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January 23, 2001

Grant Cameron
649 Silverstone Ave
Winnipeg, Manitoba
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Dear Mr. Cameron:

Thank you for your request. Please find enclosed a copy of President Reagan's May 4, 1988 address and question and answer session with the National Strategy Forum.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

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Encls.

nounce—or going to advance the attack, looking up at the stars and revealing for the first time that he had been taught all his life that there was no God. But now he believed there was. And he looked up at the heavens and spoke so sincerely and said, “Maybe before the night is over I’ll be coming to You. And I hope You will forgive what I believed for so long, the foolishness, because I know now there is a God.” And

that letter was found on the body of the young soldier who was killed in the coming engagement. I thought sometimes of taking it to Moscow with me—maybe the General Secretary might like to read it.

Well, thank you all very much. God bless you.

Note: The President spoke at 2:44 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session With Members of the National Strategy Forum in Chicago, Illinois

May 4, 1988

The President. Thank you Morris Leibman, Governor Jim Thompson, Attorney General Harding [Hartigan]—that’s all right—[*laughter*—and Michael Galvin, and someplace in the audience here I brought with me one of the Congressmen so you’d know that it isn’t true that we’re totally separated—your Congressman here, Dennis Hastert. Well, it’s just a pleasure to be in Chicago—Chicago has always been my kind of town—and an honor to be able to speak to you, the members of the National Strategy Forum.

I’ll keep my remarks brief today so that we’ll have ample time for questions. I can’t help but reflect here at the opening that it can be pretty tough in this State for a Chief Executive. In fact, let me tell you what the Illinois State Register had to say about the occupant of the White House. They said, and I quote, “the craftiest and most dishonest politician that ever disgraced an office in America.” Of course, they weren’t talking about me. That was Abraham Lincoln, they said. [*Laughter*] It may have been that kind of treatment in the press that led Lincoln to answer this way when he was asked what it felt like to be President. Well, he said—you’ve heard Lincoln is supposed to have said—about the man who was tarred and feathered and ridden out of town on a rail. And a man in the crowd asked him how he liked it, and his reply was that if it wasn’t for the honor of the occasion, he’d rather walk. [*Laughter*] Come to think of it,

I must be doing something right.

As you know, our agenda for the U.S.-Soviet relations has four main parts: regional conflicts, bilateral exchanges, arms reductions, and human rights. I’ve spoken elsewhere at some length about the first three, and today I’d like to take a moment to discuss with you the subject of human rights.

We Americans, of course, often speak about human rights, individual liberties, fundamental freedoms. We know that the promotion of human rights represents a central tenet of our foreign policy. We even believe that a passionate commitment to human rights is one of the special characteristics that helps to make America, America. It was Lincoln himself who said that the Declaration of Independence granted liberty not to our nation alone but “gave promise that in due time the weights should be lifted from the shoulders of all men.” And it’s important to note that this American emphasis on human rights represents much more than merely a vague respect for human dignity. No, part of our heritage as Americans is a very specific and definite understanding of human rights, a definition of human rights that we can assert to challenge ourselves and our own institutions and that we can hold up as an example for all the world.

Ultimately, our view of human rights derives from our Judeo-Christian heritage and the view that each individual life is sacred. It takes more detailed form in the works of

the French and English writers of the 18th century Enlightenment. It is the notion that government should derive its mandate from the consent of the governed, this consent being expressed in free, contested, regular elections. And there you have a first human right: the right to have a voice in government, the right to vote.

Elected governments would reflect the will of the majority, but the Enlightenment writers and our own Founding Fathers gave the concept of human rights still more definite, specific form. For they held that each individual has certain rights that are so basic, so fundamental to his dignity as a human being, that no government, however large the majority it represents, no government may violate them—freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, freedom of the press. These and other rights enshrined in our Constitution and Bill of Rights consist in severe limitations upon the power of government. And this is another basic point: They are rights that every citizen can call upon our independent court system to uphold. They proclaim the belief—and represent a specific means of enforcing the belief—that the individual comes first, that the Government is the servant of the people, and not the other way around. That contrasts with those systems of government that provide no limit on the power of the Government over its people.

Within the Soviet Union, decisionmaking is tightly concentrated at the top. The authority of the Communist Party is not determined by a document—a constitution, if you will—but by the leadership who determine what is right for the people. Rights such as free speech, free press, and free assembly are granted if they are “in accordance with the interests of the people and in order to strengthen and develop the Socialist system.” And that last line I was quoting.

I have in the past stressed these contrasts between the United States and the Soviet Union: the fundamental and profound differences between our philosophies of government and ways of life. And I’ve always said that our negotiations must be undertaken with precisely this sort of realism, this sort of candor. And yet while establishing this context is essential, and reminding our-

selves of these basic distinctions always useful, today I have something additional in mind. For, in recent months, the Soviet Union has shown a willingness to respect at least some human rights. It is my belief that there is hope for future change, hope that in the days ahead the Soviets will grant further recognition to the fundamental civil and political rights of all. But before discussing our hopes for the future, I’d like to turn for a moment to a subject that the Soviets themselves often raise.

The United States may recognize civil and political rights, but what of economic and social rights? The Soviets point out, for example, that the United States has an unemployment problem. Or they point to the American problem of homelessness or to racial discrimination. Well, it deserves a full response. To begin with, so-called economic and social rights belong to an essentially different category from civil and political rights. The economic and social conditions in any society are constantly changing—new social groupings constantly taking shape, as yours did, new markets forming as old markets disappear. And yet there’s nothing shifting about civil and political rights like freedom of speech or worship; they are constant and immutable, forever basic to the dignity of each human being. They are fundamental—fundamental to everything.

Yes, the United States has social and economic shortcomings—unemployment, for one. As a free people, we’ve created an economic expansion that over the past 5 years has created nearly 16 million new jobs, but we still recognize we need to do more. Homelessness is indeed a problem, an agonizing one. To some extent, we are bound in dealing with it by our very commitment to liberty, for while we seek to help the homeless in every way possible, we must avoid at all costs coercive solutions. It’s true that, as a free people, we spend hundreds of millions of dollars a year through our Federal, State, and local governments to care for the homeless. As a free people, our churches, synagogues, and a host of volunteer organizations do much to provide the homeless with food, clothing, and medicines. And yet there is no denying

that a problem remains. Racial discrimination—our strides as a free people during just the past three decades have been dramatic. Yet the problem lingers, and we continue to battle bigotry and prejudice. The problems, as I said, are serious. No one would seek to deny them. Yet in freedom we are constantly confronting them, criticizing ourselves, seeking to do better, in full view for all to see.

But consider, if you will, the economic conditions of the Soviet Union. Now, I do not mean to suggest that the Soviet economy has made no progress. But the limited successes of the past arose largely from constant additions to the labor force and the availability of inexpensive resources. Now that these have been to a great extent depleted, there remains a gap between the Soviet Union and the West. Indeed, given the enormous advances in Western technology, that gap is likely to widen. Now, I do not bring this up simply for the sake of sounding critical. I mention it here because in recent months—and this is a development of tremendous significance—in recent months they've begun to mention it themselves, just like Americans do about their problems. Soviet economists have published articles about Soviet shortages. One recent article dealt with the inadequacies of Soviet housing. The Soviet press now carries stories about the need for progress. And, of course, Soviet economic progress is one of Mr. Gorbachev's chief aims.

And this brings us back to the subject of the day: human rights. For I believe that the Soviets may be coming to understand something of the connection, the necessary and inextricable connection, between human rights and economic growth. The connection between economic productivity and certain kinds of freedom is obvious. Private plots of land make up only 3 percent of the arable land in the Soviet Union, but on them is raised a quarter of all of the produce. The free flow of information, to provide another example, will clearly prove vital for Soviet science and technology to have hope of reaching new and higher standards.

And yet there's a still deeper connection. For it's the individual who is always the source of economic creativity, the inquiring

mind that produces a technical breakthrough, the imagination that conceives of new products and markets. And in order for the individual to create, he must have a sense of just that—his own individuality, his own self-worth. He must sense that others respect him and, yes, that his nation respects him enough to permit him his own opinions, respects the relationship between the individual and his God enough to permit him to worship as he chooses, even respects him enough to permit him, if he chooses to do so, to leave.

The Soviets should recognize basic human rights because it's the right thing to do. They should recognize human rights because they have accepted international obligations to do so, particularly in the Helsinki Final Act. But if they recognize human rights for reasons of their own—because they seek economic growth or because they want to enter into a more normal relationship with the United States and other nations—well, I want to say here and now, that's fine by me. The indications, as I've said, have been hopeful. Over the past 3 years, some 300 political and religious prisoners have been released from labor camps. More recently, the incarceration of dissidents in mental hospitals and prisons has slowed and in some cases stopped completely. And while the press remains tightly controlled by the party and state, we've seen the publication of stories on topics that used to be forbidden—topics like crime, drug addiction, corruption, even police brutality.

Now, these changes are limited, and the basic standards contained in the Helsinki accords still are not being met. But we applaud the changes that have taken place and encourage the Soviets to go further. We recognize that changes occur slowly, but that's better than no change at all. And if I may, I'd like now to share with you a brief summary of the human rights agenda that I'll be discussing in my meetings in Moscow. It has four aims.

First, freedom of religion—despite the recent relaxation of some controls on the exercise of religion, it is still true that the churches, synagogues, mosques, or other houses of worship may not exist without

government permission. Many have been imprisoned in the past for acts of worship. And yet, to quote the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion." And General Secretary Gorbachev has indicated a willingness to consider a new law on the freedom of conscience.

Second is freedom of speech. There are still many serving long prison sentences for offenses that involve only the spoken or written word. Yet the clear, internationally recognized standard, as defined, once again, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is that, and I quote, "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression." And today there's more such freedom in the Soviet Union than 2 years ago. Many persons imprisoned for expressing dissenting views have been released from prison. This issue can be removed by granting full recognition to this basic human right. And I know you join me in urging the freeing of people imprisoned for nothing more than the expression of their views.

Emigration, third, has long represented a matter of great concern to us. The Universal Declaration states that "Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country." Well, it's true that during the past 12 months, the rate of people permitted to leave the Soviet Union has been significantly higher than during the preceding 6 years. And it's true as well that the number of those permitted to leave for short trips, often family visits, has gone up. We're heartened by this progress. Our hope is that the Soviets grant all their peoples full and complete freedom of movement. And one point in particular: The Soviets refuse many the right to leave on the grounds that they possess secret information, even though they had ended their secret work many years before and whatever information they had has become public or obsolete. I hope that such cases will be rationally reviewed and the decision will be made to free these people and their families.

And this brings me now to the fourth and final area I want to discuss: making the progress more permanent. As I've said a number of times now, we welcome the human rights progress that the Soviets have

made and believe there is good reason to hope for still more. Yet it's only being realistic to point out that we've seen progress in the Soviet Union before. Khrushchev loosened things up a bit. The intellectual and cultural life of the Soviet Union underwent a kind of thaw, a kind of springtime. But it was a springtime followed by winter, for Khrushchev's relaxations were reversed. And for the nearly three decades until our own day, oppression and stagnation once again became the determining characteristics of Soviet life. And that's why those of us in the West, both publicly and in direct conversation with the Soviets, must continue to make candor and realism the basis of our bilateral relationship. My Chief of Staff, Howard Baker, told me recently of an old Tennessee saying: "Plain talk—easy understood." Well, exactly. And just as previous hopeful moments in Soviet history ended all too soon, so, too, *glasnost*, today's new candor, will succeed if the Soviets take steps to make it permanent, to institutionalize it.

Freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom to emigrate, and the willingness to make new freedoms permanent—these are our hopes, these are our prayers for the future of human rights in the Soviet Union, in the world, in our own country. In granting greater liberty, I am confident that the Soviets will discover that they've made possible economic growth. But even more important, this recognition of human rights will advance the cause of peace. For in the words of Andrei Sakharov, a man who suffered much under the Soviet system, but who has also experienced the benefits of *glasnost*—he says: "I am convinced that international confidence, mutual understanding, disarmament, and international security are inconceivable without an open society with freedom of information, freedom of conscience, the right to publish, and the right to travel and choose the country in which one wishes to live. Peace, progress, and human rights—these three goals are insolubly linked."

Well, since I've been speaking today about the relationship of human rights and economic progress, let me say a few words about the present situation in Poland, a

nation with which millions of Americans share bonds of kinship. We hope and pray that the Polish Government will hear the voice of the Polish people and that economic freedom, reform, and recovery will soon begin. The Polish have long been ready for it.

Now in concluding, I just want to say something that I've said many times to students. I delight in having an opportunity to speak on campuses or in high schools or something. And I like to point out something about our Constitution. And you'd be surprised how new the thought is to all of them because they say all the other nations have constitutions. And I've read an awful lot of them. And many of them, most of them, contain some of the same clauses that ours do. But I said, the difference is so tiny in ours that it is overlooked, and yet it is so great it tells the entire difference. Three words: "We the People"—our Constitution is a document in which we the people tell the Government what it can do, and it can do nothing that isn't contained in that document. All those other constitutions are documents in which the Government is telling the people what it will let them do. And it's wonderful to see the look on their faces and to think that, well, maybe you've established another little shingle on the roof of patriotism where they're concerned. I told this one night at a dinner table in the White House, when the person beside me was the Crown Princess of Japan. They were there on a trip to our country. And very quietly she said something to me. I was only wrong in one respect. Since World War II, the Japanese Constitution now also says, "We the People," and they have copied us. And I was very happy to be corrected.

Well, thank you all, and God bless you. And now I'm very happy to take some questions.

Mr. Friedman. Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, we all thank you for your remarks, and now we come to the moment where we have a question-and-answer session. The rules of engagement, Mr. President, are these: The members have had an opportunity to write written questions—hopefully legibly. We've had ushers pass among the tables, and the questions are

now safely contained in a fishbowl.

The President. All right.

Mr. Friedman. And the reason for that is that it is very important that these questions be drawn on a random basis, which I shall do now.

Persian Gulf

The first question, Mr. President, is this: What will be the continued policy for a U.S. presence in the Persian Gulf?

The President. What will be the—

Mr. Friedman. What will be the continued policy—

The President. Oh.

Mr. Friedman. —for a United States presence in the Persian Gulf?

The President. What it has been since as far back as 1949. And that is: Those are international waters, and no nation has a right to interfere or block those international waters to the traffic of the world. And we're going to stay there as long as it takes to see that they're recognized by everyone as international waters.

Mr. Friedman. Thank you, Mr. President.

Nuclear Waste

The second question is this: How will we dispose of nuclear wastes?

The President. Oh. [Laughter] Well, as you know, there were a number of target areas in States that were named for that. And then a commission is investigating everyone, and then we'll name what they believe are the correct places and the best places for the safety of the people and the disposition of that nuclear waste. I realize that somebody's going to think it's too close to them when it happens, but you've got to put it someplace. [Laughter]

Soviet-U.S. Summit Meeting in Moscow

Mr. Friedman. The third question, Mr. President, is this: In your judgment, what major objectives will Secretary Gorbachev be trying to achieve in the forthcoming Moscow summit?

The President. Well, for one thing, we both do have, and are awaiting ratification in both countries, of the INF treaty—because they also have a ratification process, just as we do with our Senate. And I am hopeful, and I know he is, that a part of

that time could be spent with our signing, or recognizing that it has been signed, and it's in action.

The START agreement, which is the desire to reduce strategic nuclear weapons, missiles, by half, 50 percent, but down to parity—that's something that most people—some of those who are complaining about what we might be doing with that treaty—it's not just that each of us are going to come down 50 percent; we're going to come down to an equal number between the two nations, of warheads and missiles—missiles to carry them. But it's far more complicated than the INF treaty was. And it's doubtful if we are going to—we, our people, and theirs, are working in Geneva all the time, and have been steadily, but there are many complex issues there having to do with verification and things of that kind. And so, our desire that we would be able to sign the START treaty at this Moscow summit, as we did the other one at the Washington summit, may not happen. But then, what we have to say is: We must not be bound by a calendar date. We don't want a fast treaty; we want a good one. And if it is not properly worked out before we get there, then I think that that will be one of the things we will discuss while we're there and see if we can advance it a little, but eventually that we will sign that treaty.

I was very pleased when the Soviet Foreign Minister [Eduard Shevardnadze], on a recent visit to the United States—he didn't say he was quoting a line of mine, but he said it—I say that in case Larry Speakes is in the audience—[laughter]—but the line that he said was, "A nuclear war can never be won and must never be fought." Well, I said that to the British House of Parliament and to the Japanese Parliament a few years ago.

But we will also be discussing the things that I mentioned in my speech here. I'm willing to give him the benefit of the doubt up to a point—a point in which, as I say, is—the only thing I can say in Russian is, *Dovorey no provorey*. And he's tired of hearing me say it. It means: "Trust but verify." [Laughter] But I give him the benefit of the doubt, that faced with the economic problems that he has—*glasnost* with him—he really is attempting to get that,

and so I would hope that in our discussions, that maybe we could be helpful to him in suggestions as to how he might better bring that about. And that, I think, is preferable to staging a kind of contest with him so that someone looks like a winner or loser. And we very definitely will be on that subject of human rights because we are both signatories to a Helsinki pact that has us both pledging to observe those human rights. And I think that to go on with a better relationship between the two countries—that is absolutely essential.

Yesterday, in the White House, I met with four individuals who had all been imprisoned in the Soviet Union. And we had a hand, I think, in getting them released, and they came here. You're talking to a clergyman who was in [prison] 18 years, and during the 18 years, his son was beaten to death. And we think there is some hope, and that's what we're going to deal with. Is that all of them? Let's take one more.

Mr. Friedman. The fourth question of five, Mr. President, is this—well, there is always a good question, and this is the one: Would you autograph my book, "I Was a Democrat for the FBI and Other Selected Short Stories"?

The President. Yes, I'd be very pleased to do that autograph.

Mr. Friedman. And also, Mr. President, I would be very happy to see the person who made that question. [Laughter]

The President. You don't see anyone volunteering.

Mr. Friedman. Sam Donaldson.

Arms Control

Mr. Friedman. Mr. President, the fifth and final question of this session is this: What do you consider to be the most important need in international relations?

The President. The important—

Mr. Friedman. What do you consider to be the most important need in international relations?

The President. Oh, my goodness. [Laughter] That is quite a question, and how to get at it? I think the need is, well, just actual frankness and a desire for a peaceful solution. I think maybe I'd answer it this way: In my frustration sometimes—you know, ac-

tually, if you count some of the things going on in smaller countries and all, there've been about 114 wars since World War II. But I've often wondered, What if all of us in the world discovered that we were threatened by a power from outer space—from another planet. Wouldn't we all of a sudden find that we didn't have any differences between us at all—we were all human beings, citizens of the world—and wouldn't we come together to fight that particular threat. Well, in a way, we have something of that kind today—mentioning nuclear power again. We now have a weapon that can destroy the world, and why don't we recognize that threat more clearly and then come together with one aim in mind: How safely, sanely, and quickly can we rid the

world of this threat to our civilization and our existence.

Note: The President spoke at 12:51 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Palmer House Hotel. In his opening remarks, he referred to Morris Leibman and Michael Galvin, chairman and president, respectively, of the forum; Gov. James R. Thompson, Jr.; and State Attorney General Neil F. Hartigan. Richard Friedman, vice chairman of the forum, moderated the question-and-answer session. Prior to his remarks, the President attended an Illinois State Republican fundraising reception in the Crystal Room at the hotel. Following the luncheon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

Proclamation 5811—National Defense Transportation Day and National Transportation Week, 1988

May 5, 1988

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Transportation is essential to American life. Our safe, fast, economical, and convenient movement of people and goods is the cornerstone of our country's social and economic welfare and of our national defense. Now, as in the past, our transportation systems—highways, airports, inland waterways, railroads and public transit, our merchant fleet and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway—provide a superior emergency response network and are available as a critical component of our national defense. As our citizens travel in record numbers for business or pleasure, our local, State, and Federal governments continue to work with the transportation industry to enhance transportation safety.

The growth of our Nation and the development of transportation have been intertwined throughout our history. Those who first explored this vast country were followed by pioneers who established settlements. Most of the road routes, river sys-

tems, and ocean ports used by our earliest settlers are still in use today. Many of our great cities originated as towns that were starting or end points for transportation systems. As trade and commerce grew, transportation provided the necessary link to vital resources that in turn enabled further national growth. On land and water, in the air, and in space, our transportation systems have become an essential element of our Nation's economic health, providing indispensable services and generating employment for millions of people.

This week we acknowledge the contributions of the dedicated people who build, maintain, and safeguard our transportation systems—from the flagman on a highway project to the space engineer. We honor those who led the way in the development and improvement of ships, waterways, motor vehicles, highways, trains, airplanes, and our newest transportation vehicles, spacecraft. The recent announcement of our National Space Policy means that we continue to call for the help of modern-day pioneers on the frontiers of space technology. With public and private cooperation,

The president's enthusiasm for two government-sponsored studies of Strategic Forces, headed by Retired Gen. Brent Scowcroft, and another for the Office of the Secretary of Defense, headed by Ashton B. Carter of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. These studies agreed that a "total attack is neither technically feasible nor cost-effective," and that a Pentagon study headed by Fred Ikle, a former defense official and a California-based think tank, described

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Reagan Follows Astrological Flap With Comment on Space Invaders[QL]

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By TERENCE HUNT

AP White House Correspondent

<RO> CHICAGO (AP) [MD] One day after an uproar about the use of astrology at the

White House, President Reagan said Wednesday he often wonders what would happen if the Earth were invaded by "a power from outer space."

Reagan made the comment during a question and answer session after a Chicago speech when someone asked what he felt was the most important need in international relations.

He spoke of the importance of frankness and for a desire for peaceful solutions, and went on to say that there have been "about 114 wars" since World World II, including conflicts between smaller nations.

"But I've often wondered, what if all of us in the world discovered that we were threatened by an outer [MD] a power from outer space, from another planet," Reagan said.

"Wouldn't we all of a sudden find that we didn't have any differences between us at all, we were all human beings, citizens of the world, and wouldn't we come together to fight that particular threat?" the president said.

Continuing, Reagan said, "Well, in a way we have something of that kind today, mentioning nuclear power again. We now have a weapon that can destroy the world, and why don't we recognize that threat more clearly and then come together with one aim in mind, how safely, sanely and quickly can we rid the world of this threat to our civilization and our existence."

The comment drew applause from the members of the National Strategy Forum, a non-partisan group that specializes in foreign policy and national security issues.

A day earlier, White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater acknowledged that Nancy Reagan had consulted an astrologer about the president's travel and schedule plans.

Reagan said Tuesday he has never based any decision "in my mind" on astrological forecasts, but he avoided a question about astrological influence on his schedule.

The revelation that the Reagans follow astrology prompted taunts from Congress and harsh criticism from some scientists who consider astrology worthless.

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