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SPEECHES BY PRESIDENT REAGAN AND PRIME MINISTER
MRS. THATCHER ON LAWN OF WHITE HOUSE ON WEDNESDAY,
FEBRUARY 20, 1985

PRESIDENT REAGAN

IT IS ALWAYS A PLEASURE TO EXCHANGE VIEWS WITH PRIME MINISTER THATCHER, A DEAR FRIEND AND A RESPECTED LEADER OF ONE OF AMERICAS CLOSEST ALLIES.

WE HAVE HAD A CORDIAL DISCUSSION ON A WIDE RANGE OF MATTERS. OUR CONVERSATIONS REFLECTED THE EXCELLENT RELATIONSHIP WHICH EXISTS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES, AS WELL AS THE WARM FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN MRS. THATCHER AND MYSELF.

WE DISCUSSED EAST-WEST RELATIONS AND IN PARTICULAR THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE UPCOMING GENEVA TALKS WITH THE SOVIETS. WE FULLY AGREE THAT THE UNITY, PATIENCE AND DETERMINATION OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC ALLIANCE ARE ESSENTIAL IF ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS ARE TO SUCCEED. WHAT WE ARE SEEKING ARE SIGNIFICANT REDUCTIONS IN THE NUMBERS OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS THROUGH FAIR AND VERIFIABLE AGREEMENTS. PRIME MINISTER THATCHER AND I AGREED THAT IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY TO CONTINUE NATOS INF DEPLOYMENTS ON SCHEDULE IN ACCORD WITH THE ALLIANCE'S 1979 DECISION. WE ARE BOTH HOPEFUL THAT THE DIALOGUE OPENING IN GENEVA WILL RESULT IN PROGRESS, AND WHILE THAT PROGRESS CONTINUES HOWEVER WE WILL BE STEADFAST IN THE MODERNISATION OF OUR FORCES AND IN OUR DETERMINATION TO PROMOTE FULL ADHERENCE TO EXISTING ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENTS. THESE ARE CRUCIAL INCENTIVES TO ANY REAL PROGRESS.

PRIME MINISTER THATCHER AND I ALSO DISCUSSED THE CURRENT SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND AGREED ON THE NEED FOR PARTIES IN THAT REGION TO TAKE CONCRETE STEPS TOWARD PEACE.

WE REVIEWED THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA AND I ASSURED THE PRIME MINISTER THAT OUR DETERMINATION TO PRESERVE DEMOCRACY AND TO SEEK PEACEFUL SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS OF THAT AREA.

WE ALSO DISCUSSED THE THREAT OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM AND WE AGREED THAT INCREASED INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IS CALLED FOR TO COMBAT THIS EVIL.

WE EXPRESSED OUR WILLINGNESS TO WORK TOGETHER AND WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS TO FIGHT TERRORISM AND DIETER THOSE WHO GIVE SUPPORT TO TERRORISTS.

WE DISCUSSED THE SITUATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND I TOLD THE PRIME MINISTER THAT THE UNITED STATES APPLAUDS THE CONTINUATION OF HER DIALOGUE WITH IRISH PRIME MINISTER FITZGERALD AND ASSURED HER OF OUR SUPPORT OF ALL THOSE WORKING FOR PEACEFUL SOLUTIONS AND RECONCILIATION.

PRIME MINISTER THATCHER AND I REVIEWED THE CURRENT ECONOMIC SITUATION AND THE PROSPECTS FOR OUR ECONOMIES IN THE FUTURE AND IN CLOSING, I WISH TO NOTE THAT 1985 MARKS THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND GREAT BRITAIN. OVER THE YEARS, THESE RELATIONS HAVE TAKEN ON A VERY SPECIAL QUALITY., IN FACT, THEY ARE QUITE EXTRAORDINARY. WE, AS AMERICANS, ARE PROUD OF OUR RELATIONS WITH OUR ALLIES. THE BRITISH AND I AM PERSONALLY PROUD OF MY CLOSE COLLABORATION WITH MY FRIEND, MARGARET THATCHER.

PRIME MINISTER

MR. PRESIDENT.

MAY I SAY HOW VERY GRATEFUL I AM TO YOU FOR INVITING ME FOR THIS BRIEF VISIT, THE FIRST OFFICIAL ONE IN YOUR SECOND TERM, ALTHOUGH I PAID AN UNOFFICIAL WORKING VISIT TO CAMP DAVID IN DECEMBER.

OUR TALKS ARE ALWAYS PARTICULARLY VALUABLE, BECAUSE WE SEE SO MANY THINGS IN THE SAME WAY AND YOU CAN SPEAK OF A REAL MEETING OF MINDS.

AS THE PRESIDENT POINTED OUT, THIS MEETING IS A SPECIAL ONE. BECAUSE 1985 MARKS THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES AND I THINK I CAN SAFELY SAY THAT OUR RELATIONS NOW ARE BETTER THAN WHEN JOHN ADAMS PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS TO KING GEORGE III - INDEED, I FEEL NO INHIBITIONS ABOUT DESCRIBING THE RELATIONS AS VERY VERY SPECIAL, AND IT IS A PARTICULAR HONOUR THAT PRESIDENT REAGAN AND MRS. REAGAN HAVE ACCEPTED AN INVITATION TO DINNER AT THE BRITISH EMBASSY TONIGHT TO MARK THIS VERY SPECIAL DIPLOMATIC ANNIVERSARY.

THE PRESIDENT HAS GIVEN YOU AN ACCOUNT OF THE DISCUSSIONS WE HAD TODAY. WE HAD SOME VERY THOROUGH ONES, ESPECIALLY ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS. THOSE NEGOTIATIONS CARRY OUT HOPES WITH THEM. THEY WILL, AS I INDICATED THIS MORNING, BE COMPLEX BUT THOSE WHO ARE NEGOTIATING ON THE PART OF THE WEST KNOW OF OUR FUNDAMENTAL, SINCERE WISH TO GET DOWN THE NUMBER OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN THE WORLD IN A WAY WHICH IS STILL BALANCED AND WHICH STILL KEEPS OUR SECURITY. WE BELIEVE OUR NEGOTIATORS WILL STRIVE TO THAT END AND THEY WILL CARRY OUR GOOD WISHES WITH THEM.

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WE ALSO SPENT SOME TIME DISCUSSING THE MIDDLE EAST AND BOTH AGREED THAT THE MOMENT IS PROPITIOUS FOR A FRESH EFFORT TO ACHIEVE PROGRESS TOWARDS A MIDDLE EASTERN SETTLEMENT. AND I TOLD THE PRESIDENT OF MY SUPPORT FOR THE STATEMENT ISSUED FOLLOWING KING FAHDS RECENT VISIT TO WASHINGTON AND WE BOTH ENDORSED KING HUSAINS EFFORTS TO ARRIVE AT A JOINT ARAB POSITION WHICH WOULD ALLOW DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL TO TAKE PLACE.

WE ALSO, AS YOU WOULD EXPECT, HAD A THOROUGH DISCUSSION ON ECONOMIC MATTERS. THE RECORD OF THE AMERICAN ECONOMY AND ITS SUCCESS IN CREATING NEW JOBS IS ENVIABLE AND SUCH IS THE SCALE OF YOUR ECONOMY THAT YOUR DECISIONS AFFECT ALL OF US. WE DISCUSSED HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO KEEP DOWN PUBLIC SPENDING. WE HAVE A DIFFERENT PROBLEM WITH THE DEFICIT, BUT WE BOTH SHARE SIMILAR PROBLEMS OF HOW TO KEEP DOWN PUBLIC SPENDING SO THAT PEOPLE MAY BE ABLE TO KEEP A BIGGER PROPORTION OF THEIR OWN MONEY IN THEIR OWN POCKETS. AND I THINK WE ARE AT ONE IN RESISTING ANY MOVES TOWARDS PROTECTIONISM.

WE ALSO TOUCHED ON A NUMBER OF OTHER ISSUES, PERHAPS THE MOST IMPORTANT OF WHICH WAS THE NORTHERN IRISH AND REPUBLIC OF IRELAND TALKS. ALWAYS TO TRY TO SECURE AN AGREEMENT WHICH WILL RESPECT BOTH COMMUNITIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND, AND ALWAYS RECOGNISING THAT ANY CHANGE MUST COME ABOUT BY CONSENT OF THE PEOPLE CONCERNED.

IT WAS, AS ALWAYS, MR. ALWAYS MAKE THEM FRIENDLY AND WARM BY YOUR OWN WELCOME RECEPTION OF US, BUT WE DO HAVE JUST A VERY SPECIAL EASE IN TALKING ABOUT THESE THINGS - AN EASE WHICH COMES BECAUSE WE SHARE COMMON GOALS AND COMMON POLITICAL PHILOSOPHIES - A VERY HAPPY AND SUCCESSFUL VISIT.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH, MR. PRESIDENT, FOR YOUR HOSPITALITY.

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