

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

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RADIO ADDRESS
OF THE PRESIDENT
TO THE NATION

Camp David

12:06 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: My fellow Americans, this has been a busy week of diplomatic activity for America. I've addressed the United Nations and the International Monetary Fund and World Bank meetings, and met with a dozen world leaders. Among them were the new leader of our neighbor to the North Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, and, as you know, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko.

To the delegates at the UN, I emphasized America's dedication to world peace through confident and stronger alliances, and a constructive dialogue with our adversaries. I told them of the importance we attached to seeking peaceful solutions to regional conflicts plaguing many nations, and the need for democratic principles and human freedom as the foundation for a more prosperous, peaceful world.

At the IMF and World Bank, I reported that an American economic renaissance is under way, leading the rest of the world from the darkness of recession toward brighter days of renewed hope and global prosperity.

World economic growth today is nearly twice what it was four years ago. And inflation in the industrial countries is half of what it was. The growing economic interdependence of our world is creating a ripple effect of good news for those countries committed to sensible policies -- policies which allow the magic of the marketplace to create opportunities for growth and progress, free from the dead weight of government interference and misguided protectionism.

But we can't build an enduring prosperity unless peace is secure. Our relations with the Soviet Union have been at the center of my attention, and yesterday I met with Foreign Minister Gromyko at the White House for a thorough exchange of views. I've said from the outset of my public life that a successful U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union must rest on realism, strength, and a willingness to negotiate.

Last January, I spelled out clearly for -- our goals for U.S.-Soviet relations -- to reduce and eventually eliminate the threat and use of force in resolving disagreements, to reduce the vast stockpiles of armaments in the world, especially nuclear arms, and to establish a working relationship between our two countries marked by a greater understanding.

In our meeting yesterday, we covered all issues which separate us. And while I told Mr. Gromyko of our disappointment that his country walked out of the Geneva nuclear arms reduction talks last year, we remain ready to discuss the entire family of arms control issues as soon as they are. It's in both our interests that these talks commence promptly and that progress be made.

Our two countries have no more solemn responsibility than to reduce the level of arms and to enhance understanding.

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Mr. Gromyko and I also discussed major trouble spots in the world. And I told him that it's vital for us to exchange views and help find lasting solutions to these regional disputes. We didn't seek to gloss over the hard issues that divide our two countries. We were not looking to paper over these differences. Indeed, I made plain to Mr. Gromyko what it is about Soviet behavior that worries us and our allies.

But they were useful talks. I made it clear that we Americans have no hostile intentions toward his country and that we're not seeking military superiority over the USSR. I told him, "If your government wants peace, then there will be peace." And I said that the United States is committed to move forward with the Soviet Union toward genuine progress in resolving outstanding issues.

Pursuing peace, prosperity and democracy are not new goals. They've been at the heart of an American foreign policy that down through the years has sought to promote individual freedom and human progress in the world.

I think one great change has taken place in the world over the last four years: The tide of freedom has begun to rise again. Four years ago, American influence and leadership were ebbing. Our defenses were neglected, our economy was collapsing, and other countries were being undermined by communist-supported insurgencies. Today, our economy is vibrant, our strength is being restored, our alliances are solid, and peace is more secure.

Now, the Soviets will return home to ponder our exchanges. And while they know they will not secure any advantages from inflexibility, they will get a fair deal if they seek the path of negotiation and peace.

Until next week, thanks for listening and God bless you.

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12:11 P.M. EDT