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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 6, 1989

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE OF
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

Sheraton-Washington Hotel
Washington, D.C.

11:08 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Well, thank you very much, Larry. I remember when Larry Rivers first took over, I was Vice President -- came into greet me. I wasn't sure he knew what he was getting into. But he's holding up real well -- (laughter) -- and doing a first-class job, and you're lucky to have this dynamic young man as your leader.

You know, it's a pleasure to be here. I also want to express my best wishes to a real institution of the VFW -- you know what I'm talking about -- who I'm talking about -- Cooper Holt. (Applause.) I can't believe it -- I can't believe that he's stepping down this year, after more than a quarter of a century of distinguished service as Executive Director. But let me tell you something. Members of the VFW, others who stand for a strong defense whoever they may be, Cooper has earned the gratitude of veterans everywhere for making the VFW his life-long cause, but also the way he has conducted himself in Washington and elsewhere in this high office. He has my respect and my friendship, and I don't know what it's going to be like without him around here, I'll tell you. (Applause.)

I want to pay my respects to General Al Gray, member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, a commandant of the Marine Corp, outstanding soldier -- outstanding Marine, I should say. Sorry, Al. (Laughter.) Really know how to hurt a guy, but -- (laughter.) But an outstanding leader. And also, to my former colleague and dear friend, the veteran's friend, Congressman Sonny Montgomery, over here. (Applause.)

Before I begin -- and I want to talk to you about two or three major issues -- but before I begin, let me just say a word about an issue that is of particular importance, I'd say, to the people in this room. You know John Tower as a fellow veteran, and you know him as a life-long public servant, and you also know him as a fighter. And he's fought for his country as a seventeen-year-old enlisted man in the United States Navy, and now he and I are fighting for what I think are some very important principles -- principles that the American people understand, like fairness and truth; and principles like the prerogative of a President of the United States to assemble the most talented and qualified team to guide this nation

the Pentagon.

Enough of that now. (Laughter.) I wanted to get it off my chest. I'm getting sick and tired of some of the rumors and the innuendos -- (applause) -- that are used against this decent man. (Applause.)

Back to the gentler and kinder message. (Laughter.)

Look it's always an honor to meet with fellow members of the VFW. The love of liberty is the birthright of all men -- certainly all Americans -- and that's why our nation owes a special debt of gratitude to its veterans who freely and courageously took up the defense of freedom. I am especially pleased to welcome the Department of Veterans Affairs to a place in the Cabinet, and it's a sign of -- (applause) -- a cause, I might add, that you were in the lead on, and it's a sign of America's commitment to her veterans, of the importance we place in repaying in some way the sacrifice that veterans have made in answering their country's call. And in my view it is important that the first Secretary is someone who is close to the President, who has the President's full confidence on a personal basis, and Ed Derwinski, my former colleague in Congress and my friend of long-standing fits that description to a tee. He will be an outstanding Secretary. (Applause.)

Some facts. Today there are six times as many veterans alive as there were when the VA was created in 1930. Ed already has come to see me to discuss some of the challenges facing us in these programs. With the pressure the country is under -- and let's make no mistake about it, the pressures are great -- to solve our massive federal deficit, we may not be able to do everything we'd like to do in the way of adding resources, but I can tell you that Ed is your strong advocate. And, like me, he understands the needs, including the crying need for strong health care for the veterans. He already is an advocate for that. (Applause.)

I want to speak this morning about a matter of the utmost importance to the VFW -- keeping America strong -- today and then just 11 years from now, into the 21st century.

Opinion is nearly unanimous that today is a time of transition in world affairs. That means our powers of observation and analysis -- our ability to sort out change and continuity -- will be put to the test.

And when it comes to predicting the future, Winston Churchill's rule is the best. It is, "I always avoid prophesying beforehand because it's much better policy to prophesy after the event has already taken place." You've got to think about that one for a while, but -- and maybe I'm the guy to do that. Last year I told the American Legion about Pearl Harbor being on September 7th. (Laughter.) Just think if Franklin Roosevelt had listened to me, think what we could have spared the nation. (Laughter.)

You know, maybe you've read and maybe you haven't that we are in the midst of a series of systematic strategic reviews, and I've asked the members of my national security team to look hard at the international landscape and to look forward to assess the combination of security threats. technological change and political

But today I want to speak about the foundations of an adequate national defense program, about the world we live in, and the challenges and opportunities we'll encounter -- and about the approach I'll take on issues integral to our own national security.

First, the foundations. A month ago, I presented to the Congress a sound defense spending plan that makes sense -- strategically and fiscally. As a sign that my administration is serious about the deficit, I called for a freeze in defense spending in 1990, adjusted only for inflation. And I'm well aware that our national strength rests ultimately on the health and vigor of the American economy. And we need a strong defense and we need a strong economy, and I mean to preserve both.

But our crucial military modernization plans -- and the diverse defense commitments that we must keep -- cannot be achieved without additional defense funding. And that's why the budget plan follows the freeze for 1990 with real increases, albiet they small, with real increases -- one percent in 1991 and 1992, and a two percent increase for 1993.

And my aim is to put defense spending on a modest, manageable growth path -- one that we can afford and one that will allow us to modernize and maintain forces that are formidable, flexible, and ready.

But in the defense debate, what we can and can't afford isn't just a matter of economics. It's a matter of vital national security, I say we can't afford to continue the downward trend in defense spending -- 1989 -- now listen carefully to this -- 1989 will be the fourth straight year that budget authority for defense has declined in real terms. And we've worked hard to rebuild America's strength -- and it's paid off. Today, America is strong, its voice is heard, its forces are ready and the values we stand for are more secure.

Secondly, we can't afford to mistake a more stable international environment as proof that we can spend less on national defense. The secret to our success can be summed up in a single word -- strength. And let's sustain the military strength that helped turn the world situation around.

And finally, we can afford adequate defenses. The defense budget that I'm calling for in 1990 represents 5.5 percent of our annual Gross National Product. And that's a far smaller share of our national wealth than the United States spent on defense at any point throughout the 1950s or the 1960s -- periods of rapid and sustained economic growth though they were.

The bottom line is not a question of cost, or a question of resources. It's simply a question of will.

And you have my word -- as long as I am President, America will stand fast on the front line in defense of freedom. (Applause.)

Today, around the world, a number of long-standing regional conflicts are closer now to resolution than ever before.

that the changes taking place are significant and far-reaching, but it is equally true that the ultimate outcome of the events unfolding in the USSR remains certain.*

My view is this -- we should press for progress that contributes to a more stable relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union, but we must combine our readiness to build better relations with a resolve to maintain defenses adequate to secure our interests. America and her allies must recognize that even in light of the military cuts proposed by President Gorbachev, the Soviet Union remains the most formidable military power facing the free world.

We must be ready to cope with change and favorable opportunities -- and ready in any event to defend our interests and ideals.

And what this means in terms of our national security should be clear: We need to maintain and modernize our forces -- nuclear and conventional. For America and its allies, a survivable nuclear force will remain the ultimate deterrent of aggression.

We need to make a concerted effort to turn our technological strengths into a source of advantage to our national security. And that includes, in my view, vigorous pursuit of the Strategic Defense Initiative.

And we need to make an active effort in arms control -- to strive for increased stability at lower levels, lower levels of armaments. But I will strongly oppose legislative attempts to withdraw U.S. troops from Europe unilaterally. Imprudent unilateral reductions are not the path to peace and security and freedom. (Applause.)

And I've been listening to General Gray. We need to keep our forces ready and well-trained. The dedicated men and women who serve our country deserve no less.

We need to reform our procurement process to deliver a dollar's worth of defense for every dollar we spend. (Applause.) And the way to do that is to begin to follow through on the sensible reforms suggested in the Packard Commission report and the findings of the defense management review now underway. I'll look carefully at those management review findings and then move to implement them.

And we need to maintain the alliance of like-minded nations in Europe and Asia that have helped us keep peace in the post-war era. As strong as we are -- and we are strong -- as strong as we are, the United States of America in this complex world cannot go it alone. Keep our alliances strong.

Before I close, I want to focus for a moment on a threat no less real than the adversaries you have battled. And I'm speaking about not a military threat; I'm speaking about the insidious threat to our society and our values -- drug abuse. The notion that America is a nation at peace is only partly true, as long as the violence and destructive power of drugs assault our communities.

that's what it takes, we are going to have to go all out. We need to break the deadly grip of drugs and prevent the drug scourge from taking hold.

And the VFW can help. Many of you have already started. Many of your posts are actively involved. You've got 2.3 million members, 750,000 auxiliary members, 10,000 chapters nationwide -- the VFW is and always will be a respected member of communities across our country. (Applause.) And today, I call on you to form a community of action. "For America, whatever it takes" -- that's the motto of the VFW.

And you've fought for your nation once and your nation needs you again. And today, I want to enlist you in the antidrug campaign. Meet with other leaders in your community -- church, clergy, law enforcement officers. Tell them the VFW volunteers are ready to help.

And go to the schools and put the full weight of this magnificent organization behind the antidrug education effort that provides our kids with the reasons and willpower that they need to resist drugs.

Speak to your state and local elected officials. Urge them to make the passage of strong antidrug legislation a priority.

I am reaching out to you, so I want to extend my help, as well. Bill Bennett stands ready to meet with the VFW leadership to share ideas that can help you map a strategy.

VFW has proven many times over its dedication to the health and well-being of our nation -- proven it over and over and over again. And the fifty young people that you've honored here today, with whom I had a chance to meet very briefly a minute ago, underscore the VFW's interest in our nation's youth and in our future.

I know that we can count on the veterans of America all across this country to help us wage and win the war on drugs. Your country needs you once again. (Applause.)

Veterans share a special bond. We've seen the face of war. We know its terrible costs. Americans never willingly choose conflict. But we know as well that we must be ready and willing to respond when our interests and our ideals come under threat.

Let me be very clear. I prefer the diplomatic approach. Nations can and should explore every avenue toward working out their differences without resorting to force or military intimidation.

But I'm also a realist. I know that there is no substitute for a nation's ability to defend its ideals and interests.

And too often, we hear that we face a stark choice in coping with conflict. We can pursue a diplomatic situation or we can seek a resolution through military means. One, we're told, is incompatible with the other.

be an optimist. I'd be an optimist about world peace, changes in the Soviet Union. As I said earlier in this talk, nobody is talking about the socialist model or the communist model as to a way to solve their problems. But never forget -- never forget that when a President of the United States goes to the negotiating table, the way to enhance our values -- the way to enhance the principles that everybody in this room holds dear is to be dealing from a position of a strong America. We have the ideals. Keep America strong. (Applause.)

Thank you all and God bless you. And good luck to you guys.

END

11:32 A.M. EST

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Document No. 012474

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 03/02/89 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: _____

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS/WASHINGTON CONFERENCE
(03/02 6:00 p.m. draft)

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCCLURE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NEWMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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DARMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	STUDDERT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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REMARKS:

The attached has been forwarded to the President.

RESPONSE:

James W. Cicconi
Assistant to the President
and Deputy to the Chief of Staff
Ext. 2702

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(McGroarty)
March 2, 1989
6:00pm
dan1

REMARKS: VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS WASHINGTON CONFERENCE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
MARCH 6, 1989

Thank you. Congressman Derwinski, Commander-in-Chief Rivers: it is a pleasure to be here this morning. I want to express my best wishes to a real VFW institution, my good friend Cooper Holt, who is stepping down this year after more than a quarter century of distinguished service as VFW's Executive Director. Cooper, you've earned the gratitude of veterans everywhere for making the VFW your lifelong cause.

It is always an honor to meet with the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The love of liberty is the birthright of all men -- certainly of all Americans. That is why our nation owes a special debt of gratitude to its veterans, who freely and courageously took up the defense of freedom.

I am especially pleased to welcome the Department of Veterans Affairs to a place in the cabinet. It is a sign of America's commitment to her veterans -- of the importance we place in repaying, in some way, the sacrifices veterans have made in answering their country's call.

And in my view, it is important that the first Secretary of Veterans Affairs is someone who ~~has the full confidence~~ who is close to the President -- who has the President's full confidence on a personal basis. Well, Ed Derwinski, my

Former colleague in Congress and my friend of long standing fits that description to a ~~tee~~ "T."

- 2 -

Today, there are six times as many veterans alive as there were when the VA was created in 1930. Counting their dependents and survivors, about one-third of our population now has an immediate family involvement in veterans affairs.

Ed Derwinski's already come to see me to discuss some of the challenges facing us in veterans programs. With the pressures the country is under to solve our massive Federal deficit, we may not be able to do everything we'd like to do in the way of adding resources for veterans programs, but I can tell you Ed is a strong advocate for veterans.

I want to speak this morning about a matter of the utmost importance to the VFW: keeping America strong -- today, and into the 21st Century.

Opinion is nearly unanimous that today is a time of transition in world affairs. That means our powers of observation and analysis -- our ability to sort out change and continuity -- will be put to the test.

When it comes to predicting the future, Winston Churchill's rule is still the best. "I always avoid prophesying beforehand -- because it is much better policy to prophesy after the event has already taken place."

[Maybe I'm the one to do that. Last year I told the American Legion about Pearl Harbor being on Sept. 7th. If Roosevelt had listened to me, back then, we might have averted disaster.]

(6B)

That's sound advice. We can't predict the future -- but we must do all we can to turn the opportunities it presents to our advantage.

~~I am confident we can.~~

We are, as you know, in the midst of a series of systematic strategic reviews. I've asked the members of my national security team to look hard at the international landscape -- and to look forward, to assess the combination of security threats, technological change, and political and economic developments that will shape our security horizon well into the next century.

I am convinced that this important exercise will have lasting benefits on our national security. In my address to Congress last month, I set a ninety-day deadline for this important work, ^{and} ~~And although some of the reviews may be finished earlier,~~ I won't rush the final results. The insights we will gain into the problems we will face in the decades ahead are worth waiting for.

Today, I want to speak about the foundations of an adequate national defense program, about the world we live in, and the challenges and opportunities we'll encounter -- and about the approach I'll take on issues integral to our national security.

First, the foundations. A month ago, I presented to Congress a sound defense spending plan that makes sense -- both strategically and fiscally. As a sign that my Administration is serious about the deficit, I called for a freeze in defense spending in 1990, adjusted only for inflation. I am well aware that our national strength rests ultimately on the health and vigor of the American economy, and I mean to preserve both ~~---~~ *a strong economy and a strong defense.*

But our crucial military modernization plans -- and the diverse defense commitments we must keep -- cannot be achieved without additional defense funding. *H/* That is why my budget plan follows the freeze for 1990 with real increases of 1 percent in 1991 and 1992, and a 2 percent increase for 1993.

My aim is to put defense spending on a modest, manageable growth path -- one that will allow us to modernize and maintain forces that are formidable, flexible, and ready *and one that we can afford.*

Now, we've all heard the ~~critics~~ who tell us America can't afford the defenses I'm talking about. Well, the critics are wrong. The defense expenditures I am calling for are well within our economic means.

But in the defense debate, what we can and can't afford isn't just a matter of economics. It's a matter of vital national security, ~~and America's place in the world.~~ I say:

-- We can't afford to continue the downward trend in defense spending. 1989 will be the fourth straight year budget authority for defense has declined in real terms. We've worked hard to rebuild America's strength -- and it's paid off. Today, America is strong, its voice is heard, and the values we stand for are more secure.

-- We can't afford to mistake a more stable international environment as proof we can spend less on national security. The secret to our success can be summed up in a single word: strength. Let's sustain the military strength that helped turn the world situation around.

-- And finally, we can afford adequate defenses. The defense budget I am calling for in 1990 represents 5.5% of our annual GNP. That's a far smaller share of our national wealth than the United States spent on defense at any point throughout the 1950s or 1960s -- periods of rapid and sustained economic growth.

The bottom line is not a question of cost, or a question of resources. It is simply a question of will.

You have my word: as long as I'm President, America will stand fast and on the front line in defense of freedom.

Today, around the world, a number of long-standing regional conflicts are closer now to resolution than ever before. The

stirrings of freedom, and the advance of democratic rule are evident and undeniable. In the economic sphere, the free market is increasingly seen as an engine of growth and development unmatched by any other system.

Yes, freedom is on the march. But there are still forces arrayed against it -- regimes whose interests and systems are at odds with our own and with those of our allies. And the spread ^{of} chemical and biological weapons -- along with the means to deliver them -- is likely to make the flashpoints that always exist more dangerous than ever before.

On the key issue of change within the Soviet Union, there are still far more questions than answers. There is no doubt that the changes taking place are significant and far-reaching -- but it is equally true that the ultimate outcome of the events unfolding in the USSR remains uncertain.

My view is that we should press for progress that contributes to a more stable relationship between the U.S. and USSR -- ~~whether in the areas of arms reduction, human rights, regional conflicts, or other global challenges.~~ But we must combine our readiness to build better relations with a resolve to maintain defenses adequate to secure our interests. America and her allies must recognize that -- even in light of the military cuts proposed by President Gorbachev -- the Soviet Union remains the most formidable military power facing the free world.

We must be ready to cope with change and favorable opportunities -- and ready in any event to defend our interests and ideals.

What this means in terms of national security should be clear:

We need to maintain and modernize our forces -- nuclear and conventional. For America and its allies, a survivable nuclear force will remain the ultimate deterrent of aggression.

We need to make a concerted effort to turn our technological strengths into a source of advantage to our national security. And that includes vigorous pursuit of SDI.

We need to make an active effort in arms control -- to strive for increased stability at lower levels of armaments. But (GRB) I will strongly oppose legislative attempts to withdraw U.S. ^{are +} troops from Europe unilaterally. ^{IMPRUDENT} Unilateral ^{reductions} ~~disarmament~~ ^{from part} is not the path to peace, security, and freedom.

We need to keep our forces ready and well-trained. The dedicated men and women who serve our country deserve no less.

We need to reform our procurement process to deliver a dollar's worth of defense for every dollar we spend. The way to begin is to follow through on the sensible reforms suggested in

the Packard Commission report, and the findings of the defense management review now underway.

And we need to maintain the alliance of like-minded nations, ^{in Europe and Asia} that has helped us keep the peace in the post-war era. As strong as we are, America cannot go it alone. ~~Our allies in Europe and in Asia share a common form of government, and a common interest in peace and freedom. We must continue to work together to sustain the great collective strength and sense of common purpose that have created the conditions for unparalleled peace, freedom, and prosperity.~~ ^(with our allies)

~~For forty years, our alliance structure has been the cornerstone of American security. Now, perfect agreement will never exist in an alliance of free nations. But there can be no doubt that the benefits of alliance far outweigh the inevitable differences of interest and outlook -- and the partnership of free nations has never been a more potent force than it is today.~~

Before I close today, I want to focus for a moment on a threat no less real than the adversaries you have battled.

I am speaking about that insidious threat to our society and our values: drug abuse. The notion that America is a nation at peace is only partly true, as long as the violence and destructive power of drugs assault our communities.

As I talk, our Attorney General is completing talks with the last ^{of} three South American presidents - seeking their full participation in this war and offering our full cooperation.

~~I have sworn myself and members of my Administration to wage a war on drug abuse. This war is unconditional -- and it must be~~

(LB)
~~won.~~ My able "Drug Czar," Bill Bennett will be confirmed as my hard hitting "point man" to be at my side ~~at the~~ ^{in the} White House -- to keep the focus on winning this unconditional war.

I mean to mobilize all our resources, and wage this war on all fronts. We're going to combat drug abuse with education, treatment, enforcement and interdiction -- and, yes, with our nation's Armed Services when that is what it takes. We need to break the deadly grip of drugs, and prevent the drug scourge from taking hold.

The VFW can help. 2.3 million members, 750,000 auxiliary members, and 10,000 chapters nationwide -- the VFW is a well-respected member of communities across our nation.

Today, I call on you to form a community of action. "For America, whatever it takes" -- that's the proud motto of the VFW.

You've fought for your nation once. Your nation needs you again. Today, I want to enlist you in the anti-drug campaign.

-- Meet with other leaders in your community: church and clergy, law enforcement officers. Tell them the VFW volunteers are ready to help.

-- Go to the schools. Put the full weight of the VFW behind the anti-drug education effort that provides our children with the reasons and will-power they need to resist drugs.

-- Speak to your state and local elected officials. Urge them to make the passage of strong anti-drug legislation a priority.

I'm reaching out to you, so I want to extend my help as well. Bill Bennett, ~~the point man in our anti-drug campaign,~~ stands ready to meet with VFW leadership, to share ideas that can help you map a strategy.

The VFW has proven many times over its dedication to the health and well-being of our nation. The fifty young people you've honored here today underscore the VFW's interest in our nation's youth and future.

I know we can count on the veterans of America to help us wage and win the war on drugs.

[Pause]

Veterans share a special bond. We have seen the face of war. We know its terrible costs. We know that Americans never willingly choose conflict. But we know as well that we must be ready and willing to respond when our interests and ideals come under threat.

Let me be clear. I prefer the diplomatic approach. Nations can and should explore every avenue toward working out their differences without resorting to force or military intimidation.

But I am also a realist. I know that there is no substitute for a nation's ability to defend its ideals and interests.

Too often, we hear that we face a stark choice in coping with conflict. We can pursue a diplomatic solution -- or we can seek a resolution through military means. One, we're told, is incompatible with the other.

Well, this doesn't square with real-world experience. Diplomacy and military capability are complementary -- not contradictory. Creative diplomacy can help us avert conflict -- negotiations stand the greatest chance of success when they proceed from a position of strength.

The fundamental lesson of the decade now drawing to a close is simply this: strength secures peace.

America will continue to be a force for peace and stability in the world -- provided we stay strong.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless America.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 6, 1989

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE OF
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARSSheraton-Washington Hotel
Washington, D.C.

11:08 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Well, thank you very much, Larry. I remember when Larry Rivers first took over, I was Vice President -- came into greet me. I wasn't sure he knew what he was getting into. But he's holding up real well -- (laughter) -- and doing a first-class job, and you're lucky to have this dynamic young man as your leader.

You know, it's a pleasure to be here. I also want to express my best wishes to a real institution of the VFW -- you know what I'm talking about -- who I'm talking about -- Cooper Holt. (Applause.) I can't believe it -- I can't believe that he's stepping down this year, after more than a quarter of a century of distinguished service as Executive Director. But let me tell you something. Members of the VFW, others who stand for a strong defense whoever they may be, Cooper has earned the gratitude of veterans everywhere for making the VFW his life-long cause, but also the way he has conducted himself in Washington and elsewhere in this high office. He has my respect and my friendship, and I don't know what it's going to be like without him around here, I'll tell you. (Applause.)

I want to pay my respects to General Al Gray, member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, a commandant of the Marine Corp, outstanding soldier -- outstanding Marine, I should say. Sorry, Al. (Laughter.) Really know how to hurt a guy, but -- (laughter.) But an outstanding leader. And also, to my former colleague and dear friend, the veteran's friend, Congressman Sonny Montgomery, over here. (Applause.)

Before I begin -- and I want to talk to you about two or three major issues -- but before I begin, let me just say a word about an issue that is of particular importance, I'd say, to the people in this room. You know John Tower as a fellow veteran, and you know him as a life-long public servant, and you also know him as a fighter. And he's fought for his country as a seventeen-year-old enlisted man in the United States Navy, and now he and I are fighting for what I think are some very important principles -- principles that the American people understand, like fairness and truth; and principles like the prerogative of a President of the United States to assemble the most talented and qualified team to guide this nation

the Pentagon.

Enough of that now. (Laughter.) I wanted to get it off my chest. I'm getting sick and tired of some of the rumors and the innuendos -- (applause) -- that are used against this decent man. (Applause.)

Back to the gentler and kinder message. (Laughter.)

Look it's always an honor to meet with fellow members of the VFW. The love of liberty is the birthright of all men -- certainly all Americans -- and that's why our nation owes a special debt of gratitude to its veterans who freely and courageously took up the defense of freedom. I am especially pleased to welcome the Department of Veterans Affairs to a place in the Cabinet, and it's a sign of -- (applause) -- a cause, I might add, that you were in the lead on, and it's a sign of America's commitment to her veterans, of the importance we place in repaying in some way the sacrifice that veterans have made in answering their country's call. And in my view it is important that the first Secretary is someone who is close to the President, who has the President's full confidence on a personal basis, and Ed Derwinski, my former colleague in Congress and my friend of long-standing fits that description to a tee. He will be an outstanding Secretary. (Applause.)

Some facts. Today there are six times as many veterans alive as there were when the VA was created in 1930. Ed already has come to see me to discuss some of the challenges facing us in these programs. With the pressure the country is under -- and let's make no mistake about it, the pressures are great -- to solve our massive federal deficit, we may not be able to do everything we'd like to do in the way of adding resources, but I can tell you that Ed is your strong advocate. And, like me, he understands the needs, including the crying need for strong health care for the veterans. He already is an advocate for that. (Applause.)

I want to speak this morning about a matter of the utmost importance to the VFW -- keeping America strong -- today and then just 11 years from now, into the 21st century.

Opinion is nearly unanimous that today is a time of transition in world affairs. That means our powers of observation and analysis -- our ability to sort out change and continuity -- will be put to the test.

And when it comes to predicting the future, Winston Churchill's rule is the best. It is, "I always avoid prophesying beforehand because it's much better policy to prophesy after the event has already taken place." You've got to think about that one for a while, but -- and maybe I'm the guy to do that. Last year I told the American Legion about Pearl Harbor being on September 7th. (Laughter.) Just think if Franklin Roosevelt had listened to me, think what we could have spared the nation. (Laughter.)

You know, maybe you've read and maybe you haven't that we are in the midst of a series of systematic strategic reviews, and I've asked the members of my national security team to look hard at the international landscape and to look forward to assess the combination of security threats, technological change and political

But today I want to speak about the foundations of an adequate national defense program, about the world we live in, and the challenges and opportunities we'll encounter -- and about the approach I'll take on issues integral to our own national security.

First, the foundations. A month ago, I presented to the Congress a sound defense spending plan that makes sense -- strategically and fiscally. As a sign that my administration is serious about the deficit, I called for a freeze in defense spending in 1990, adjusted only for inflation. And I'm well aware that our national strength rests ultimately on the health and vigor of the American economy. And we need a strong defense and we need a strong economy, and I mean to preserve both.

But our crucial military modernization plans -- and the diverse defense commitments that we must keep -- cannot be achieved without additional defense funding. And that's why the budget plan follows the freeze for 1990 with real increases, albiet they small, with real increases -- one percent in 1991 and 1992, and a two percent increase for 1993.

And my aim is to put defense spending on a modest, manageable growth path -- one that we can afford and one that will allow us to modernize and maintain forces that are formidable, flexible, and ready.

But in the defense debate, what we can and can't afford isn't just a matter of economics. It's a matter of vital national security, I say we can't afford to continue the downward trend in defense spending -- 1989 -- now listen carefully to this -- 1989 will be the fourth straight year that budget authority for defense has declined in real terms. And we've worked hard to rebuild America's strength -- and it's paid off. Today, America is strong, its voice is heard, its forces are ready and the values we stand for are more secure.

Secondly, we can't afford to mistake a more stable international environment as proof that we can spend less on national defense. The secret to our success can be summed up in a single word -- strength. And let's sustain the military strength that helped turn the world situation around.

And finally, we can afford adequate defenses. The defense budget that I'm calling for in 1990 represents 5.5 percent of our annual Gross National Product. And that's a far smaller share of our national wealth than the United States spent on defense at any point throughout the 1950s or the 1960s -- periods of rapid and sustained economic growth though they were.

The bottom line is not a question of cost, or a question of resources. It's simply a question of will.

And you have my word -- as long as I am President, America will stand fast on the front line in defense of freedom. (Applause.)

Today, around the world, a number of long-standing regional conflicts are closer now to resolution than ever before.

that the changes taking place are significant and far-reaching, but it is equally true that the ultimate outcome of the events unfolding in the USSR remains certain.*

My view is this -- we should press for progress that contributes to a more stable relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union, but we must combine our readiness to build better relations with a resolve to maintain defenses adequate to secure our interests. America and her allies must recognize that even in light of the military cuts proposed by President Gorbachev, the Soviet Union remains the most formidable military power facing the free world.

We must be ready to cope with change and favorable opportunities -- and ready in any event to defend our interests and ideals.

And what this means in terms of our national security should be clear: We need to maintain and modernize our forces -- nuclear and conventional. For America and its allies, a survivable nuclear force will remain the ultimate deterrent of aggression.

We need to make a concerted effort to turn our technological strengths into a source of advantage to our national security. And that includes, in my view, vigorous pursuit of the Strategic Defense Initiative.

And we need to make an active effort in arms control -- to strive for increased stability at lower levels, lower levels of armaments. But I will strongly oppose legislative attempts to withdraw U.S. troops from Europe unilaterally. Imprudent unilateral reductions are not the path to peace and security and freedom. (Applause.)

And I've been listening to General Gray. We need to keep our forces ready and well-trained. The dedicated men and women who serve our country deserve no less.

We need to reform our procurement process to deliver a dollar's worth of defense for every dollar we spend. (Applause.) And the way to do that is to begin to follow through on the sensible reforms suggested in the Packard Commission report and the findings of the defense management review now underway. I'll look carefully at those management review findings and then move to implement them.

And we need to maintain the alliance of like-minded nations in Europe and Asia that have helped us keep peace in the post-war era. As strong as we are -- and we are strong -- as strong as we are, the United States of America in this complex world cannot go it alone. Keep our alliances strong.

Before I close, I want to focus for a moment on a threat no less real than the adversaries you have battled. And I'm speaking about not a military threat; I'm speaking about the insidious threat to our society and our values -- drug abuse. The notion that America is a nation at peace is only partly true, as long as the violence and destructive power of drugs assault our communities.

that's what it takes, we are going to have to go all out. We need to break the deadly grip of drugs and prevent the drug scourge from taking hold.

And the VFW can help. Many of you have already started. Many of your posts are actively involved. You've got 2.3 million members, 750,000 auxiliary members, 10,000 chapters nationwide -- the VFW is and always will be a respected member of communities across our country. (Applause.) And today, I call on you to form a community of action. "For America, whatever it takes" -- that's the motto of the VFW.

And you've fought for your nation once and your nation needs you again. And today, I want to enlist you in the antidrug campaign. Meet with other leaders in your community -- church, clergy, law enforcement officers. Tell them the VFW volunteers are ready to help.

And go to the schools and put the full weight of this magnificent organization behind the antidrug education effort that provides our kids with the reasons and willpower that they need to resist drugs.

Speak to your state and local elected officials. Urge them to make the passage of strong antidrug legislation a priority.

I am reaching out to you, so I want to extend my help, as well. Bill Bennett stands ready to meet with the VFW leadership to share ideas that can help you map a strategy.

VFW has proven many times over its dedication to the health and well-being of our nation -- proven it over and over and over again. And the fifty young people that you've honored here today, with whom I had a chance to meet very briefly a minute ago, underscore the VFW's interest in our nation's youth and in our future.

I know that we can count on the veterans of America all across this country to help us wage and win the war on drugs. Your country needs you once again. (Applause.)

Veterans share a special bond. We've seen the face of war. We know its terrible costs. Americans never willingly choose conflict. But we know as well that we must be ready and willing to respond when our interests and our ideals come under threat.

Let me be very clear. I prefer the diplomatic approach. Nations can and should explore every avenue toward working out their differences without resorting to force or military intimidation.

But I'm also a realist. I know that there is no substitute for a nation's ability to defend its ideals and interests.

And too often, we hear that we face a stark choice in coping with conflict. We can pursue a diplomatic situation or we can seek a resolution through military means. One, we're told, is incompatible with the other.

be an optimist. I'd be an optimist about world peace, changes in the Soviet Union. As I said earlier in this talk, nobody is talking about the socialist model or the communist model as to a way to solve their problems. But never forget -- never forget that when a President of the United States goes to the negotiating table, the way to enhance our values -- the way to enhance the principles that everybody in this room holds dear is to be dealing from a position of a strong America. We have the ideals. Keep America strong.
(Applause.)

Thank you all and God bless you. And good luck to you guys.

END

11:32 A.M. EST

MASTER I

Document No. 012474 SS

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 3/1/89 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: c.o.b. 3/1/89

SUBJECT: REMARKS: VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCCLURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NEWMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT <i>Don Schneider</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	STUDDERT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BATES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	UNTERMAYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BREEDEN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>PINKERTON</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CARD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>WINSTON</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CICCONI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>ROGERS</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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HAGIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

Please provide your comments/recommendations directly to Chriss Winston's office (Rm. 122, x2930) with an info copy to my office by c.o.b. TODAY. Thank you.

RESPONSE:

James W. Cicconi
Assistant to the President
and Deputy to the Chief of Staff
Ext. 2702

1989 MAR -1 PM 1:45

(McGroarty)
March 1, 1989
10:30am
dan1

REMARKS: VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS WASHINGTON CONFERENCE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
MARCH 6, 1989

Thank you. (Acknowledgements, Secretary-designate Derwinski, Mr. Cooper Holt, Executive Director of VFW, Mr. Larry Rivers, Commander-in-Chief, VFW.) It is always an honor to meet with the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The love of liberty is the birthright of all men -- certainly of all Americans. That is why our nation owes a special debt of gratitude to its veterans, who freely and courageously took up the defense of freedom.

I am especially pleased to welcome the Department of Veterans Affairs to a place in the cabinet. It is a sign of America's commitment to her veterans -- of the importance we place in repaying, in some way, the sacrifices veterans have made in answering their country's call.

I want to speak this morning about a matter of the utmost importance to the VFW: keeping America strong -- today, and into the 21st Century.

Opinion is nearly unanimous that today is a time of transition in world affairs. That means our powers of

observation and analysis -- our ability to sort out change and continuity -- will be put to the test.

When it comes to predicting the future, Winston Churchill's rule is still the best. "I always avoid prophesying beforehand -- because it is much better policy to prophesy after the event has already taken place."

That's sound advice. We can't predict the future -- but we must do all we can to turn the opportunities it presents to our advantage.

I am confident we can.

We are, as you know, in the midst of a serious and systematic strategic review. I've asked the members of my national security team to look hard at the international landscape -- and to look forward, to assess the combination of security threats, technological change, and political and economic developments that will shape our security horizon well into the next century.

I am convinced that this important exercise will have lasting benefits on our national security. ~~strategy~~. In my address to Congress last month, I set a ninety-day deadline for this review. I won't rush the final result. The insights it

- Darmann

(Darmann)

will provide into the ^{problems} ~~forces~~ we will face in the decades ahead are worth waiting for.

Today, I want to speak about the foundations of an adequate national defense program, about the world we live in, and the challenges and opportunities we'll encounter -- and about the approach I'll take on issues integral to our national security.

First, the foundations. Nearly two months ago, I presented to Congress a ^{sound} ~~defense~~ spending plan ^{that} ~~that is sound, and~~ makes sense -- both strategically and fiscally. As a sign that my Administration is serious about the deficit, I called for a freeze in defense spending in 1990, adjusting ^{ed} only for inflation. I am well aware that our national strength rests ultimately on the health and vigor of the American economy, and I mean to preserve both.

But our crucial military modernization plans -- and the diverse defense commitments we must keep -- cannot be achieved without additional defense funding. That is why my budget plan follows the freeze for 1990 with real increases of 1 percent in 1991 and 1992, and a 2 percent increase for 1993.

My aim is to put defense spending on a modest, manageable ^{path} of growth -- one that will allow us to modernize and maintain forces that are formidable, flexible, and ready.

Now, we've all heard the critics who tell us America can't afford the defenses I'm talking about. Well, the critics are wrong. The defense expenditures I am calling for are well within our economic means.

But in the defense debate, what we can and can't afford isn't just a matter of economics. It's a matter of vital national security, and America's place in the world. I say:

-- We can't afford to continue the downward trend in defense spending. 1989 ~~is~~ ^{will be} the fourth straight year ^(Darmann) ~~defense spending~~ ^{budget authority fell far} has declined in real terms. We've worked hard to rebuild America's strength -- and it's paid off. Today, America is strong, its voice is heard, and the values we stand for are more secure.

-- We can't afford to mistake a more stable international environment as proof we can spend less on national security. The secret to our success can be summed up in a single word: strength. Let's sustain the military strength that helped turn the world situation around.

-- And finally, we can afford adequate defenses. The defense budget I am calling for in 1990 represents 5.5% of our annual GNP. That's a far smaller share of our national wealth than the United States spent on defense at any point throughout the 1950s or 1960s -- periods of rapid and sustained economic growth.

The bottom line is not a question of cost, or a question of resources. It is simply a question of will.

You have my word: as long as I'm President, America will stand fast and on the front line in defense of freedom.

Today, the world scene looks relatively stable and secure. Around the world, a number of long-standing regional conflicts are closer now to resolution than ever before. The stirrings of freedom, and the advance of democratic rule are evident and undeniable. In the economic sphere, the free market is increasingly seen as an engine of growth and development unmatched by any other system.

Yes, freedom is on the march. But there are still forces arrayed against it -- regimes whose interests and systems are at odds with our own and with ^{those of} our allies~~X~~. And the spread of weapons of mass destruction -- along with the means to deliver them -- is likely to make the flashpoints that always exist more dangerous than ever before.

On the key issue of change within the Soviet Union, there are still far more questions than answers. There is no doubt that the changes taking place are significant and far-reaching -- but it is equally true that the ultimate outcome of the events unfolding in the USSR remains uncertain.

My view is that we should press for progress that contributes to a more stable relationship between the U.S. and USSR -- whether in the areas of arms control, human rights, or regional conflicts. But we must combine our readiness to build better relations with a resolve to maintain defenses adequate to secure our interests. America and her allies must recognize that -- even in light of the military cuts proposed by President Gorbachev -- the Soviet Union remains the most formidable military power facing the free world.

We must be ready to cope with change and favorable opportunities -- and ready in any event to defend our interests and ideals.

What this means in terms of national security should be clear:

We need to maintain and modernize our forces -- strategic and conventional. For America and its allies, a survivable nuclear force will remain the ultimate deterrent of aggression.

We need to make a concerted effort to turn our technological strengths into a source of advantage to our national security. And that includes an ~~active and aggressive~~ ^{Vigorous} pursuit of SDI.

We need to make an active effort in arms control -- to strive for increased stability at lower levels of armaments.

We need to keep our forces ready and well-trained. Our ^{the} dedicated ~~servicemen~~ and ~~servicewomen~~ ^{who serve our country} deserve no less.

We need to reform our procurement process to deliver a dollar's worth of defense for every dollar we spend. The ^{way} place to begin is to follow through on the sensible reforms suggested in the Packard Commission report on defense management.

And we need to maintain the alliance of like-minded nations that has helped us keep the peace in the post-war era. As strong as we are, America cannot go it alone. Our allies in Europe and in Asia share a common form of government, and a common interest in peace and freedom. We must continue to work together to sustain the great collective strength and sense of common purpose that have created the conditions for unparalleled peace, freedom, and prosperity.

For forty years, our alliance structure has been the cornerstone of American security. Now, perfect agreement will never exist in an alliance of free nations. But there can be no doubt that the benefits of alliance far outweigh the inevitable differences of interest and outlook -- and the partnership of free nations has never been a more potent force than it is today.

Before I close today, I want to focus for a moment on a threat no less real than the adversaries you have battled.

I am speaking about that insidious threat to our society and our values: drug abuse. The notion that America is a nation at peace is only partly true, as long as the violence and destructive power of drugs assaults ~~our~~^{it} communities.

I have sworn myself and members of my Administration to wage a war on drug abuse. This war is unconditional -- and ~~this war~~^{it} must be won.

I mean to mobilize all our resources, and wage this war on all fronts. We're going to combat drug abuse with education, treatment, enforcement and interdiction -- and, yes, with our nation's Armed Services when that is what it takes. We need to break the deadly grip of drugs ~~where it exists~~, and prevent the drug scourge from taking hold.

The VFW can help. Two million members, 10,000 chapters nationwide -- the VFW is a well-respected member of communities across our nation.

Today, I call on you to form a community of action. "For America, whatever it takes" -- that's the proud motto of the VFW.

You've fought for your nation once. Your nation needs you again. Today, I want to enlist you in the anti-drug campaign.

~~_____~~

-- Meet with other leaders in your community: church and clergy, law enforcement officers. Tell them the VFW volunteers are ready to help.

-- Go to the schools. Put the full weight of the VFW behind the anti-drug education effort that provides our children ^{WITH} the reasons and ~~the~~ will-power they need to resist drugs.

-- Speak to your state and local elected officials. Urge them to make the passage of strong anti-drug legislation a priority.

I'm reaching out to you, so I want to extend my help as well. Bill Bennett, the point man in our anti-drug campaign, stands ready to meet with VFW leadership, to share ideas that can help you map a strategy.

The VFW has proven many times over its dedication to the health and well-being of our nation. I know we can count on the veterans of America to help us wage and win the war on drugs.

Veterans share a special bond. We have seen the face of war. We know its terrible costs. We know that Americans never willingly choose conflict. But we know as well that we must be ready and willing to respond when our interests and ideals come under threat.

Let me be clear. I prefer the diplomatic approach. Nations can and should explore every avenue toward working out their differences without resort to ^{ing} force or military intimidation.

But I am also a realist. I know that there is no substitute for a nation's ability to defend its ideals and interests.

Too often, we hear that we face a stark choice in coping with conflict. We can pursue a diplomatic solution -- or we can seek a resolution through military means. One, we're told, is incompatible with the other.

Well, this doesn't square with real-world experience. ~~The fact is that~~ diplomacy and military capability are complementary -- not contradictory. ~~I know that~~ creative diplomacy can help us avert conflict -- and ~~I know that~~ negotiations stand the greatest chance of success when they proceed from a position of strength.

The fundamental lesson of the decade now drawing to a close is simply this: strength secures peace.

America ^{will} can continue to be a force for peace and stability in the world -- provided we stay strong.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless America.

TOWER INSERT/VFW

I AM PLEASED TO BE JOINED HERE TODAY BY JOHN TOWER, A FELLOW VETERAN AND LIFELONG PUBLIC SERVANT. SENATOR TOWER IS A FIGHTER. HE FOUGHT FOR HIS COUNTRY, JOINING THE NAVY AT THE AGE OF SEVENTEEN. HE'S FOUGHT FOR OUR COUNTRY'S BEST INTERESTS

DRAFT
Not Used

- 2 -

--TWENTY-FOUR YEARS IN THE SENATE, AND ACROSS THE NEGOTIATING TABLE WITH THE SOVIETS. HE'S BEEN A DRIVING FORCE IN RESTORING AMERICA'S STRENGTH AND RESOLVE.

JOHN TOWER IS FIGHTING TODAY -- FOR A FAIR SHAKE IN THE SENATE, FOR A DECISION BASED ON FACT AND ON PROVEN PERFORMANCE, NOT ON ALLEGATIONS THAT FAIL, IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, TO STAND UP UNDER SCRUTINY. I STAND BY JOHN TOWER.

- 3 -

HE'S UNIQUELY QUALIFIED, TOUGH, AND EXPERIENCED -- HE'S THE RIGHT MAN TO TAKE CHARGE AT THE PENTAGON.

Jim -

Dave Demarest would like you to look at +
approve this suggested insert on Tower for the APW
speech, which would replace the earlier insert.

JD.

Before I begin let me just say a word about an issue that's I'm sure is of particular importance to the people in this room. You know John Tower as a fellow veteran, and as a lifelong public servant. You also know him as a fighter. He's fought for his country as a seventeen-year-old in the Navy, and now he and I are fighting for some very important principles.

Principles like fairness and truth.

Principles like the prerogative of the President to assemble the most talented and qualified team to guide this nation forward.

I have asked the Senate to vote on this nomination with those principles in mind. I've asked Senators to put aside partisanship. I've asked them to use their own experience with John Tower as an expert on defense issues, as a former colleague, and as a tough, hard-nosed negotiator, to guide them as they move towards a vote on his nomination.

I stand by John Tower...not just because he is my friend, but more importantly because he's uniquely qualified as the ~~the~~ right

DRAFT

(McGroarty/Blessey)
March 3, 1989
3:30pm
dan1

TOWER INSERT/VFW

I am pleased to be joined here today by John Tower, a fellow veteran and lifelong public servant. Senator Tower is a fighter. He fought for his country, joining the Navy at the age of seventeen. He's fought for our country's best interests -- twenty-four years in the Senate, and across the negotiating table with the Soviets. He's been a driving force in restoring America's strength and resolve.

John Tower is fighting today -- for a fair shake in the Senate, for a decision based on fact and on proven performance, not on allegations that fail, in the final analysis, to stand up under scrutiny. I stand by John Tower. He's ~~well-qualified~~, tough, and experienced -- and he's the right man to take charge at the Pentagon.

uniquely

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 3, 1988

TO: Bridget Montagne

FROM: Tim McBride

12 Pages to follow ;

The bottom of page 1 reads "(over)"; The President's note on theback will be faxed as the last page.

→ former colleague in Congress and
 my friend of long standing
 that description to a "T".

fits that description

* is close to the President

□ a personal board. Well Ed Deminski
 my A

Today, there are six times as many veterans alive as there were when the VA was created in 1930. Counting their dependents and survivors, about one-third of our population now has an immediate family involvement in veterans affairs.

Ed Derwinski's already come to see me to discuss some of the challenges facing us in veterans programs. With the pressures the country is under to solve our massive Federal deficit, we may not be able to do everything we'd like to do in the way of adding resources for veterans programs, but I can tell you Ed is a strong advocate for veterans.

I want to speak this morning about a matter of the utmost importance to the VFW: keeping America strong -- today, and into the 21st Century.

Opinion is nearly unanimous that today is a time of transition in world affairs. That means our powers of observation and analysis -- our ability to sort out change and continuity -- will be put to the test.

When it comes to predicting the future, Winston Churchill's rule is still the best. "I always avoid prophesying beforehand -- because it is much better policy to prophesy after the event has already taken place."

put in brackets - not in text plus

[Maybe I'm the one to do that - Last year I told the American Legion about Pearl Harbor being Sept. 7th. If Roosevelt had listened to me, back then

- 3 -

✓ That's sound advice. We can't predict the future -- but we must do all we can to turn the opportunities it presents to our advantage.

✓ I am confident ~~we can~~.

We are, as you know, in the midst of a series of systematic strategic reviews. I've asked the members of my national security team to look hard at the international landscape -- and to look forward, to assess the combination of security threats, technological change, and political and economic developments that will shape our security horizon well into the next century.

I am convinced that this important exercise will have lasting benefits on our national security. In my address to Congress last month, I set a ninety-day deadline for this important work. And although some of the reviews may be finished earlier, I won't rush the final results. The insights we will gain into the problems we will face in the decades ahead are worth waiting for.

Today, I want to speak about the foundations of an adequate national defense program, about the world we live in, and the challenges and opportunities we'll encounter -- and about the approach I'll take on issues integral to our national security.

- 4 -

First, the foundations. A month ago, I presented to Congress a sound defense spending plan that makes sense -- both strategically and fiscally. As a sign that my Administration is serious about the deficit, I called for a freeze in defense spending in 1990, adjusted only for inflation. I am well aware that our national strength rests ultimately on the health and vigor of the American economy, ~~and~~ I mean to preserve both *a strong economy and a strong defense.*

But our crucial military modernization plans -- and the diverse defense commitments we must keep -- cannot be achieved without additional defense funding. *||* That is why my budget plan follows the freeze for 1990 with real increases of 1 percent in 1991 and 1992, and a 2 percent increase for 1993.

My aim is to put defense spending on a modest, manageable growth path -- one that will allow us to modernize and maintain forces that are formidable, flexible, and ready.

Now, we've all heard the critics who tell us America can't afford the defenses I'm talking about. Well, the critics are wrong. The defense expenditures I am calling for are well within our economic means.

But in the defense debate, what we can and can't afford isn't just a matter of economics. It's a matter of vital national security, and America's place in the world. I say:

- 5 -

-- We can't afford to continue the downward trend in defense spending. 1989 will be the fourth straight year budget authority for defense has declined in real terms. We've worked hard to rebuild America's strength -- and it's paid off. Today, America is strong, its voice is heard, and the values we stand for are more secure.

-- We can't afford to mistake a more stable international environment as proof we can spend less on national security. The secret to our success can be summed up in a single word: strength. Let's sustain the military strength that helped turn the world situation around.

-- And finally, we can afford adequate defenses. The defense budget I am calling for in 1990 represents 5.5% of our annual GNP. That's a far smaller share of our national wealth than the United States spent on defense at any point throughout the 1950s or 1960s -- periods of rapid and sustained economic growth.

The bottom line is not a question of cost, or a question of resources. It is simply a question of will.

You have my word: as long as I'm President, America will stand fast and on the front line in defense of freedom.

Today, around the world, a number of long-standing regional conflicts are closer now to resolution than ever before. The

- 6 -

stirrings of freedom, and the advance of democratic rule are evident and undeniable. In the economic sphere, the free market is increasingly seen as an engine of growth and development unmatched by any other system.

✓ of Yes, freedom is on the march. But there are still forces arrayed against it -- regimes whose interests and systems are at odds with our own and with those of our allies. And the spread of chemical and biological weapons -- along with the means to deliver them -- is likely to make the flashpoints that always exist more dangerous than ever before.

On the key issue of change within the Soviet Union, there are still far more questions than answers. There is no doubt that the changes taking place are significant and far-reaching -- but it is equally true that the ultimate outcome of the events unfolding in the USSR remains uncertain.

My view is that we should press for progress that contributes to a more stable relationship between the U.S. and USSR -- whether in the areas of arms reduction, human rights, regional conflicts, or other global challenges. But we must combine our readiness to build better relations with a resolve to maintain defenses adequate to secure our interests. America and her allies must recognize that -- even in light of the military cuts proposed by President Gorbachev -- the Soviet Union remains the most formidable military power facing the free world.

looks OK but ask Brent

We must be ready to cope with change and favorable opportunities -- and ready in any event to defend our interests and ideals.

What this means in terms of national security should be clear:

We need to maintain and modernize our forces -- nuclear and conventional. For America and its allies, a survivable nuclear force will remain the ultimate deterrent of aggression.

We need to make a concerted effort to turn our technological strengths into a source of advantage to our national security. And that includes vigorous pursuit of SDI.

We need to make an active effort in arms control -- to strive for increased stability at lower levels of armaments. But I will strongly oppose legislative attempts to withdraw U.S. troops from Europe unilaterally. ^{Independent} Unilateral ~~disarmament~~ ^{is} not the path to peace, security, and freedom. ~~is~~ ^{reductions are}

We need to keep our forces ready and well-trained. The dedicated men and women who serve our country deserve no less.

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Checked OK

- 8 -

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- 6 -

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For forty years, our alliance structure has been the cornerstone of American security. Now, perfect agreement will never exist in an alliance of free nations. But there can be no doubt that the benefits of alliance far outweigh the inevitable differences of interest and outlook -- and the partnership of free nations has never been a more potent force than it is today.

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As I talk an Attorney General is conspiring with
 talks with ~~the President~~ the part of 3 South American
 products - seeing their full participation in this war and
 of my own full cooperation -
~~Thomson~~ my able "Drug czar" will be confirmed as my
 hard hitting "point man" to ~~handle~~ ~~at my~~ ~~side~~
 I have sworn myself and members of my Administration to wage
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side with white
 frame to keep the
 focus on winning this
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 all fronts. We're going to combat drug abuse with education,
 treatment, enforcement and interdiction -- and, yes, with our
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- 10 -

-- Go to the schools. Put the full weight of the VFW behind the anti-drug education effort that provides our children with the reasons and will-power they need to resist drugs.

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put in brackets (in pause)
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- 11 -

Let me be clear. I prefer the diplomatic approach. Nations can and should explore every avenue toward working out their differences without resorting to force or military intimidation.

But I am also a realist. I know that there is no substitute for a nation's ability to defend its ideals and interests.

Too often, we hear that we face a stark choice in coping with conflict. We can pursue a diplomatic solution -- or we can seek a resolution through military means. One, we're told, is incompatible with the other.

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The fundamental lesson of the decade now drawing to a close is simply this: strength secures peace.

America will continue to be a force for peace and stability in the world -- provided we stay strong.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless America.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 2, 1989

MEMORANDUM FOR CHRISS WINSTON

FROM: ROGER B. PORTER *RBP*

SUBJECT: Remarks: Veterans of Foreign Wars Washington
Conference

I have reviewed briefly the remarks of the President for the Veterans of Foreign Wars and have no policy problems with it nor editorial suggestions.

cc: James W. Cicconi

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 3/1/89 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: c.o.b. 3/1/89

SUBJECT: REMARKS: VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCCLURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NEWMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	STUDDERT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BATES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	UNTERMAYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BREEDEN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>PINKERTON</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CARD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>WINSTON</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CICCONI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>ROGERS</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HAGIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

Please provide your comments/recommendations directly to Chriss Winston's office (Rm. 122, x2930) with an info copy to my office by c.o.b. TODAY. Thank you.

RESPONSE:

James W. Cicconi
Assistant to the President
and Deputy to the Chief of Staff

1989 MAR -1 PM 1:45

(McGroarty)
March 1, 1989
10:30am
danl

REMARKS: VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS WASHINGTON CONFERENCE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
MARCH 6, 1989

Thank you. (Acknowledgements, Secretary-designate Derwinski, Mr. Cooper Holt, Executive Director of VFW, Mr. Larry Rivers, Commander-in-Chief, VFW.) It is always an honor to meet with the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The love of liberty is the birthright of all men -- certainly of all Americans. That is why our nation owes a special debt of gratitude to its veterans, who freely and courageously took up the defense of freedom.

I am especially pleased to welcome the Department of Veterans Affairs to a place in the cabinet. It is a sign of America's commitment to her veterans -- of the importance we place in repaying, in some way, the sacrifices veterans have made in answering their country's call.

I want to speak this morning about a matter of the utmost importance to the VFW: keeping America strong -- today, and into the 21st Century.

Opinion is nearly unanimous that today is a time of transition in world affairs. That means our powers of

observation and analysis -- our ability to sort out change and continuity -- will be put to the test.

When it comes to predicting the future, Winston Churchill's rule is still the best. "I always avoid prophesying beforehand -- because it is much better policy to prophesy after the event has already taken place."

That's sound advice. We can't predict the future -- but we must do all we can to turn the opportunities it presents to our advantage.

I am confident we can.

We are, as you know, in the midst of a serious and systematic strategic review. I've asked the members of my national security team to look hard at the international landscape -- and to look forward, to assess the combination of security threats, technological change, and political and economic developments that will shape our security horizon well into the next century.

I am convinced that this important exercise will have lasting benefits on our national security strategy. In my address to Congress last month, I set a ninety-day deadline for this review. I won't rush the final result. The insights it

will provide into the forces we will face in the decades ahead are worth waiting for.

Today, I want to speak about the foundations of an adequate national defense program, about the world we live in, and the challenges and opportunities we'll encounter -- and about the approach I'll take on issues integral to our national security.

First, the foundations. Nearly two months ago, I presented to Congress a defense spending plan that is sound, and makes sense -- both strategically and fiscally. As a sign that my Administration is serious about the deficit, I called for a freeze in defense spending in 1990, adjusting only for inflation. I am well aware that our national strength rests ultimately on the health and vigor of the American economy, and I mean to preserve both.

But our crucial military modernization plans -- and the diverse defense commitments we must keep -- cannot be achieved without additional defense funding. That is why my budget plan follows the freeze for 1990 with real increases of 1 percent in 1991 and 1992, and a 2 percent increase for 1993.

My aim is to put defense spending on a modest, manageable path of growth -- one that will allow us to modernize and maintain forces that are formidable, flexible, and ready.

Now, we've all heard the critics who tell us America can't afford the defenses I'm talking about. Well, the critics are wrong. The defense expenditures I am calling for are well within our economic means.

But in the defense debate, what we can and can't afford isn't just a matter of economics. It's a matter of vital national security, and America's place in the world. I say:

-- We can't afford to continue the downward trend in defense spending. 1989 is the fourth straight year defense spending has declined in real terms. We've worked hard to rebuild America's strength -- and it's paid off. Today, America is strong, its voice is heard, and the values we stand for are more secure.

-- We can't afford to mistake a more stable international environment as proof we can spend less on national security. The secret to our success can be summed up in a single word: strength. Let's sustain the military strength that helped turn the world situation around.

-- And finally, we can afford adequate defenses. The defense budget I am calling for in 1990 represents 5.5% of our annual GNP. That's a far smaller share of our national wealth than the United States spent on defense at any point throughout the 1950s or 1960s -- periods of rapid and sustained economic growth.

The bottom line is not a question of cost, or a question of resources. It is simply a question of will.

You have my word: as long as I'm President, America will stand fast and on the front line in defense of freedom.

Today, the world scene looks relatively stable and secure. Around the world, a number of long-standing regional conflicts are closer now to resolution than ever before. The stirrings of freedom, and the advance of democratic rule are evident and undeniable. In the economic sphere, the free market is increasingly seen as an engine of growth and development unmatched by any other system.

Yes, freedom is on the march. But there are still forces arrayed against it -- regimes whose interests and systems are at odds with our own and with our allies'. And the spread of weapons of mass destruction -- along with the means to deliver them -- is likely to make the flashpoints that always exist more dangerous than ever before.

On the key issue of change within the Soviet Union, there are still far more questions than answers. There is no doubt that the changes taking place are significant and far-reaching -- but it is equally true that the ultimate outcome of the events unfolding in the USSR remains uncertain.

My view is that we should press for progress that contributes to a more stable relationship between the U.S. and USSR -- whether in the areas of arms control, human rights, or regional conflicts. But we must combine our readiness to build better relations with a resolve to maintain defenses adequate to secure our interests. America and her allies must recognize that -- even in light of the military cuts proposed by President Gorbachev -- the Soviet Union remains the most formidable military power facing the free world.

We must be ready to cope with change and favorable opportunities -- and ready in any event to defend our interests and ideals.

What this means in terms of national security should be clear:

We need to maintain and modernize our forces -- strategic and conventional. For America and its allies, a survivable nuclear force will remain the ultimate deterrent of aggression.

We need to make a concerted effort to turn our technological strengths into a source of advantage to our national security. And that includes an active and aggressive pursuit of SDI.

We need to make an active effort in arms control -- to strive for increased stability at lower levels of armaments.

We need to keep our forces ready and well-trained. Our dedicated servicemen and servicewomen deserve no less.

We need to reform our procurement process to deliver a dollar's worth of defense for every dollar we spend. The place to begin is to follow through on the sensible reforms suggested in the Packard Commission report on defense management.

And we need to maintain the alliance of like-minded nations that has helped us keep the peace in the post-war era. As strong as we are, America cannot go it alone. Our allies in Europe and in Asia share a common form of government, and a common interest in peace and freedom. We must continue to work together to sustain the great collective strength and sense of common purpose that have created the conditions for unparalleled peace, freedom, and prosperity.

For forty years, our alliance structure has been the cornerstone of American security. Now, perfect agreement will never exist in an alliance of free nations. But there can be no doubt that the benefits of alliance far outweigh the inevitable differences of interest and outlook -- and the partnership of free nations has never been a more potent force than it is today.

Before I close today, I want to focus for a moment on a threat no less real than the adversaries you have battled.

I am speaking about that insidious threat to our society and our values: drug abuse. The notion that America is a nation at peace is only partly true, as long as the violence and destructive power of drugs assaults our communities.

I have sworn myself and members of my Administration to wage a war on drug abuse. This war is unconditional -- and this war must be won.

I mean to mobilize all our resources, and wage this war on all fronts. We're going to combat drug abuse with education, treatment, enforcement and interdiction -- and, yes, with our nation's Armed Services when that is what it takes. We need to break the deadly grip of drugs where it exists, and prevent the drug scourge from taking hold.

The VFW can help. Two million members, 10,000 chapters nationwide -- the VFW is a well-respected member of communities across our nation.

Today, I call on you to form a community of action. "For America, whatever it takes" -- that's the proud motto of the VFW.

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Veterans share a special bond. We have seen the face of war. We know its terrible costs. We know that Americans never willingly choose conflict. But we know as well that we must be ready and willing to respond when our interests and ideals come under threat.

Let me be clear. I prefer the diplomatic approach. Nations can and should explore every avenue toward working out their differences without resort to force or military intimidation.

But I am also a realist. I know that there is no substitute for a nation's ability to defend its ideals and interests.

Too often, we hear that we face a stark choice in coping with conflict. We can pursue a diplomatic solution -- or we can seek a resolution through military means. One, we're told, is incompatible with the other.

Well, this doesn't square with real-world experience. The fact is that diplomacy and military capability are complementary -- not contradictory. I know that creative diplomacy can help us avert conflict -- and I know that negotiations stand the greatest chance of success when they proceed from a position of strength.

The fundamental lesson of the decade now drawing to a close is simply this: strength secures peace.

America can continue to be a force for peace and stability in the world -- provided we stay strong.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless America.

To the President
3/2/89

(McGroarty)
March 2, 1989
6:00pm
dan1

REMARKS: VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS WASHINGTON CONFERENCE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
MARCH 6, 1989

Thank you. Congressman Derwinski, Commander-in-Chief Rivers: it is a pleasure to be here this morning. I want to express my best wishes to a real VFW institution, my good friend Cooper Holt, who is stepping down this year after more than a quarter century of distinguished service as VFW's Executive Director. Cooper, you've earned the gratitude of veterans everywhere for making the VFW your lifelong cause.

It is always an honor to meet with the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The love of liberty is the birthright of all men -- certainly of all Americans. That is why our nation owes a special debt of gratitude to its veterans, who freely and courageously took up the defense of freedom.

I am especially pleased to welcome the Department of Veterans Affairs to a place in the cabinet. It is a sign of America's commitment to her veterans -- of the importance we place in repaying, in some way, the sacrifices veterans have made in answering their country's call.

Today, there are six times as many veterans alive as there were when the VA was created in 1930. Counting their dependents and survivors, about one-third of our population now has an immediate family involvement in veterans affairs.

Ed Derwinski's already come to see me to discuss some of the challenges facing us in veterans programs. With the pressures the country is under to solve our massive Federal deficit, we may not be able to do everything we'd like to do in the way of adding resources for veterans programs, but I can tell you Ed is a strong advocate for veterans.

I want to speak this morning about a matter of the utmost importance to the VFW: keeping America strong -- today, and into the 21st Century.

Opinion is nearly unanimous that today is a time of transition in world affairs. That means our powers of observation and analysis -- our ability to sort out change and continuity -- will be put to the test.

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That's sound advice. We can't predict the future -- but we must do all we can to turn the opportunities it presents to our advantage.

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We are, as you know, in the midst of a series of systematic strategic reviews. I've asked the members of my national security team to look hard at the international landscape -- and to look forward, to assess the combination of security threats, technological change, and political and economic developments that will shape our security horizon well into the next century.

I am convinced that this important exercise will have lasting benefits on our national security. In my address to Congress last month, I set a ninety-day deadline for this important work. And although some of the reviews may be finished earlier, I won't rush the final results. The insights we will gain into the problems we will face in the decades ahead are worth waiting for.

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First, the foundations. A month ago, I presented to Congress a sound defense spending plan that makes sense -- both

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 3/1/89 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: c.o.b. 3/1/89

SUBJECT: REMARKS: VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

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DARMAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	STUDDERT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BATES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	UNTERMAYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BREEDEN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>PINKERTON</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CARD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>WINSTON</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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HAGIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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no comments DD

RESPONSE:

1989 MAR -1 PM 1:45

(McGroarty)
March 1, 1989
10:30am
dan1

REMARKS: VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS WASHINGTON CONFERENCE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
MARCH 6, 1989

Thank you. (Acknowledgements, Secretary-designate Derwinski, Mr. Cooper Holt, Executive Director of VFW, Mr. Larry Rivers, Commander-in-Chief, VFW.) It is always an honor to meet with the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The love of liberty is the birthright of all men -- certainly of all Americans. That is why our nation owes a special debt of gratitude to its veterans, who freely and courageously took up the defense of freedom.

I am especially pleased to welcome the Department of Veterans Affairs to a place in the cabinet. It is a sign of America's commitment to her veterans -- of the importance we place in repaying, in some way, the sacrifices veterans have made in answering their country's call.

I want to speak this morning about a matter of the utmost importance to the VFW: keeping America strong -- today, and into the 21st Century.

Opinion is nearly unanimous that today is a time of transition in world affairs. That means our powers of

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That's sound advice. We can't predict the future -- but we must do all we can to turn the opportunities it presents to our advantage.

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We are, as you know, in the midst of a serious and systematic strategic review. I've asked the members of my national security team to look hard at the international landscape -- and to look forward, to assess the combination of security threats, technological change, and political and economic developments that will shape our security horizon well into the next century.

I am convinced that this important exercise will have lasting benefits on our national security strategy. In my address to Congress last month, I set a ninety-day deadline for this review. I won't rush the final result. The insights it

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First, the foundations. Nearly two months ago, I presented to Congress a defense spending plan that is sound, and makes sense -- both strategically and fiscally. As a sign that my Administration is serious about the deficit, I called for a freeze in defense spending in 1990, adjusting only for inflation. I am well aware that our national strength rests ultimately on the health and vigor of the American economy, and I mean to preserve both.

But our crucial military modernization plans -- and the diverse defense commitments we must keep -- cannot be achieved without additional defense funding. That is why my budget plan follows the freeze for 1990 with real increases of 1 percent in 1991 and 1992, and a 2 percent increase for 1993.

My aim is to put defense spending on a modest, manageable path of growth -- one that will allow us to modernize and maintain forces that are formidable, flexible, and ready.

Now, we've all heard the critics who tell us America can't afford the defenses I'm talking about. Well, the critics are wrong. The defense expenditures I am calling for are well within our economic means.

But in the defense debate, what we can and can't afford isn't just a matter of economics. It's a matter of vital national security, and America's place in the world. I say:

-- We can't afford to continue the downward trend in defense spending. 1989 is the fourth straight year defense spending has declined in real terms. We've worked hard to rebuild America's strength -- and it's paid off. Today, America is strong, its voice is heard, and the values we stand for are more secure.

-- We can't afford to mistake a more stable international environment as proof we can spend less on national security. The secret to our success can be summed up in a single word: strength. Let's sustain the military strength that helped turn the world situation around.

-- And finally, we can afford adequate defenses. The defense budget I am calling for in 1990 represents 5.5% of our annual GNP. That's a far smaller share of our national wealth than the United States spent on defense at any point throughout the 1950s or 1960s -- periods of rapid and sustained economic growth.

The bottom line is not a question of cost, or a question of resources. It is simply a question of will.

You have my word: as long as I'm President, America will stand fast and on the front line in defense of freedom.

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Yes, freedom is on the march. But there are still forces arrayed against it -- regimes whose interests and systems are at odds with our own and with our allies'. And the spread of weapons of mass destruction -- along with the means to deliver them -- is likely to make the flashpoints that always exist more dangerous than ever before.

On the key issue of change within the Soviet Union, there are still far more questions than answers. There is no doubt that the changes taking place are significant and far-reaching -- but it is equally true that the ultimate outcome of the events unfolding in the USSR remains uncertain.

My view is that we should press for progress that contributes to a more stable relationship between the U.S. and USSR -- whether in the areas of arms control, human rights, or regional conflicts. But we must combine our readiness to build better relations with a resolve to maintain defenses adequate to secure our interests. America and her allies must recognize that -- even in light of the military cuts proposed by President Gorbachev -- the Soviet Union remains the most formidable military power facing the free world.

We must be ready to cope with change and favorable opportunities -- and ready in any event to defend our interests and ideals.

What this means in terms of national security should be clear:

We need to maintain and modernize our forces -- strategic and conventional. For America and its allies, a survivable nuclear force will remain the ultimate deterrent of aggression.

We need to make a concerted effort to turn our technological strengths into a source of advantage to our national security. And that includes an active and aggressive pursuit of SDI.

We need to make an active effort in arms control -- to strive for increased stability at lower levels of armaments.

We need to keep our forces ready and well-trained. Our dedicated servicemen and servicewomen deserve no less.

We need to reform our procurement process to deliver a dollar's worth of defense for every dollar we spend. The place to begin is to follow through on the sensible reforms suggested in the Packard Commission report on defense management.

And we need to maintain the alliance of like-minded nations that has helped us keep the peace in the post-war era. As strong as we are, America cannot go it alone. Our allies in Europe and in Asia share a common form of government, and a common interest in peace and freedom. We must continue to work together to sustain the great collective strength and sense of common purpose that have created the conditions for unparalleled peace, freedom, and prosperity.

For forty years, our alliance structure has been the cornerstone of American security. Now, perfect agreement will never exist in an alliance of free nations. But there can be no doubt that the benefits of alliance far outweigh the inevitable differences of interest and outlook -- and the partnership of free nations has never been a more potent force than it is today.

Before I close today, I want to focus for a moment on a threat no less real than the adversaries you have battled.

I am speaking about that insidious threat to our society and our values: drug abuse. The notion that America is a nation at peace is only partly true, as long as the violence and destructive power of drugs assaults our communities.

I have sworn myself and members of my Administration to wage a war on drug abuse. This war is unconditional -- and this war must be won.

I mean to mobilize all our resources, and wage this war on all fronts. We're going to combat drug abuse with education, treatment, enforcement and interdiction -- and, yes, with our nation's Armed Services when that is what it takes. We need to break the deadly grip of drugs where it exists, and prevent the drug scourge from taking hold.

The VFW can help. Two million members, 10,000 chapters nationwide -- the VFW is a well-respected member of communities across our nation.

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You've fought for your nation once. Your nation needs you again. Today, I want to enlist you in the anti-drug campaign.

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Veterans share a special bond. We have seen the face of war. We know its terrible costs. We know that Americans never willingly choose conflict. But we know as well that we must be ready and willing to respond when our interests and ideals come under threat.

Let me be clear. I prefer the diplomatic approach. Nations can and should explore every avenue toward working out their differences without resort to force or military intimidation.

But I am also a realist. I know that there is no substitute for a nation's ability to defend its ideals and interests.

Too often, we hear that we face a stark choice in coping with conflict. We can pursue a diplomatic solution -- or we can seek a resolution through military means. One, we're told, is incompatible with the other.

Well, this doesn't square with real-world experience. The fact is that diplomacy and military capability are complementary -- not contradictory. I know that creative diplomacy can help us avert conflict -- and I know that negotiations stand the greatest chance of success when they proceed from a position of strength.

The fundamental lesson of the decade now drawing to a close is simply this: strength secures peace.

America can continue to be a force for peace and stability in the world -- provided we stay strong.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless America.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Date: 2/29/69

TO:

Don Mc Groaty / 122

FROM:

JUANITA D. DUGGAN

Special Assistant to the President

~~Domestic Policy Council~~

~~Room 200, OEOB, Ext. 6640~~

235

2800

Attached are Dept. of VA
Comments on your speech -
I do not think we
need to accommodate
more than a H or Z -
Choose whatever you
want.

Please note the
statistic correlation
on VFW membership.

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 3/1/89 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: c.o.b. 3/1/89

SUBJECT: REMARKS: VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCCLURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NEWMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	STUDDERT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BATES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	UNTERMAYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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HAGIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Please provide your comments/recommendations directly to Chriss Winston's office (Rm. 122, x2930) with an info copy to my office by c.o.b. TODAY. Thank you.

Leo Tannen

RESPONSE:

PROPOSED INSERT FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH 2

[Today, there are six times as many veterans alive as there were when the VA was created in 1930. Counting their dependents and survivors, about one-third of our population now has an immediate family involvement in veterans affairs.]

This special population deserves and must have the attention of their government -- beginning at the top. A cabinet position for veterans means the Secretary of Veterans Affairs has the kind of access necessary to get the job done.

Ed Derwinski's already come to see me to discuss some of the challenges facing us in veterans programs. ^{But} And I can tell you Ed's a strong advocate for veterans, -- and

veterans In this context, I want to say I certainly understand the ~~compelling needs of our veterans -- and the importance of providing~~ *our* them with timely benefits and services -- and especially with quality health care.

[With the pressures the country is under to solve our massive Federal deficit, we may not be able to do everything we'd like to do in the way of adding resources for veterans programs ...]

... but I'm here to tell you I don't intend to compromise -- in any way -- the words of Abraham Lincoln, upon which our veterans benefits system is founded:

"... to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan."

NOTE: The current VFW membership stands at 2.3 million, with 750,000 auxiliary members. The use of these figures would strengthen the paragraph which discusses VFW involvement in the community.



The Deputy Administrator
of Veterans Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20420

March 1, 1989

Denise Schwarz
Cabinet Affairs
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Ms. Schwarz:

Thank you for the opportunity to review President Bush's remarks to the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Washington Conference on March 6, 1989.

Defense as a topic for this audience is appropriate, however, not addressing veterans issues, which is the real concern of the 6,000 delegates who will be in attendance, truly would be a missed opportunity.

Politically, I do not recommend that the President use this speech without modifications. I have attached proposed language that would be an appropriate addition to the speech to more adequately address the concerns of the audience. Modification of the speech to include these brief remarks on veteran's issues, would not detract from the main message.

Please call me on 233-5514 to discuss how best to incorporate the President's position on vital Veterans Administration issues, such as the medical care funding shortfall and benefit programs.

Sincerely Yours,

Anthony J. Principi
Deputy Secretary-designate

1989 MAR - 1 10:30 AM

(McGroarty)
March 1, 1989
10:30am
danl

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MARCH 6, 1989

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