploy was, would we risk their retaliation with their intercontinental missiles by using our intercontinental missiles to counter their deployments?

So, we worked a deal with NATO. Actually, we inherited what Bill Perry had negotiated before. We worked with NATO, and the deal was that we would negotiate with the Soviets to see if we could work out an arrangement, and if we couldn't do that, we would deploy our own missiles.

In the runup to this, Ronald Reagan had his negotiating strategy which was, number one, be realistic. Remember

when he called the Soviet Union an evil empire? People went bananas.

Paul Nitze, my colleague was testifying in front of the Senate and they were all criticizing Paul. One of them says, “Paul, how can you serve in an administration where the President would call the Soviet Union an evil empire?” And Paul says, “Senator, have you considered the possibility that the statement might be accurate?”

First, there’s realism, and then you have to be strong, militarily at first but, more important, economically. If you’re not strong economically, you can’t be strong militarily. But more than that, you have to have strength of purpose. It has to be clear to people that you are doing something important and right and are behind it. So we had to have all of those elements of strength.

Then you have to figure out your position. Don’t think about what the other guy has got or you’ll be negotiating with yourself. What is it that you want? We put forward our position as wanting zero intermediate nuclear forces on either side. People said, “How ridiculous.” They had 1,500 deployed, we had none. What a position, but that was what we wanted so that was the position we took.

So we had our negotiations. Remember the Korean airliner that was shot down by the Soviets? We led the charge in condemning them, but at the same time, we broke with the concept of linkage and we sent our negotiators back to Geneva.

Because Ronald Reagan was a very skillful negotiator, he knew he wasn’t negotiating only with the Soviet Union. He was negotiating with the European publics because if you’re going to have a nuclear weapon deployed somewhere, that’s a target, and they were a little uneasy. So he was negotiating with them very consciously and very skillfully.

It came to a point where it was clear the negotiations were not going to succeed so we deployed cruise missiles in Britain with Margaret Thatcher's help. It was controversial but she did it. We also deployed cruise missiles in Italy.

Then we placed ballistic missiles called Pershings in Germany. The Soviets thought they could hit Moscow. That was a huge thing and there was a big stew about it. The Soviets walked out of negotiations and they stimulated war talk, but the alliance held firm. With a lot of help from President Reagan, the Germans deployed the Pershings. I always thought it was Helmut Kohl's finest hour that they were able to do that.

After they were deployed, President Reagan had a high-level, somewhat conciliatory talk that caused a more operational meeting than the one I had when I met with Gromyko. Gradually, the Soviets softened. By August, I was able to go to the President and say, "Mr. President, at four different capitals in Europe, a Soviet diplomat has come up to one of ours and said virtually the same thing: 'If Gromyko is invited to Washington when he comes to the General Assembly in September, he will accept.'"

In other words, the Soviets blinked. I said, "Mr. President, you may want to think this over because Jimmy Carter cancelled these meetings when they invaded Afghanistan and they're still there." He said, "I don't have to think it over. Let's get him here." So he came, and it was a gigantic event.

I went to Nancy, who was my pal. She always seated me next to a Hollywood starlet at White House dinners, so I got to dance with Ginger Rogers. I went to Nancy and I said, "Nancy, we're going to have a fairly lengthy meeting in the Oval Office. Then we're going to walk down the colonnade to the mansion, your home. There will be some stand-around time and a working lunch.

How about being there for the stand-around time? It would be a nice, hospitable thing to do.” She said, “Ok, I’ll do that.”

So she’s there and Gromyko knows she’s influential, so he makes a beeline for Nancy. He says to her, “Does your husband want peace?” Nancy could bristle. She says, “Of course my husband wants peace!” Then he says, “Well, every night before he goes to sleep, whisper in his ear, ‘Peace.’” He was a little taller than she was so she put her hands on his shoulders and pulled him down so he had to bend his knees and she said, “I’ll whisper in your ear, ‘Peace!’”

I said, “Nancy, you just won the Cold War.”

Gradually, things softened up by the time we got through the negotiations. All of this happened before Gorbachev. Then we had the various events, including Reykjavik. Incidentally, in Reykjavik, a wonderful woman named Rozanne Ridgway, who was my assistant secretary, negotiated an agreement where, for the first time, human rights would be a regularly recognized item on our agenda. Before that, they always said, “It’s none of your business.” So you could see something was beginning to happen in the Soviet Union. That was something of a breakthrough.

Eventually, we negotiated what people here call the INF (Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty) agreement, and guess what the outcome was? Zero on both sides – what Ronald Reagan had asked for.

So he was very conscious of peace through strength but was very subtle in all of the different ways in which he implemented that strength. I think it’s a lesson for all of us. Right now, I think we are all wondering if it would be a good thing to have a constructive dialogue with the Russians. But obviously – obviously to me, anyway – we

don't want to do it when they are running wild the way they are doing.

I think we need a Pershing moment.

I'm wondering myself whether or not we couldn't supply the Ukrainians with lethal arms. Maybe that would produce a Pershing moment. But you need something like that to sober Putin up. Actually, he has a weak hand but he's playing it aggressively and we need to sober him up. Maybe then something better can come.

At any rate, I am very impressed with President Reagan and the way he implemented the slogan "Peace through strength." Strength comes in all sorts of ways. Sometimes it's the direct use of force, as in Grenada. Other times it has nothing to do with anything military, as with the air traffic controllers. In other ways, it is like the negotiations over the INF and the placement of the Pershing missiles. Not a shot was fired. Obviously, that was a military effort, but the strength was in the strength of the alliance and the very skillful way in which President Reagan conducted the bargaining, not simply with the Soviet Union but with the European publics.

So, what a great privilege it was for me to serve with Ronald and Nancy Reagan. It's a wonderful thing to be here at the Reagan Library, to hear his voice. I went to the grave site and read the words that are there. It is a beautiful day and you can look out over what President Reagan used to call it the endless horizon, which he loved.

God bless Ronald Reagan, and thank you, Ronald Reagan, for all you have done for us.

Thank you.

*“We will always remember. We will always be proud.  
We will always be prepared, so we may always be free.”*

*Ronald Reagan*

W W W W

June, 1984



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