

September 29, 1980

Allied Support in Persian Gulf

Q: This Administration has correctly described the Western demand for oil as the reason stability in the Persian Gulf is so crucial to Western security. Yet the United States appears to be more concerned with the security of the region than the local states or our European and Japanese allies, whose interests there are greater than our own. Our pleas within NATO and in other forums have resulted in little action in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Isn't the security of the Persian and collective responsibility? Doesn't the current conflict between Iran and Iraq make it clear to our allies that they must assume their fair share of the burden? Isn't their unwillingness to follow the U.S. lead only an example of the larger failure of confidence in U.S. leadership?

Response:

As a result of the fighting between Iran and Iraq, and its potential impact on world oil supplies, I have been in contact with our key allies and friends. I have stated our willingness to host a meeting to review the status of oil supplies and international shipping in the Persian Gulf area. To date the conflict has not had a major impact on world oil supplies and shipping continues through the Strait of Hormuz. We will continue to watch this situation very closely and stay in contact with our allies.

Another major source of potential instability in the Persian Gulf area is Soviet behavior, as demonstrated by Afghanistan. As a superpower, the United States must be willing to bear the main burden of shoring up the region's security, along with cooperative local countries. But we do expect strong support from our European allies and from Japan, because they depend on the region's security and its resources even more than we do. Roughly one-quarter of the oil we import comes from this area of the world. For our allies the proportion is higher -- two-thirds in the case of Western Europe, three-fourths for Japan. Thus, we believe they can contribute a great deal, politically, economically, and, to some extent, militarily. We are making progress with our allies in securing such support. Specifically:

-- We expect them to give us strong political support in communicating our unwillingness to tolerate aggressive Soviet behavior, dangerous to all of us. They have done this. Our joint statement at the Venice Summit was a sharp denunciation of Soviet aggression in Afghanistan.

-- We expect cooperation from our allies in steps that reduce our mutual dependence on vulnerable oil supplies. They are doing this.

-- In the military sphere, we can also expect cooperation. Some, like the British and the French, have small but capable military forces that can play a stabilizing role. Others can allow us to use their airfields if we have to move forces into the region quickly.

-- Most important of all, we expect all of our allies to increase their total defense effort, as we are increasing ours, to meet the overall challenge to our security interests in Europe, in East Asia, and now in a very vital new theater surrounding the Persian Gulf. Our allies are moving in this direction.

September 18, 1980

Middle East: Future of the Peace Process

Q: There has been no progress in the autonomy talks between Egypt and Israel. None is expected until after the November election, if then. Many believe that the autonomy issues are so intractable that the Camp David process is finished. The Europeans have apparently reached this conclusion.

Would it not be fair to say that the Middle East peace process is at a dead end? Would it not be better to start on a new approach? Also, how would you respond to the Republican charge that your Administration's "vacillations" on Middle East policy "have left friend and foe alike unsure" of where we stand?

Response

For 30 years, peace in the Middle East was only a prayer -- rejected four times by those who chose war. For 30 years, there were efforts to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. Except for some limited disengagement agreements, none of them worked.

It was just two years ago that President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin joined me at Camp David to begin a process which almost no one then believed could bring us closer to peace. It did. Israel and Egypt are at peace for the first time in their modern history.

Throughout this process we have remained constant and unswerving on these fundamental principles:

-- Our unwavering support for Israel's security and well-being;

-- Our longstanding commitment to the independence and territorial integrity of all the states of the Middle East, including Israel's right to live in peace, within secure and recognized boundaries;

-- Our support for Security Council Resolution 242 in all its parts as the foundation of a comprehensive peace settlement;

-- Our conviction, shared by Egypt and Israel, that a comprehensive peace must include a resolution of the Palestinian problem in all its aspects;

-- Our firm position that we will not recognize or negotiate with the PLO so long as the PLO does not recognize Israel's right to exist and does not accept Security Council Resolution 242 and 338.

In March, 1979, Prime Minister Begin and President Sadat signed the Israel-Egypt peace treaty at the White House. Today that treaty has led to the transfer of two-thirds of the Sinai to Egypt -- along with the Sinai oil fields; ambassadors have been exchanged; borders have been opened; and normalization of relations is well underway. Israel has finally gained peace with its largest Arab neighbor.

Camp David led to the treaty between Egypt and Israel. It also established the framework for a broader peace -- a comprehensive peace among all parties in the region. Progress toward that goal is essential. Israel and Egypt have pledged themselves to it. The United States, at the request of Israel and Egypt, is involved as a full partner in the negotiations. As Camp David demonstrated, the United States can contribute in a major way to the peace process -- not by imposing its will -- but by acting as a catalyst, and by helping the

parties overcome difficult issues. The role of the United States is not to force solutions or prescribe answers. Nor do we envisage our role as that of policeman of the region. Within the framework agreed to by Israel and Egypt, the United States is committed and determined, more than ever, to help them in their negotiations.

Although we have made progress since Camp David and the peace treaty in the talks on autonomy for the West Bank, this progress has not been as fast or as far as we had hoped. But I am convinced -- as are Prime Minister Begin and President Sadat -- that Camp David can succeed. It is in the interests of all our countries and, when we are finished, in the interests of the Palestinian people, as well. The road is not easy; the issues are complex and difficult; and reflect more than a generation of conflict.

It is clear to me that any other approach to peace would also have to deal with these central problems, and follow this general approach. Camp David may be an imperfect process. But let me remind you of this. It is also the first time the twin issues of Palestinian rights and Israeli security -- issues at the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict -- have been at the top of the agenda together. And no other approach has been suggested that can do that. As the autonomy talks continue, they will focus on the difficult issues that remain, building on the work that has been done in the past 17 months. With good will on all sides -- which does exist -- the answers can be found.

Gov. Reagan on the Middle East Peace Process

"...I would not like to see...the United States try to impose a settlement on the Middle East problems. I think we should stand ready to help wherever we can be of help, and whenever, in both the factions there, in arriving at a peaceful settlement--but we should not, as the great power, go in and attempt to dictate or impose the settlements."

Clifford Evans Interview
RKO General Broadcasting
April 10, 1980

Reagan likes to reduce the Arab-Israeli dispute to simple terms, saying that 80% of the territory once labeled Palistine now is Jordan and only 20% is under Israeli control. "It seems to me the Palestinian problem is 80% Jordan's and 20% Israel's," he says.

Middle East: The PLO

Q: The Republican platform refers to the Carter Administration's "involvement" with the PLO. Governor Reagan has stated that you refuse to brand the PLO as a terrorist organization and that your Administration has violated the 1975 agreement with Israel concerning our relations with the PLO.

Has your Administration been "involved" with the PLO and, if so, to what extent and purpose? What is your position on the PLO? Do you believe it will be possible to bring peace to the Middle East without eventually establishing an independent Palestinian state?

Response:

From the day I became President, my position on the PLO, and that of my Administration, has been clear and firm: We will not negotiate with or recognize the Palestinian Liberation Organization until it accepts Israel's right to exist and UN Security Council Resolution 242 and 338. Any suggestion that I have swerved from this position is a distortion of the record and untrue. Further, I do not believe that any efforts by other nations to change UN Resolution 242 or to establish relations with the PLO serve a constructive purpose.

I firmly believe that Camp David offers real hope to the Palestinians; and that their interests would be best served by joining the autonomy talks. At the very least, I hope that they will keep an open mind in judging the results of these negotiations to establish a Self-Governing Authority.

September 18, 1980

Middle East: US-Israeli Relations

Q: Many charge that Israeli intransigence on West Bank settlements and the status of Jerusalem are the real roadblocks to peace in the Middle East.

Do you agree with this assessment? If so, shouldn't the United States bring pressure to bear on Israel to change its policy on these issues? Also, what is your view of Governor Reagan's statement that "I do not see how it is illegal for Israel to move in (the) settlement."

Response

The United States will not -- indeed cannot -- pressure Israel to make concessions in the autonomy negotiations that are contrary to Israel's national interests. In saying this, it is important to bear in mind two factors:

-- First, there can be no peace in the Middle East unless Israel is secure. We are committed to its security, and we provide it with great quantities of assistance and modern arms to that end. Nearly half of all US aid to Israel since its creation as a sovereign state -- more than \$10 million -- has been requested during my Administration. Seeking to weaken Israel through "pressure," therefore, could fly in the face of our concern for Israel's security, and would undermine Israeli political confidence in the peace process;

-- Second, the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict must be a political process, reached through political decision. Thus any agreement in the autonomy talks, to have any value, must have the approval of the Prime Minister, Cabinet, Knesset, and the people of Israel. Therefore, there

is only one way to reach success: to work through each issue patiently and persistently, until there can be agreement that makes sense to both Israel and to Egypt. I am confident that that is possible, and will do all that I can to help.

We must also understand that the decisions and choices Israel is facing in the autonomy talks are among the most difficult in its entire history. It can only make those choices against a background of confidence in its security and its future. We are committed to helping provide that essential confidence. Israel needs our understanding at this difficult time. It will have it.

At the same time, I believe that, while the autonomy negotiations are being pursued, all of the parties must avoid unilateral actions that will prejudice the outcome of the negotiations or would have the effect of worsening the atmosphere for successful negotiations. That is why we have made known to all parties our opposition to Israeli settlements on the West Bank, which we believe is illegal. On Jerusalem, our policy, consistent under several Administrations, has not changed. We believe that Jerusalem should remain undivided, with free access to the holy places. The final status of Jerusalem should be decided in negotiations between the parties. That remains our position.

Gov. Reagan on Settlements

"Under UN Resolution 242, the West Bank was supposed to be open to all, and then Jordan and Israel were to work out an agreement for the area. Under those terms, I do not see how it is illegal for Israel to move in settlements." (Time, June 30, 1980)

September 18, 1980

Afghanistan

Q: Some have referred to Afghanistan as the Soviet's "Vietnam." Do you share this assessment? What motivated the Soviets to go into Afghanistan? What real effect is the United States having on Soviet policy toward Afghanistan? Are we aiding the Afghan insurgents? If not, shouldn't we be?

Response

Let me first review some of the harsh facts of life about Afghanistan today:

-- Thousands of political prisoners are locked up in Afghanistan's jails.

-- 85,000 Soviet troops occupy that country.

-- Another 25-30,000 Soviet troops are poised just across the border.

-- Because of the continuing collapse of the Afghan Army, Soviet troops are moving into the countryside. They are meeting fierce resistance.

-- Soviet casualties are estimated to run 500-600 per week.

-- There is mounting evidence that the Soviets are using incapacitating gas -- and some reports that they may be using lethal gas -- in the Afghan countryside.

-- Almost one million Afghan refugees have crossed over the border into Pakistan and Iran, and the total is increasing every day.

No one can state with certainty why the Soviets invaded Afghanistan other than to suppress a popular uprising against a repressive government which they backed. Nor can anyone state with certainty what their intentions are in the region.

The fact is that tens of thousands of Soviet troops have invaded a sovereign country. What is at stake is the freedom of a nation. What is also at stake is the security of other nations in the region and the world's access to vital resources and shipping routes.

By using Afghanistan as a foothold, the Soviets can exert increased political and military pressure on the countries of the Persian Gulf, and thus on those nations tied to the Gulf by a long and vulnerable tanker lifeline.

Our first purpose, then, has been to impose a heavy price on the Soviet Union for this aggression. The Soviet leadership must understand that the international reaction to aggression will be swift and firm. The steps we have taken -- on grain, on technology, on the Olympics, on fisheries, and in other areas -- convey our determination in the clearest terms.

The measures we have taken involve sacrifice -- for our farmers and our businessmen, our athletes, our scientists -- indeed, for all of us. But I believe the American people are prepared to make sacrifices for our long-term security. By opposing many of the steps I have taken, I believe Governor Reagan is sending the Soviets the opposite message.

The steps we have taken are also designed to move us toward our second goal: the withdrawal of all Soviet military forces from Afghanistan. To encourage that withdrawal, we are ready to support efforts by the international community to restore a neutral, nonaligned Afghan Government. With the

prompt withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, we would be willing to join in a guarantee of Afghanistan's true neutrality and of noninterference in its internal affairs. Such a political settlement would put an end to brutality and bloodshed in Afghanistan.

Let me reaffirm, however, that the sanctions we have undertaken will remain in force until the Soviets withdraw their military forces from Afghanistan. Let me be equally clear that when those actions cease -- when Soviet troops are fully withdrawn -- then our intention is to remove the sanctions we have imposed. In contrast to Governor Reagan and the Republicans, we seek no return of the Cold War, of the indiscriminate confrontation of earlier times.

But let me be frank. There are no signs at this time of a Soviet withdrawal. If anything, current signs point to the contrary, Soviet aggression continues, and permanent facilities are being constructed. For the foreseeable future, therefore, I see little progress toward a peaceful resolution of this international crisis. Thus, while we continue to impose costs on the Soviets for their aggression, we will continue to:

-- Mobilize international pressure for the withdrawal of Soviet troops among the countries of the Third World and support initiatives by the Islamic Conference to achieve total withdrawal from Afghanistan.

-- Urge our allies to continue to limit trade credits and high technology transfer to the USSR.

-- Strengthen our position in Southwest Asia and the Persian Gulf. In this regard, we have increased our naval presence in the Indian Ocean, signed agreements with nations in the area on US access to air and naval facilities, and strengthened our military capabilities -- through the Rapid Deployment Force -- to respond swiftly and effectively if our vital interests are assaulted.

As for direct US assistance to the Afghan insurgents, I have no intention of commenting on stories in the press that we are providing covert aid. As a matter of principle, the US Government never confirms or denies such allegations. I can say, however, that we are providing -- and will continue to provide -- a large share of the humanitarian support for the Afghan refugees in Pakistan, many of whom are the families of the freedom fighters.

I can also say that the Soviet statements on outside interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan are lies. The Soviet Union is the aggressor in Afghanistan and the world knows it.

Aid to Pakistan

Q: Soon after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan the Administration proposed a \$200 million military and economic assistance package for Pakistan. President Zia called it "peanuts" and turned it down. At the same time, President Zia called for a new security treaty with the United States but the Administration simply reaffirmed the 1959 Agreement.

What is the current state of our relations with Pakistan? Why do we want to have closer relations with a regime that violates human rights, stifles democracy, burned down our Embassy, spurns our offers to be helpful, and is building a nuclear bomb?

RESPONSE

Pakistan remains interested in working toward a better relationship with the U.S. It needs the strong support of its friends in order to resist Soviet pressure.

We have urged our Western allies, the Japanese, the Chinese and Pakistan's Muslim friends such as Saudi Arabia to increase their assistance to Pakistan.

For our part, we have reaffirmed the strong commitment to Pakistan's security embodied in the 1959 Agreement. Pakistan has welcomed this reaffirmation, while making it clear that they would like our commitment to be formally strengthened by conversion into a treaty. I do not believe this to be necessary.

Pakistan's decision not to seek military aid from us reflected a preference on their part to keep close relations with some of their neighbors and the non-aligned countries generally. The United States must be understanding

of such decisions. We can no longer impose our preferences on the nations of the Third World, as we attempted to do in the 1950's. We must not readopt the 1950's view of Governor Reagan and the Republicans that if a country is not with us, they are against us.

US-Pakistan relations have gone through some difficult times. We have our differences, but we also have a number of important shared interests, including Pakistan's security from Soviet pressure; the stability of South Asia; and the economic development of that country. We intend to work together with Pakistan on these matters of shared concern. At the same time we have made our views on non-proliferation known to the Pakistanis and that we look forward to a return of full democracy to that country.

Pakistan and India Nuclear Aims

Q: Your Administration cut off economic and military aid to Pakistan because of its efforts to acquire sensitive nuclear facilities which could produce material for weapons. After Afghanistan, you wanted to resume military assistance to Pakistan without conditions on its nuclear program, which frightened India.

On the other hand, you now are trying to get Congressional approval to send nuclear material to India, even though that country also is building sensitive nuclear facilities and has already exposed a nuclear device. If the US continues to supply India with nuclear material, what effect will this have on Pakistan's nuclear aims?

One main reason India and Pakistan are pursuing these dangerous nuclear programs is their fear of each other. What is your assessment of the nuclear intentions of Pakistan and India? Do you expect either or both of them to conduct a nuclear explosion in the coming few years? What can you do to turn these countries towards the real threat from the Soviet Union, and away from each other and from efforts to build a nuclear weapons option. Do you have any plan to pursue some security arrangements in the region that would reduce incentives to go nuclear?

Response

I remain committed to the vigorous pursuit of our non-proliferation objectives. The spread of nuclear weapons would increase the risk of nuclear war and add to the dangers to mankind.

I am deeply concerned about the nuclear programs of Pakistan and India. I believe it is tragic that both nations have refused to join the Non-Proliferation Treaty and to accept international safeguards on all their nuclear activities. My Administration is committed to giving favorable treatment in peaceful nuclear cooperation to nations which adhere to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Gov. Reagan on the Persian Gulf

Asked whether the United States should send the Soviets "a clear-cut ultimatum not to meddle" in Iran, thereby drawing the line there, Reagan stated:

"Maybe the signal we should send should be a little further back, and that might be Saudi Arabia...And if we send it, we should send it only with the collaboration of our allies, Japan and Europe, who are so dependent on OPEC oil."

New York Times
May 10, 1980

Six weeks later, Reagan elaborated:

Q: Is Saudi Arabia a place where we should "draw the line?"

Reagan: Yes.

Time
June 30, 1980

Pakistan continues to develop nuclear facilities that can give it the capability to produce nuclear explosive devices. This is a matter of grave concern to us and we are continuing to explore all possibilities of averting such an outcome.

We have, however, conflicting priorities in Pakistan. Our non-proliferation goal remains important, but we are also concerned that Pakistan be able to stand up to the threat posed by the Soviet forces in Afghanistan. We will continue to work toward both ends, but at times we may have to make choices between our objectives. That is often the case in foreign policy. It is not as simple as Governor Reagan would have the American people believe.

I would also point out that over the longer term, a firm, lasting and cooperative relationship between Pakistan and the United States is possible only if the nuclear issue is settled. We have made this point to the Pakistanis.

India also refuses to accept international inspections of all its nuclear activities. But foreign policy and security interests dictate that with India, as with Pakistan, we try to have as good a relationship as possible. It is important that these nations recognize the long-term threat to their security from the Soviet presence in Afghanistan, and they work together and with other like-minded nations of the area to oppose further

Soviet encroachment. It was with these important US interests in mind that I approved the shipment of additional US nuclear fuel to India in accordance with the existing US-Indian nuclear cooperation. My action was consistent with US law and, I believe, with the maintenance of US influence in India. I would note, however, that the Republican party has stated its opposition to the shipment of fuel to India. If this advice had been followed, the United States would be the loser. A further obstacle to better US-India relations would have been constructed and we would have had less influence on the future of India's nuclear program.

US Policy Toward China

Q: United States policy toward the People's Republic of China and toward Taiwan has already surfaced as a major foreign policy issue in the campaign.

Do you believe, as Governor Reagan apparently does, that it would be possible to upgrade our unofficial relationship with Taiwan without doing serious damage to our relations with the PRC? More generally, what do you see as the major benefits to date of your decision to normalize relations with the PRC? What impact do you believe the "China card" has had on US relations with the Soviet Union? Do you foresee the possibility of a military alliance with the PRC down the road?

RESPONSE

I am very pleased with the progress we have made in U.S.-China relations. In 1977 our relations were at a standstill. The deadlock was broken in December, 1978, when I announced that we would establish formal diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. Since that time the benefits of normalization have become clear. Trade, travel, cultural exchange and, most of all, the security and stability of the Pacific region is greater now than at any time in this century. For the first time we have good relations with both China and Japan. Tension in the strait between Taiwan and China is at an all time low.

I am very concerned that Governor Reagan's ill-advised and confused statements on Taiwan and China may place these important accomplishments in jeopardy. Perhaps he does not understand that the resumption of an official relationship with Taiwan would not only be contrary to the

to the January 1979 Joint Communique we negotiated and agreed to with China, but would void all of the preliminary understandings beginning with the Shanghai Communique President Nixon agreed to in 1972. If the U.S. Government were to adopt Mr. Reagan's proposal, the damage to our important strategic relationship with China would be severe.

Gov. Reagan's concern about Taiwan also is ill-informed. Since derecognition our unofficial relations have worked remarkably well. At the time of normalization, I made clear that we would continue practical relations with the people on Taiwan, but without an official relationship, and that we would do nothing to jeopardize the well-being of the people on Taiwan. The clearest evidence that we have lived up to this pledge is that trade with Taiwan is at an all-time high and that tension in the Taiwan area is at an all-time low.

Concerning the so-called "China card," we are not improving relations with China for tactical advantage against the Soviet Union, although the nature of our relations with China will inevitably be affected by Soviet actions. The famous triangular diplomacy of the early 1970's is no longer an adequate framework in which to view relations with China. We are developing our relations with China on their own merits. We want good relations with China

and the Soviet Union, but we will not slow down progress in U.S.-China relations just because Soviet behavior makes it impossible to move ahead with Moscow.

We will continue to pursue our interest in a strong, peaceful and secure China. A China confident in its ability to defend its borders enhances stability in the region and contributes to our security and that of our allies.

We do not sell arms to China or engage in joint military planning arrangements with the Chinese. The current international situation does not justify our doing so. Neither we nor the Chinese seek such an alliance relationship. Nevertheless, we can and will assist China's drive to improve its security by permitting appropriate technology transfer, including the sale of selected items of dual use technology and defensive military support equipment. We have begun to do so.

In the absence of frontal assaults on our common interests, the United States and China will remain -- as at present -- friends rather than allies.

Gov. Reagan on China and Taiwan

When the Carter administration began normalizing relations with Peking, Reagan stated:

"...(I)t's beginning to look as if our government is willing to pay the price Peking has put on 'normalization,' though it is hard to see what is in it for us."

Radio Transcript
July, 1978

Just after normalization of relations with China, Reagan began proposing a two China policy--where both China and Taiwan would have an official liaison office.

"If the Chinese Communists could handle embassy functions in Washington by calling it a 'liason office' before January 1, why can't the Republic of China's embassy--handling much more work--be called a 'Liaison office' after January 1."

Radio Transcript
January, 1979

Reagan stuck to his two-China stand throughout the campaign.

"I want to have the best relations and have the Republic of China, the free Republic of China, know that we consider them an ally and that we have official relations with them... That liaison office is unofficial, it is not government. It is a private kind of foundation thing...I would make it an official liaison office so they knew they had a governmental relations."

Los Angeles Times
August 17, 1980

To clear up any misconceptions by the Chinese regarding Reagan's statements, Bush visited China as an emissary for Reagan. At a joint news conference, before the trip, Reagan restated his position.

"Yes I will advocate restoring official government status to the Taipei office."

Los Angeles Times
May 19, 1980

Gov. Reagan on China and Taiwan

After the trip he stated:

"I would not pretend, as Carter does, that the relationship we now have with Taiwan, enacted by our Congress, is not official."

Associated Press
August 25, 1980

Vietnam and Southeast Asia

Q: Many observers view Vietnam today as the "Cuba of the East." Since the withdrawal of United States forces from South Vietnam in 1975, the Vietnamese have extended their domination to Laos and now Kampuchea. Recently there was an incursion into Thailand by Vietnamese soldiers. Soviet naval vessels now use, on a regular basis, the port of Cam Ranh Bay and Danang.

Early in your Administration you seemed to be moving in the direction of recognition of Vietnam. Did you misjudge the aggressive tendencies of the leaders in Hanoi? What actions should be taken to end what the Republicans call Vietnam's "brutal expansion and genocide" in Southeast Asia? Would you commit United States military forces to Thailand if that country were invaded by Vietnam?

RESPONSE

At the beginning of my Administration, we made it clear to the Vietnamese that in order to put the hostility of the past behind us and to enhance the stability of Southeast Asia, we were ready to discuss the normalization of relations. That remains our objective. From the first meeting between our two countries in May 1977 we stressed to the Vietnamese that progress toward normalization would be affected by Hanoi's policies and actions toward its neighbors. Following the massive forced expulsion of the boat people and the December, 1979 Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea, we halted further movement toward normalization.

The stability of Southeast Asia has been severely challenged by Vietnamese aggression in Kampuchea. As is

true in other regions of the world, the Soviet Union must bear a major part of the responsibility for the human suffering and the increased instability in the region. The Soviet Union is providing Vietnam essential support for its military activities in Kampuchea.

We continue to encourage a political settlement in Kampuchea which will permit that nation to be governed by leaders of its own choice. We have taken all prudent steps possible to deter Vietnamese attacks on Thai territory by increasing our support to the Thais, reaffirming our commitment to their security, and by direct warnings to Vietnam and the U.S.S.R.

Let me conclude by stressing that the Vietnamese have it in their power to end the tensions and crisis in the region if they wish to. They are, truly, at a crossroads. They can be peaceful participants in the region, establishing good relations with ASEAN and seeking to reduce their tensions with China. Or they can become, whether they intend it or not, a Soviet stalking horse in Southeast Asia. It's their choice. The United States will respond accordingly.

Security and Human Rights in South Korea

Q: Early in your Administration you appeared to have two objectives with respect to South Korea. The first was the withdrawal of US military troops; the second was to press President Park to observe human rights and move toward political liberalization. Three and a half years later your troop withdrawal plan has been suspended, the leading opposition leader in South Korea, Kim Dae Jung, is on trial for his life, and a new military strongman, Gen. Chun, has just been installed as President.

Given the continuing threat to South Korea posed by the North, is it possible for the United States to press President Chun to respect human rights and open up the political process? Do we have any leverage over events in South Korea and should we exercise it? What action will you take if Kim Dae Jung is put to death?

RESPONSE

A new government has just been formed in South Korea, and I consider that a new chapter in our relations with that country has now started. U.S. policy toward South Korea, however, will remain constant. We will continue not only to fulfill our commitment to South Korea's security, which is important to Asian security as a whole, but to press for a more democratic government.

President Chun has assured me that he considers continued close relations with this country to be indispensable. I have made clear to President Chun our support for political change in Korea, and our human rights concerns. We will continue our frank dialogue as his government moves toward constitutional revision, and a presidential election next year.

I believe that the wisest role for us is to make clear to the South Koreans our support for the development of free institutions in that country, and our determination to keep any outsider from interfering with that process. It was for this reason that, after examining in detail new intelligence estimates of North Korean military strengths last year, I decided to maintain our troop strength in South Korea at its present level until at least 1981.

With respect to Kim Dae Jung, we have talked in private with the new Korean Government about the trial and the recent conviction and sentence. They are well aware of our strong views on this matter. Any more specific comment from me at this point could be counterproductive.

Japanese Defense Expenditures

Q: There has been a great deal of discussion about whether the Japanese should do more in the way of defense. Currently, they spend less than 1% of their GNP on the military.

Do you believe the Japanese should increase their defense spending? Since the United States has taken on heavier military responsibilities in the Indian Ocean-Persian Gulf area, should we not expect Japan to assume greater responsibility for the security of the Western Pacific area, specifically the defense of her own sea lanes? Would you ever envision a military alliance among the United States, Japan, and the PRC?

RESPONSE

During the past three and a half years we have fostered the closest degree of security cooperation with Japan in the history of our two nations -- exemplified by joint planning for the defense of Japan, increase of Japanese contributions to our base costs in Japan, and large-scale Japanese purchases of U.S. defense equipment.

At the same time the Japanese have steadily increased their defense spending and capabilities. We are helping and encouraging them to continue these efforts which are particularly important now in view of our need to shift some of our naval forces from the Pacific to the Indian Ocean.

There is more Japan could do and Ambassador Mansfield, Secretary Brown and others in my Administration are in continuous consultations with the Japanese Government on this issue. For example, the Japanese air and naval

Self-Defense Forces are taking on more of the responsibility for patrolling the air and sea lanes of communication around Japan and the nearby ocean areas.

In addition, Japan has significantly expanded its economic assistance to a number of countries, including our close friends, Turkey and Thailand. This aid has been both generous and beneficial. We need to remember that the Japanese decision-making process is different from ours, that their constitution prohibits the maintenance of anything but defensive forces, and that the Japanese people not too long ago would not have supported anything like what they are doing today. As long as the present trends continue, and do not slacken, I will be basically satisfied with what the Japanese are doing.

I do not envision a military alliance among the United States, Japan and the People's Republic of China.

Central America and the Caribbean

Q: Perhaps the most volatile region in the world today is Central America. No country seems immune from the revolutionary fervor sweeping the region. The Republicans have sharply criticized your policy there. They state you have stood by while Castro's Cuba--assisted by the Soviet Union--arms, trains and supports revolutionary forces throughout the region. They further state: "We deplore the Marxist Sandinista takeover of Nicaragua and the Marxist attempts to destabilize El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. We do not support United States assistance to any Marxist government in this hemisphere, and we oppose the Carter Administration's aid program for the government of Nicaragua."

On few foreign policy issues are the lines so tightly drawn between your policies and those of the Republicans. How do you account for this sharp policy difference? Do you believe, as the Republicans charge, that your Administration "has actively worked to undermine governments and parties opposed to the expansion of Soviet power?" Do you believe the Cubans and Soviets are responsible for the turmoil in Central America? How best can the United States influence the direction of the change sweeping through the region?

Response

Under my Administration, the United States will not sit by on the sidelines and abandon its friends in Central America to Cuba and its radical Marxist allies. Those who say that Nicaragua is already "lost" are the same people who said Portugal was lost five years ago. We do not agree with them, and we are encouraged that Nicaraguan moderates and businessmen have chosen to stay in Nicaragua and help work to make it a more democratic country. They have asked for our help, and we will not abandon them. They are struggling to preserve individual freedoms and political and economic

pluralism, and they have asked for our economic aid. We have provided it, most recently in the form of a \$75 million economic package to Nicaragua. We cannot guarantee that democracy will take hold in Nicaragua. But if we turn our backs on that country, as Governor Reagan and the Republicans would do, we can help guarantee that democracy will fail.

Our challenge in El Salvador is similar. If reform fails, that country will become a battle ground between radical left and radical right. A moderate solution is still possible and we intend to help.

Those who are most concerned about the potential for radical revolution in Central America and growing Cuban influence in the region should be the strongest supporters of our efforts to help Nicaragua and El Salvador. But the Republicans are not. They seem to believe that Cuba is the cause of all the problems in the region. There is no question that Castro is assisting subversive efforts and we must deal with this. But we must also understand -- as Governor Reagan does not -- that the root problems in the region are extreme poverty, social injustice and repression and we must direct our efforts to address these problems as well.

The US was once identified with dictatorships and injustice in the region. Now we can be proud of our efforts to play a constructive role, assisting moderate and peaceful change. Now we are better positioned to keep the extremists isolated and on the defensive.

I might note, in closing, that while a lot of attention has been given by the Republicans to the Caribbean and the tiny island of Grenada, the winds of political change in that area are clearly blowing in a different direction. Recent elections in Dominica, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, Antigua and St. Kitts have resulted in victories by moderate leaders friendly to the United States, and resounding defeats by leftists who are friendly to Cuba.

Gov. Reagan on Central America and the Caribbean

"Totalitarian Marxists are in control of the Caribbean Island of Grenada, where Cuban advisors are now training guerrillas for subversive action against other countries such as Trinidad-Tobago, Grenada's democratic neighbor. In El Salvador, Marxist totalitarian revolutionaries, supported by Havana and Moscow, are preventing the construction of a democratic government.

Must we let Grenada, Nicaragua, El Salvador, all become additional "Cubas", new outposts for Soviet combat brigades? Will the next push of the Moscow-Havana axis be northward to Guatemala and thence to Mexico, and south to Costa Rica and Panama?"

Chicago Council on Foreign Relations
March 17, 1980

US Policy Toward Cuba

Q: Early in your Administration a US Interest Section was established in Havana. Better US-Cuban relations appeared to be just around the corner. That, of course, is no longer the case. Fidel Castro is, once again, the subject of harsh US criticism. His troops remain in Africa. He is assisting revolutionary forces in Central America. And, most recently, thousands of his citizens fled Cuba for the United States. Added to this is the charge by your opponents that you have done nothing about the Soviet combat brigade in Cuba nor about the transfer of new Soviet offensive weapons to the island, such as modern MIG aircraft and submarines.

How do you account for this reversal in your initial policy toward Cuba? Did you misjudge Castro? How do you intend to deal with him in the future?

With respect to Soviet activities on the island, why did you reverse your position that the Soviet combat brigade was "unacceptable?"

Response

Over the past three years we have taken a number of steps to open lines of communication between Cuba and the United States. Our dialogue with Cuba has cost us little and has yielded some significant benefits. Ask the families of the 4,000 political prisoners who have been released from Castro's prisons if they agree. Ask the Cuban-Americans who, for the first time since the 1960s, are now allowed to return to the island for family visits if they agree.

While the Cubans have taken some encouraging steps, this has not been matched by any change in their foreign policy. While I have been disappointed in this, I have not been surprised. As a result, we have told the Cubans that there will be no further progress toward normalization.

until Cuba is prepared to accept the norms of peace and human rights of the international community. Cuba still has thousands of troops in Africa, serving as a vanguard for Soviet imperialism. It is exploiting for its own purposes the revolutionary climate in Central America and the Caribbean. It has refused to respect other nations' immigration laws. Until these practices stop, it is difficult to conceive of normal relations.

At the same time, the close Cuban-Soviet relationship continues. For the past several years the Soviet Union has been upgrading the equipment of the Cuban military. Unlike other Soviet military clients, Cuba pays nothing for this. It gets a free ride.

Several developments over the past two years have caused us concern:

-- In 1978, the Soviets delivered MIG-23s to Cuba. Certain types of MIG-23s can carry nuclear weapons. The ones delivered to Cuba cannot. They do not constitute an offensive threat to the United States.

-- We have been monitoring the construction of a new naval facility at Cienfuegos. We have no evidence that the Soviets are involved in the construction of this facility or intend to use it as a base.

-- And, last year, we confirmed the presence in Cuba of a 2,600-3,000 Soviet combat brigade. While the unit may have been in Cuba for some time, here again we were confronted with a matter of serious concern to us.

We have taken steps to insure that none of these activities constitute a threat to the United States or the region. I have increased surveillance of Cuba, expanded military maneuvers in the region and established a full-time Caribbean Joint Task Force at Key West.

As I have said before, we do not accept these activities. We have responded to them -- and will respond to any future activities -- in an appropriate manner. Castro knows this and so does the Soviet Union.

Gov. Reagan on Cuba

Reagan has long held that Cuba is a mere proxy of the Soviet Union, and is behind most revolutionary movements in Africa, and Latin America.

"Despite the power the Soviet Union is able to exert over Castro, the Cuban dictator still fancies himself as a revolutionary leader who aids and inspires revolts in Africa, Latin America and the Middle East. The Russians aren't bothered by Castro's delusions of grandeur because much of his international interference fits nicely into their own foreign policy designs.

Jefferson City Post
October 26, 1979

In 1977, when the Administration was considering relaxing relations with Cuba, Reagan wrote:

"... (t)he U.S. decision on Cuban trade must rest on broader considerations. Our trade embargo of Cuba is a little like a long-running advertising campaign. Just as its full effects are being felt, the sponsor may get tired of it."

Jefferson City Post
October 26, 1979

Impact of Human Rights Policy

Q: The Republicans have charged that your policies toward Latin America "have encouraged a precipitous decline in United States relations with virtually every country in the region." The policy most singled out for criticism is your human rights policy. Brazil, Argentina and Chile are often cited as examples of countries which have turned away from the United States due to your policy on human rights.

Do you believe our bilateral relations in Latin America have suffered as a result of your human rights policy? What, in your view, have been the benefits of this policy? How do you respond to the Republican platform statement that: "We will return to the fundamental principle of treating a friend as a friend and self-proclaimed enemies as enemies, without apology"?

Response

Since my inauguration, I have worked hard to forge a new relationship with the nations of Latin America and the Caribbean -- one resting on a firm commitment to human rights, democracy, economic development and nonintervention. For too long, the United States was associated with dictatorships which trampled on human rights and with the status quo even when that meant poverty, political repression, and social injustice. I do not believe, as the Republicans apparently do, that we should return to that association.

The trend toward democracy in Latin America is gaining strength. Ecuador and now Peru have returned to freely elected democratic governments. Brazil has maintained a steady course toward democracy. Uruguay will have national elections next year. The new nations in the Caribbean, with the exception of Grenada, remain models of democracy despite severe economic hardship. The only setback has come in

Bolivia, but even in Bolivia, where military coups are a tradition, one is encouraged by the strong new force of democratic groups.

The trend toward a greater regard for human rights is also gaining strength. Human rights violations have substantially declined in a number of countries. There are fewer reports of disappearances; political prisoners have been released in substantial numbers; the use of torture has declined sharply.

I do not believe, as the Republicans apparently do, that the pursuit of human rights is incompatible with our national security interests. We pursue our human rights objectives not only because they are right, but because we have a stake in the stability that comes when people can express their hopes and find their futures freely.

Panama Canal Treaties

Q: The controversy over the Panama Canal Treaties has abated. The issue now appears to be holding Panama to a strict interpretation of the language of the treaties rather than trying to somehow overturn them.

Despite this, the Republicans have stated that although you assured the American taxpayers that the treaties would not cost them "one thin dime," they claim that implementing the treaties will cost them \$4.2 billion.

Is this true?

Response:

The Panama Canal Treaties went into force on October 1, 1979. Today, almost a year later, the Panama Canal is working just as efficiently and safely as it did over the previous 65 years. The fears of those who so strongly opposed the treaties, including Governor Reagan, have not been realized.

I consider the Panama Canal Treaties a major accomplishment of my Administration. The treaties eliminated a serious irritant in our relations with Panama and with the nations of the Hemisphere. By returning this territory to Panamanian control, the treaties have established the basis for a new, cooperative relationship between our two countries. This would not have been the case if we had followed Governor Reagan's advice. At the same time our national security interests have been protected. The United States has the right to operate and defend the Canal until the year 2000 and, thereafter, the permanent right to defend the Canal against any threat to its open and secure operation. Our warships will continue to have priority passage.

There have been some differences of opinion over the implementation of the treaties, but these have been resolved -- and are being resolved -- in a non-controversial way. As I wrote to President Royo on the day the treaties went into force, "The United States is as committed to making these treaties work as we were to building the Canal itself." Panama shares this goal.

As for the Republican charge that the implementation of the treaties is costing the American taxpayer billions of dollars, this is patently false. Transfer expenses associated with the treaties are comparable with the expenses we incur throughout the world with our important foreign base operations. And, if there are any deficits associated with the operation of the Canal, these will be met by higher tolls. Such increases will involve no charge against the U.S. Treasury.

marine and light infantry forces, along with additional air power, which could move into action in the Persian Gulf in a matter of days. We have recently concluded agreements with Oman, Kenya and Somalia on access to additional air and naval facilities in the region.

Enhancing the security of the Persian Gulf region and the Middle East will require a sustained, long-term commitment. We are prepared to make such a commitment. We want to work with all of the countries in the region to achieve it. The present conflict between Iraq and Iran underscores the vital importance of this task.

Gov. Reagan on Panama

Reagan has been at the forefront of those opposed to the Panama Canal Treaties. As negotiations were underway, Reagan stated his strong objection to the proposed Treaty.

"As I talk to you tonight, negotiations with another dictator go forward, negotiations aimed at giving up our ownership of the Panama Canal Zone...The Canal Zone is not a colonial possession. It is not a long-term lease. It is sovereign U.S. territory, every bit the same as Alaska and all the states that were carved from the Louisiana Purchase. We should end those negotiations and tell the (Panamanian head of state): 'We bought it, we paid for it, we built it and we intend to keep it.'"

Los Angeles Times
August 12, 1977

During the 1980 campaign Reagan has raised the issue of abrogating the Treaties on several occasions.

"If there is any possibility of keeping the Panama Canal, believe me I would do it because I believe it was one of the great mistakes we have made so far."

Bangor News
January 18, 1980

Majority Rule and Southern Africa

Q: Rhodesia is now Zimbabwe. A former guerrilla leader, Robert Mugabe, is now Prime Minister of that independent nation. Despite this change, the struggle for majority rule in southern Africa continues. The settlement on Namibia is stalled. Apartheid is still in place in South Africa.

What role do you believe the United States should take in pressing for majority rule in southern Africa. Should full economic sanctions be levied against South Africa? And, what assistance should we provide the new government of Zimbabwe?

Response

I am very proud of our record on Africa. In 1977 our relations were at their lowest point in decades. Secretary Kissinger had recently been refused permission to visit Nigeria. The United States had little credibility in black Africa. As a consequence, our attempts to bring an end to the war in Rhodesia were ineffective. We were becoming, in African eyes, irrelevant -- even antagonistic -- to African aspirations. All that has changed. My trip to Africa and subsequent trips by the Vice President and others have demonstrated that. The United States is once again welcome in Africa.

Our diplomatic efforts in Southern Africa and our support for British initiatives on Zimbabwe helped bring about a peaceful settlement to the Rhodesian war -- without further Soviet/Cuban expansion. We will assist in the reconstruction and development of an independent Zimbabwe. That assistance will be as much in our interests as theirs. So far, we have committed \$100 million for this effort.

I want to be sure the importance of this event is understood. We have a wide range of interests in Africa -- security interests, economic interests, an interest in political cooperation on all global issues. In my judgment no policy could have served those interests better than our strong support for the principle of majority rule, with minority rights, in Zimbabwe. And nothing could have weakened us more than to waver in this crucial effort. Strong Republican opposition in Congress did not help in this regard.

Although we have made a good beginning, much work remains to be done:

-- There has been very little progress on Namibia in recent months. We expect that the successful example of Zimbabwe should be helpful in setting a general precedent for Namibia. I believe the proposals set forth by the UN offer a reasonable basis for a settlement which would include UN-supervised elections. We are now awaiting South Africa's reply to Secretary General Waldheim's most recent proposals.

-- On South Africa, we continue to exert our influence to encourage peaceful -- but rapid -- change and an end to the racist system of apartheid. The South African government has a choice: to follow the difficult and courageous course of seeking cooperation with the forces for change, both internally and within the region, or to face the prospect of further conflict and violence. I hope they choose the former. We will do all we can to assist them in this.

A peaceful transition to majority rule in Southern Africa is a major goal of my Administration. Our active support for self-determination and racial equality in Southern Africa has enabled the United States to develop a continuing and effective dialogue with governments throughout the continent. We will continue to participate in their first priority -- economic development -- and to help Africans resolve their political problems and maintain stability in their continent.

Soviet-Cuban Influence in Africa

Q: The Republicans have charged that the Soviet Union and its surrogates--Cuban and Nicaraguan troops and East German secret police--are attempting to impose the "Marxist, totalitarian model" on Africa.

Do you believe this is an accurate statement? Have the Soviets and their surrogates expanded their influence in Africa during your term in office? Is there any evidence that Nicaraguan troops are now in Africa?

Response

Since the massive infusion of Soviet military equipment and advisers and Cuban combat troops into Angola in early 1976, and the subsequent similar movement into Ethiopia in 1977, there has not been a further direct expansion of Soviet-Cuban presence in Africa.

* * *

-- We worked very hard, and successfully, in cooperation with the UK and several African states to bring about the peaceful settlement in Zimbabwe that has precluded any role for the Soviets and Cubans in that country.

-- Similarly, in Namibia, we have been pursuing a policy that we hope can lead to independence, with no room for Soviet or Cuban meddling.

-- Presently, there are no other African nations which appear to be immediately threatened by Soviet-Cuban expansion.

-- During the past year, the Soviets have seen the removal of one of their clients, Idi Amin in Uganda, and the Cubans have witnessed the passing of one of their friends, Macias, in Equatorial Guinea.

-- There seems to be a growing awareness among the OAU States that Soviet-Cuban adventurism does not serve the best interests of Africa.

-- Finally, there is no evidence that Nicaraguan troops are now in Africa and I do not expect any. This is simply another example of Republican exaggeration.

Horn of Africa

Q: Once again the conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia over the Ogaden region is in the news, as it was in 1977. Just recently your Administration signed an agreement with Somalia for the use of the naval base at Berbera in exchange for increased US military and economic assistance.

Doesn't this new relationship with Somalia have the potential for drawing the United States into the on-going conflict between Somalia and Ethiopia? Do you have any confidence in Somalia's assurances that they are withdrawing their military forces from the Ogaden? Will the United States come to Somalia's assistance if they are attacked by the Ethiopians?

Response: Our agreement with Somalia is a limited one. It is one of three we recently signed in the region. The other two were with Oman and Kenya. Each of these agreements will help us maintain a better military balance in that part of the world and therefore to protect our security interests and those of the states of the region.

We do not intend to involve ourselves in purely local conflicts of long standing, such as the Ogaden. We have made it clear that we favor political settlement of such conflicts; this policy has also been expressly stated by the Government of Somalia. We have also made it clear that we oppose military activity by any state in the region that jeopardizes the territorial integrity and legitimate security interests of its neighbors.

Our relationship with Somalia is not directed against Ethiopia. That country's security is being most directly jeopardized from within, by an authoritarian regime which is increasingly dependent on the USSR, to which it has granted extensive military rights.

-- We have provided nearly \$100 million annually in economic aid to Southern African countries which helped pave the way for the peaceful settlement in Rhodesia.

-- Our aid is being used to support the efforts of the Governments of Nicaragua and El Salvador to bring peace and stability to their countries.

-- Our Food for Peace has been the difference between life and death for refugees in Southeast Asia and Africa.

-- U.S. technical assistance has helped farmers in developing countries grow more food and has contributed to a reduction in the rate of population growth.

Some argue that U.S. aid to foreign countries is a waste, that we receive nothing in return. This is a false, and dangerous, view. Our stake in developing nations has deepened. They supply us with essential materials. They are also our fastest growing markets.

Aid programs do not yield instant results. Success or failure is difficult to measure in any one four-year period. But I believe that our programs have helped people in developing countries and have contributed to the maintenance of peace in the world. By helping poorer nations and people in need to build a better future, we are both strengthening the world economy and enhancing the political stability which comes with economic, social, and political justice.

Foreign Assistance and Security Assistance

Q: During your Administration the U.S. has provided about \$40 billion in foreign aid. Yet, as you look around the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and Latin America, both turmoil and poverty appear to be increasing -- not decreasing. What do we have to show for the billions we have spent for foreign aid?

Response: First, let me say that the aid figures you cite are less than two percent of the Federal Budget for those years. We spend much less for aid than many people believe. We rank 13th of the 17 major aid donors in percentage of GNP provided for official development assistance.

More importantly, I believe that the aid we have provided has helped our friends defend themselves against aggression and has helped alleviate the poverty which affects the lives of most people in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

-- We provide more than \$3 billion each year to Israel and Egypt to help support military and economic stability as these two countries work to find a lasting solution to the Middle East conflict.

-- We have provided Thailand with military assistance to secure her borders against Vietnamese military incursions and have helped the Thai to feed the hundreds of thousands of Kampuchean refugees who came into Thailand.

Global Issues: Good Intentions/Few Accomplishments

Q: Your Administration began with a list of "global" issues on which it was going to make progress: human rights, nuclear proliferation and conventional arms transfers. After four years, there have been few positive accomplishments. US foreign policy interests have, in many cases, been damaged by overemphasis on a "global" approach to these issues which ignores the complexities of US interests in different parts of the world.

In a second Carter Administration, will you deemphasize these "global" issues and balance them against other, sometimes more pressing US foreign policy, security and economic interests? What has your Administration achieved in any of these "global" issues?

RESPONSE

Progress on the global issues of human rights, non-proliferation and conventional arms transfers remain in the forefront of my Administration's policy objectives. I do not deny that progress has been difficult or that there have been many problems in implementing our policies. But, in spite of the difficulties, we must persevere in pursuing our objectives in each of these areas. They are in our national interest.

I disagree with those who charge, as the Republicans have, that there have been no accomplishments. On the contrary, we have taken major steps in each of these pressing concerns:

On non-proliferation, we have, working closely with Congress, developed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act, which conditions U.S. nuclear cooperation on acceptance of key non-proliferation standards by our nuclear trading partners. We have successfully completed the two-year

International Nuclear Fuel Cycle Evaluation, with more than 60 nations participating in an effort to develop a common understanding of nuclear energy and non-proliferation. We have just concluded the Second Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

I believe that more progress will be made in the non-proliferation area when the SALT Treaty is ratified and SALT III negotiations begin, and when we conclude negotiations for a Comprehensive Test Ban. Governor Reagan is opposed to these arms control efforts. He should understand that non-proliferation and progress in nuclear arms limitations are linked.

On human rights, progress has also been made. I regard making human rights an essential element of American foreign policy and an item on the agenda of every major international organization a major accomplishment of my Administration.

-- Just in the past several years, we have seen the drive for a fuller voice in economic and political life achieve new expression ... in Portugal and Spain and Greece ... in Nigeria and Ghana and Upper Volta ... in Ecuador, Peru and the Dominican Republic ... and elsewhere.

These countries make a compelling case for the proposition that the tide in the world is running toward human rights and that it is in our interest to support it.

The United States cannot claim credit for these developments. But we can find proof in them that our policy of furthering human rights is not only consistent with American ideals. It is consistent with the aspirations of others.

-- I have worked to strengthen international organizations to promote human rights and, in the last two years, the UN and OAS human rights commissions have been improved. The Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) has also proved to be an effective vehicle for pursuing human rights concerns.

-- I have signed and submitted for ratification four important human rights treaties: The Convention on Racial Discrimination; the International UN Covenants on Economic and Social Rights, and on Political and Civil Rights; and the Inter-American Convention on Human Rights.

On arms transfer restraint, progress has been slower and the problems even more intractable. Other nations have not responded cooperatively to our efforts to negotiate international restraints in arms transfer. This is deeply disappointing. Nevertheless, we have devised and put into place a coordinated, overall policy governing U.S. arms transfers. This policy makes arms transfers an instrument of U.S. security and foreign

policy interests, not of profit. In the name of anti-
communism, Governor Reagan seems to be willing to
provide U.S. arms to any regime, however oppressive,
however unpopular with its own people, however shaky.
I am not. Change, the demand of peoples everywhere for
their basic rights, cannot be suppressed by selling arms
to dictators. We have vividly seen this in Central
America.

U.S. national interests are best served by a
careful policy of restraint, in which arms transfers
must be justified by U.S. security or foreign policy
interests. I believe we are doing this.

September 22, 1980.

Global Issues: Human Rights Policy

Q: Your Administration has made espousal of human rights a central theme of your foreign policy. Some argue that you have persisted in advocating human rights even when it has damaged other US interests and weakened regimes friendly to the United States. The Republicans charge that you have pressed hardest on our friends and little on Marxist regimes with the worst human rights records, such as the Soviet Union, Vietnam and Cuba.

You have contrasted your pursuit of human rights and "morality" in foreign affairs with the supposed indifference to these considerations by the previous Administration. In view of the harm to US interests in key areas, such as Iran, Central America and Africa, of your pursuit of human rights, do you intend to continue to assert this as a global, universal US objective? Are you now ready to show discrimination and weigh other US objectives as well, before attacking a regime for alleged abuses?

More generally, what do you believe is the role of "morality" or idealism in international relations? Do you believe nations act idealistically, or do they pursue their national self-interest?

Response

When I became President, I emphasized our commitment as a nation to human rights as a fundamental tenet on which our foreign policy was based. The commitment of mine is as deep and as important to me today as it was then. It is as central to America's interests now as when our nation was first born. Then, as now, our commitment to human rights persists in our own country and also worldwide. Beyond Europe, we have sought in Africa, Asia, Latin America, to stand behind basic principles of respect for the individual, for fair trials, for political liberty, and for economic and social justice.

We have made it clear the the United States believes that torture cannot be tolerated under any circumstances, and that

officially sanctioned so-called "disappearances" are abhorrent in any society. We have insisted on the right of free movement everywhere. So we have worked hard to give aid to the world's refugees, compelled to flee from oppression and hardship.

As we have maintained these policies as a government, sometimes they have been criticized as being incompatible with our national security interests. The Republican Party has stated that it will return to the fundamental principle of treating a friend as a friend, without apology. I do not believe that we should simply drop our human rights concerns because a country is anti-communist. Not when that country imprisons and tortures its citizens. Throughout my Administration, we have maintained our opposition to such activities and we will continue to do so. We pursue these policies because we recognize that both our country and our world are more secure when basic human rights are respected internationally. In pursuing our values, we enhance our own security.

Let no one doubt that our words and actions have left their mark on the rest of the world. Many governments have released their political prisoners. Others have lifted states of seige, curtailed indiscriminate arrests, and reduced the use of torture. We have seen several dictatorships, some of them in this hemisphere change into democracies. And, because of our leadership, the defense of human rights now has its rightful place on the world agenda for everyone to see.

My own faith in the ultimate outcome of this struggle is undimmed. Our nation's role must be in doubt. One of the best ways to express this commitment is to quote from the words of Archibald MacLeish, "There are those who will say that the liberation of humanity, the freedom of man and mind, is nothing but a dream. They are right. It is. It's the American dream."