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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY
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 SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
 TO THE COMMONWEALTH CLUB OF
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A strong defense has always been, in principle, an integral part of the foundation upon which our society is built. As the Preamble to the Constitution recognizes, to "provide for the common defense" is one of the most basic and solemn obligations of government. But, during the century that followed the War of 1812, we faced little threat from outside. The situation since has been quite different, even when, as between the World Wars, we were not aware of that fact.

As nations pursue their foreign policy goals in the international arena, they rely on a variety of diplomatic, economic, military, and political resources. Each nation calls upon, and each situation calls for, a different mixture of these necessary tools.

For a nation with the responsibilities of the United States, however, one ingredient is absolutely essential, and that is military strength. Military power alone, no matter how great, cannot solve all of our international problems. Nor can it make the world over according to our design. But, without adequate military strength, even the most imaginative application of our vast diplomatic, economic, and political resources has little chance of

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sustaining our basic security and physical integrity--let alone the position and influence required for the well-being of the American people and that of others as well. Without adequate military strength, our other tools of international politics would be--and would be seen by others to be--at best marginal, at worst hollow and ineffective.

With adequate military strength, we are in a position to exploit our unequaled diplomatic, economic, and political assets.

Given our superpower status, our defense requirements are global. They can, nonetheless, be stated quite simply. Deterrence--preventing war and preserving peace--is the primary purpose of our military strength. We must be able to deter--and, if necessary, to repel--any attack on our vital interests or those of our friends and allies.

Such deterrence requires that a potential attacker judge that his likely gains are not worth the losses he must expect. Therefore, to preserve the peace and to protect and defend our vital interests, our military forces must be second to none. And I can confidently say to you that today they are second to none.

That is not to say that we are without capable rivals and adversaries, or that we live in a world without threats. In fact, it is because the opposite is true that we need to continue to build up our military strength.

For the United States, the central military realities in the world today are the effects of the relentless and massive growth in Soviet military power over the past 20 years, and the demonstrated willingness of the Soviets to use this power--not only within the boundaries of the Warsaw Pact, but also on the homelands of their other neighbors and, so far through the use of surrogates, in distant lands as well. All elements of the Soviet military apparatus--ground, sea, and air forces, conventional and nuclear alike--have mushroomed in the past two decades. The price for this expansion has been steep; it has been financed by regular increases in Soviet defense spending of four percent or more above inflation every year for 20 years and by continuing and painful sacrifices in virtually every non-military sector of the Soviet economy and Soviet life.

When this Administration took office, we inherited a military posture and a defense budget that simply had not kept pace. In the eight years preceding President Carter's inauguration, real defense spending--after inflation--had declined by more than

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35 percent. In particular, spending on our strategic nuclear deterrent also had declined in 20 percent.

While it is true that the Soviets began their buildup from a position far behind us, the trend lines were clear and ominous. Only by changing course could we prevent the growing Soviet military capability from surpassing our own (which had remained relatively level) and in time leading to a dangerous Soviet military superiority.

Since taking office in January 1977, this Administration has increased real defense spending every year, resulting in an overall increase of 10 percent. And under our Five Year Defense Plan, real defense spending will have increased more than 27 percent by the end of President Carter's second term. I am particularly proud of our record, and I think it will stand up favorably in proper comparison with what others have done, not what they say or what they promise.

* * *

In the end, of course, it is military capabilities, not military spending, which determines the real balance of strength between the United States and the Soviet Union. Today, we are engaged in a determined enhancement of our military capabilities to enable us to pursue successfully our three basic security objectives:

- 1) to deter nuclear attack on the United States, by ensuring that our strategic nuclear forces remain essentially equivalent to those of the Soviet Union;
- 2) to deter both conventional and nuclear war in Europe, by maintaining the overall military balance between NATO and the Warsaw Pact; and
- 3) to be able to come quickly and effectively to the aid of friends and allies in other parts of the world.

We are making real and substantial progress in all three areas.

Strategic nuclear forces. We are moving full speed ahead on strengthening all three legs of our TRIAD of land-based missiles, submarine-launched missiles, and bombers.

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Four years ago, there was no program for a mobile ICBM--no final decisions had been made on the MX missile or on how to deploy it. One alternative was to put a new ICBM in fixed silos; the other was to make it mobile by deploying it in covered trenches. The former would, we saw, clearly become vulnerable in the early 1980s, in the same way as Minuteman, to the increased numbers and accuracy of Soviet ICBM warheads. As to the latter, soon after we took office, an independent technical evaluation concluded that it was vulnerable to blast waves propagating along the trench.

Today, the missile itself is in full-scale engineering development, and we have a survivable and workable basing scheme. In terms of both the number of warheads and their accuracy, the MX will equal or outmatch the best ICBM in the Soviet arsenal; in survivability, which is a major, but non-threatening, military advantage, the MX will be far ahead of anything the Soviets have.

Four years ago, the TRIDENT submarine program was bogged down in contractor disputes and way behind schedule. Today, the ship-builders' claims have been resolved to the government's advantage, the first TRIDENT will undergo sea trials this year and will join the fleet next year. Ten other boats are programmed to follow in rapid succession. We have already begun to equip our POSEIDON submarines with the longer-range, more accurate TRIDENT I missile, and by 1982, 12 of them will be armed with this powerful weapon system.

Four years ago, the only major proposal to modernize our bomber force was the B-1. In 1977, we cancelled this program because it was clear then--and it is even clearer today--that by the time the B-1 could have been off the assembly lines and deployed at our SAC bases, improved Soviet air defenses would have made this aircraft dangerously vulnerable. Quite simply, the B-1 was obsolete and a waste of money. Instead, we chose to modernize the bomber force by exploiting some of the most advanced and effective military technology in the world--the air-launched cruise missile. Four years ago, no long-range, air-launched cruise missiles were included in the defense program. Today, we have flight tested two designs, selected the contractor, and are well on our way to equipping our B-52s with over 3,000 of these very highly accurate, long-range cruise missiles, which will be able to penetrate Soviet defenses not only in 1982, when the first full squadron will be ready, but through the 1980s and beyond. At the same time, we have the exploratory programs necessary to develop a new bomber to meet any requirements for the 1990s.

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NATO and Europe. Four years ago, the defense posture of our most historic alliance was in serious trouble. In the first year of this Administration, we developed and proposed a Long Term Defense Program for NATO; the next year, it was accepted. Following U.S. leadership, Alliance members have committed themselves to increasing defense budgets by three percent a year--above inflation--through the mid-1980s, in order to bolster our conventional capabilities, especially in the early stages of a war in Europe. Today, in the United States, we are meeting the three percent commitment, and so is the Alliance considered as a whole.

Last year, the Alliance agreed to modernize and upgrade our long-range theater nuclear forces by deploying 572 PERSHING II missiles and ground-launched cruise missiles, in order to offset Soviet advances in this area. Today, this program is underway and on schedule.

NATO is responding in a determined and coordinated fashion to the military competition posed by the Warsaw Pact. Never in the history of the Alliance has its military solidarity been greater than it is today.

Non-NATO contingencies. The chaos in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan have emphasized that the challenges to our vital interests and our security are not confined to one geographic locale. As a world power with global interests and a global network of allies, the United States must be able to respond quickly and effectively to military challenges anywhere in the world.

Power projection is not new for the United States, but the demands change over time. Today, they are greater than at any time in recent memory. That is why we are engaged in a systematic and significant enhancement of our capabilities to move forces rapidly to distant trouble spots. Of special concern--because of our dependence, and our Allies' even greater dependence, on imported oil--is the Southwest Asia-Persian Gulf-Indian Ocean region.

Four years ago, we did not have adequate capability to respond to threats in this vital region as quickly and effectively as our interests required. Our intensified effort involves a number of different programs.

We are prepositioning in the Indian Ocean enough equipment, supplies, fuel, and water to support an augmented Marine Amphibious Brigade and several Air Force fighter squadrons. Ultimately, we will expand this to a capability sufficient to support three such

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brigades for four weeks. We have increased our continuing naval presence in the region; the U.S. naval forces currently in the Indian Ocean are by far the strongest ever to sail those waters. We are negotiating access rights to key local port and airfield facilities in the event of a military threat requiring a U.S. response, and have already concluded such agreements with Kenya and Oman. We are expanding our airlift and our fast sealift capabilities, the former primarily through the development of the new CX cargo aircraft, the latter through acquisition of high-speed commercial container ships. We have established a Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force to assume planning and operational responsibilities for those forces from all services that have been designated for rapid deployment. And we are successfully persuading our allies to assume more of the defense burden in their own regions as we shift resources to Southwest Asia-Persian Gulf-Indian Ocean contingencies.

In combination, these measures will make clear to the Soviets that, if they plan further aggression in that vital region, they cannot safely assume that the only troops they would have to fight would be local ones. The United States' message is clear: we have both the will and the ability to defend our vital interests.

* * *

This defense program I have outlined is comprehensive. It is balanced. It is carefully designed to meet our real military needs.

The goals of, and even the criteria for, our military capability are relatively simple. But, putting together a realistic defense strategy and program is a very difficult business. The problems are complex; the proposed solutions are numerous, never perfect, often expensive. In the real world, meeting our defense needs is not a matter of taking everything we have and increasing it by 10 percent or 20 percent or 40 percent. There is no magic formula. There is no quick fix. And there is no pot of gold with which to buy all we might want, of everything we might need, to meet whatever might come up.

Having full-time responsibility for the security of over 220 million Americans and countless millions of others around the world is a serious business, one in which words and actions have real meaning and real consequences.

Those who hold such high positions have a solemn obligation to tell the truth about national security to the American people. Sometimes the truth is palatable, sometimes it is not. But it has

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been my experience in government that, when confronted not with a myth and a promise, but with the truth, the American people recognize it for what it is and accept it.

Some have said that the Soviet Union has already achieved military superiority over the United States. These voices speak only of American weaknesses and Soviet strengths. They would have us--and others, I might add--believe that we are weaker than, in fact, we are.

The truth is that we are second to none. Our military power, coupled with that of our allies, is not exceeded by any combination of nations on earth. Our strengths are abundant, if occasionally ignored by some. In contrast to the Warsaw Pact, our allies are allies by choice. They make real contributions to our collective security, and their allegiance in time of war is unquestioned. Our technological prowess is the envy of every military power, and we will continue to exploit it to our advantage, as we have with the cruise missile, our incredibly accurate precision-guided munitions, and antisubmarine warfare capability.

Some have promised American military superiority over the Soviet Union.

The truth is that comprehensive military superiority for either side--absolute supremacy, if you will--is a military and economic impossibility--if the other is determined to prevent it. There can be no return to the days of the American nuclear monopoly. There can be no winner in an all-out arms race. Neither side can win such an arms race, because neither side would or needs to concede it to the other. It is wishful thinking of the highest order to assume that the Soviets would drop out of a nuclear arms race early, or that they would shrink from imposing additional, even unimaginable hardships on their civilian society, in order to stay in the race.

Desirable and attractive as the goal of across-the-board supremacy may be in the abstract, a hard-headed assessment of what its pursuit might mean is sobering.

- First, it would mean the end of arms control. By definition, strategic superiority and arms control are incompatible--a race to superiority is an attempt to achieve a real military advantage, one which the losing party would never accept in a formal arms control agreement. We will not negotiate from a position of inferiority, and neither will the Soviets.

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- Second, it would mean an uncontrolled, open-ended, and very expensive arms race. The sums involved would be enormous even in absolute terms, let alone in the face of a proposed massive--30 percent--tax cut.
- Third, in the context of real world constraints of finite resources, the tendency (as has occurred in the past) would be to skimp on conventional forces and to concentrate on a race in strategic weapons.
- Fourth, this, in turn, would channel the competition into the most dangerous arena--the one most likely to lead to nuclear war. At some point along the line, in a world in which East-West relations would be strained beyond anything in recent memory, one side--its resources stretched to the limit--might believe that the only way to prevent the other from achieving superiority would be to strike first.

In contrast, this Administration's policy is one of peace through strength. We need a strategic force that convinces the Soviets they cannot gain from a nuclear war any advantage that compares with the losses they will surely suffer. At the same time, we need to be ahead in some conventional capabilities (such as naval forces) but we do not need to match the Soviets tank for tank or soldier for soldier.

Unlike the pursuit of across-the-board supremacy, our policy promotes international stability, while protecting our vital interests.

- First, it is compatible with arms control. Lasting national security depends on a strong defense coupled with sensible arms control; the two are complementary, not incompatible. In this way, the legitimate security interests of both sides can be preserved, and the vital effort to place some limits, some constraints on this deadly competition can continue.
- Second, through arms control, which places upper limits on the size and capabilities of the Soviet force, and through sensible choices of our own, we can avoid spending vast sums of money on an unnecessary strategic arms race.
- Third, we are, therefore, able to balance our defense resources appropriately between strategic and conventional forces, and thus meet our real defense needs.

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- Fourth, we can preserve a stable strategic military balance--one in which neither side has an incentive to strike first. A stable balance is a peaceful balance.

That most famous of European observers of America, Alexis de Tocqueville, once warned us against "the propensity which induces democracies to obey impulse rather than prudence, and to abandon a mature design for the gratification of a momentary passion."

The impulse and the passion for military superiority must be seen for what they are: unrealistic, simplistic, dangerous. On the other hand, the prudent and mature design for national security--this Administration's approach--takes the world as it is and as it will be.

We will preserve our national security. We will improve our capabilities as necessary to maintain the approximate military balance that exists today between the United States and the Soviet Union.

We will stay ahead in those capabilities that are vital to us--for example, in naval forces, in micro-electronics and accuracy, in anti-submarine warfare, in tactical air effectiveness, in computers and satellites and propulsion engines. We will continue to draw upon our broad strengths--our technological genius, our industrial might, our powerful and loyal allies, the training and quality of our military people, the growing consensus of the American people in support of adequate American defense--to offset Soviet advantages. We will not make our military forces a mirror image of the Soviets'--nor should we.

We will continue to make steady and sustained increases in defense spending to build the capabilities we need. We will buy only the weapon systems that best serve our needs, not every glamorous weapon system that comes along. We will continue to seek equitable and verifiable arms control agreements--like the SALT II Treaty--to limit the growth in Soviet military power, in order to place some constraints on this competition, to reduce the risks of unintended conflict, and to avoid spending resources unnecessarily in an uncontrolled strategic arms race.

Prudence and the mature design--not impulse and the momentary passion--are the hallmarks of a strong and a sane national security policy. I have explained what this Administration, under President Carter's leadership, has provided for four years, and what we will continue to provide in the future. The American people should--and I believe will--settle for no less.

END