

Ronald Reagan - Evil Empire Speech - March 8, 1983



“Yes, let us pray for the salvation of all of those who live in that totalitarian darkness—pray they will discover the joy of knowing God. But until they do, let us be aware that while they preach the supremacy of the state, declare its omnipotence over individual man, and predict its eventual domination of all peoples on the Earth, they are the focus of evil in the modern world. . . . So, I urge you to speak out against those who would place the United States in a position of military and moral inferiority. . . . So, in your discussions of the nuclear freeze proposals, I urge you to beware the temptation of pride—the temptation of blithely declaring yourselves above it all and label both sides equally at fault, to ignore the facts of history and the aggressive impulses of an evil empire, to simply call the arms race a giant misunderstanding and thereby remove yourself from the struggle between right and wrong and good and evil.”

— Ronald Reagan (1911-2004) 40th President of the United States

“He called us the ‘Evil Empire.’ So why did you in the West laugh at him? It’s true!”¹

— Arkady Murashev, Moscow police chief, a leader of Democratic Russia

“The problems of both East and West as ‘a disaster’ rooted in agnosticism and atheism. They are ‘the calamity of an autonomous, irreligious humanistic consciousness . . . It has made man the measure of all things on earth—imperfect man, who is never free of pride, self-interest, envy, vanity, and dozens of other defects. We are now paying for the mistakes which were not properly appraised at the beginning of the journey. On the way from the Renaissance to our days we have enriched our experience, but we have lost the concept of a Supreme Complete Entity which used to restrain our passions and our irresponsibility.”

— Aleksandr Isayevich Solzhenitsyn (1918-2008) Russian novelist & historian who documented the horrors of the Gulags, 1970 Nobel Prize winner for Literature

“I marveled a bit at the feat [Lubianka re-education]. I also began to understand more clearly what was meant by rewriting history for the proletariat and how it could be arranged that young people would hear nothing whatsoever of God.”

— Walter J. Ciszek Jr (1904-1984) Polish-American priest, imprisoned in various labor camps for 23 years for missionary work in the Soviet Union.

“Atheism is not an incidental element of communism, it is not part of the package, it is the package.”²
— Ronald Reagan (1911-2004) 40th President of the United States

“The Communist vision is the vision of man without God” “I see in Communism the focus of the concentrated evil of our time” “What was there was the sense that, like me, time and the world stood still, an awareness of God as an envelopment, holding me in silent assurance and untroubled peace. There was a sense that in that moment I gave my promise [break from the Communist Party in Russia], not with the mind, but with my whole being, and that this was a covenant that I might not break.”

— Whittaker Chambers (1901-1961) Former Communist & witness for the House on Un-American Activities Committee

“In the Soviet Union you could clearly see your enemy, where in the west you don’t.”

— Josjo [Joseph] Terelya, Ukraine (now Canada) (1943-2009) Imprisoned & tortured for twenty years because of his Catholic faith; experienced visions & given messages by the Virgin Mary of the future, while in the Soviet Gulags.

“Warsaw, Moscow, Budapest, Berlin, Prague, Sofia and Bucharest have become stages in a long pilgrimage toward liberty. It is admirable that in these events, entire peoples spoke out — women, young people, men, overcoming fears, their irrepressible thirst for liberty speeded up developments, made walls tumble down and opened gates.”

— Pope John Paul II (1920-2005) 264th Pope of the Roman Catholic Church

“Until I came to the West myself and spent two years looking around, I could never have imagined to what an extreme degree the West had actually become a world without a will, a world gradually petrifying in the face of the danger confronting it. ...All of us are standing on the brink of a great historical cataclysm, a flood that swallows up civilization and changes whole epochs.”

— Aleksandr Isayevich Solzhenitsyn (1918-2008) Russian novelist & historian who documented the horrors of the Gulags, 1970 Nobel Prize winner for Literature

“What actually happens now, that unlike myself, you have literally several years to live on unless the United States wakes up. The time bomb is ticking. With every second the disaster is coming closer and closer. Unlike myself, you will have is nowhere to defect to, unless you want to live in untenable options. This is the last country of freedom and possibility. ...there must be a national effort to educate people in the spirit of real patriotism number one. And number two, explain to them the real danger of socialist communist state welfare state, big brother government. If people will fail to grasp the impending danger of that development, nothing ever can help the United States. You may kiss goodbye to your freedoms ... all this freedom will evaporate in five seconds including your precious lives.”

— Yuri Alexandrovich Bezmenov – (1939-) Defector from the Soviet Union (1970), trained in psychological warfare methods of ideological subversion

“The twentieth century was, so to speak, the ‘theater’ in which particular historical and ideological processes were played out, leading toward that great ‘eruption’ of evil, but it also provided the setting for their defeat. Is it fair, then, to consider Europe solely from the point of view of the evil which marked its recent history? Is this not a rather one-sided approach? The modern history of

Europe, shaped—especially in the West—by the influence of the Enlightenment, has yielded many positive fruits. This is actually characteristic of evil, as understood by Saint Thomas, following the traditions of Saint Augustine. Evil is always the absence of some good which ought to be present in a given being; it is a privation. It is never a total absence of good.”

“We cannot remain silent regarding a tragic question tht is more pressing today than ever. The fall of the regimes build on ideologies of evil put an end to the forms of extermination just mentioned in the countries concerned. However, there remains the legal extermination of human beings concieved but unborn. ... It is legitimate and even necessary to ask whether this is not the work of another ideology of evil, more subtle and hidden, perhaps,intent upon exploting human rights themselves against man and against the family.”

“I have had personal experience of ideologies of evil. It remains indelibly fixed in my memory. First was nazism. What we could see in those years was terrible enough. Yet many aspects of nazism were still hidden at that state. The full extent of the evil was raging through Europe was not seen by everyone, not even by those of us situated at the epicenter. We were totally swallowed up in a great eruption of evil and only gradually did we begin to realize its true nature. Those responsible took great pains to conceal their misdeeds from the eyes of the world. Both Nazis during the war and later, the Communists in Eastern Europe tried to hide what they were doing from public opinion.”
“We know that communism fell in the end because of the system’s socioeconomic weakness, not because it has been truly rejected as an ideology or a philosophy. In certain quarters in the West, there are still those who regret its passing.”³

— Pope John Paul II (1920-2005) 264th Pope of the Roman Catholic Church

“This irreconcilable conflict is between those who believe in the sanctity of individual freedom and those who believe in the supremacy of the state...In a phase of this struggle not widely known, some of us came toe to toe with this enemy this evil force in our own community in Hollywood, and make no mistake about it, this is an evil force.”⁴

— Ronald Reagan (1911-2004) 40th President of the United States

“America is like a healthy body and its resistance is threefold: its patriotism, its morality and its spiritual life. If we can undermine these three areas, America will collapse from within.”

— Joseph Stalin (1878 – 1953) Dictator & Russian political leader of the USSR

“Freedom prospers when religion is vibrant and the rule of law under God is acknowledged.”

— Ronald Reagan (1911-2004) 40th President of the United States

Editors Note:

Ronald Reagan was the man trained by an unseen hand for his later role as president of the United States. All his experiences, and trials of life, helped to prepare him for his fight to against Godless communism, and manage, nuclear brinkmanship with the Soviet Union. From his recurring dream as a child of living in a big white house with ball room height ceilings, mothers religious teachings, his Christian education at Eureka college, to his speaking engagements against the evils of communism and threats he said from the Marxists in Hollywood when he was head of the screen actors gild (he packed a gun for his safety), all were building blocks of his character and prepared him for what lay ahead. Sixty nine days into office, he was shot and nearly killed in an assassination attempt on his life. He was saved from death by God for a reason, he later said. It was

during his recuperation that he decided to reach out to the Soviet Union, to open discussions that led to disarmament talks. He also reached out to Pope John Paul II, who was recovering from an assassination attempt on his life, six weeks after Reagan's. Together they formed a "holy alliance," to fight against Godless communism.

Reagan's ability to communicate his message, and sense of humor was legendary. As an example of the depth of his humor, in 1981, at the hospital after being shot, as surgeons entered the operating room, he said, "Please tell me you're Republicans." He often joked, "How do you tell a Communist? Well, it's someone who reads Marx and Lenin. And how do you tell an anti-Communist? It's someone who understands Marx and Lenin." While Reagan's "Evil Empire Speech" had humor, he was also dead serious about what he spoke, and why, history has bestowed upon Reagan, the title of "The Great Communicator."

Reagan may not have understood the destiny in store for him back in 1964 when he said, "You and I have a rendezvous with destiny. We will preserve for our children this, the last best hope of man on earth, or we will sentence them to take the first step into a thousand years of darkness. If we fail, at least let our children and our children's children say of us we justified our brief moment here. We did all that could be done." His destiny, it appears was to break the communist establishment responsible for the Holocaust (Russian Communist Revolution to Reagan's time) that killed upwards of 60 million Christians in Russia. Ronald Reagan's anticommunist work with John Paul II would be tied to a series of messages given to three illiterate children in Fatima, Portugal in 1917 by an apparition of the Virgin Mary. The messages were given to the children at the end of WWI, years before Russia was a country.

"Eat and drink the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, horribly outraged by ungrateful men. Make reparation for their crimes and console your God...."

"You have seen Hell where the souls of poor sinners go. To save them, God wishes to establish in the world devotion to My Immaculate Heart. If what I say to you is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace. The war [WWI] is going to end; but if people do not cease offending God, a worse one [WWII] will break out during the reign of Pius XI. When you see a night illumined by an unknown light [aurora borealis extending to Italy], know that this is the great sign given you by God that He is about to punish the world for its crimes by means of war [WWII], famine, and persecutions of the Church and of the Holy Father.

"To prevent this, I shall come to ask for the consecration of Russia to My Immaculate Heart, and the Communion of Reparation on the First Saturdays. If My requests are heeded, Russia will be converted and there will be peace; if not, she will spread her errors [Communism & corruption of the word of God] throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions of the Church. The good will be martyred, the Holy Father will have much to suffer, various nations will be annihilated. In the end, My Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to Me, and she will be converted, and a period of peace will be granted to the world. In Portugal, the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved, etc. Do not tell this to anybody. Francisco, yes, you may tell him."

"When you pray the Rosary, say after each mystery: O my Jesus, forgive us, save us from the fires of hell. Lead all souls to Heaven, especially those who are most in need."

— Sister Lucia, 3rd Memoir August 31, 1941 regarding the apparition at Fatima.⁵

It was a miracle Pope John Paul II survived his assassination attempt on the 13th of May, 1981, a miracle he credited to the intercession Virgin Mary (Fatima apparitions always appeared on the 13th). On the one year anniversary of the attempt on his life, he traveled to Fatima, placing the bullets that nearly killed him in the crown of the statue of the Virgin Mary. He moved forward on against communism and request for the

consecration of Russia. Ronald Reagan as well, moved forward on a number of different fronts to undermine godless communism.

Reagan was also moved by the messages of peace from apparition of the Virgin Mary at Medjugorje in Kosovo, in the communist country of Yugoslavia. The Virgin Mary first appeared to six children in June of 1981, the same year he and Pope John Paul II were shot. As “the President [Reagan] was entering the room to sign the treaty [missile]—which just happened to be December 8th, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception—he turned to the ambassador and told him that he had been deeply affected by the message of Medjugore and wanted ‘Those two girls to know it.’”⁵ Ronald Reagan maintained a healthy lack of trust that the Russians would not live up to their end of the missile treaty. His final words of warning to the country were “trust, but verify.” He did trust in God, and his divine plan; Reagan knew that communism was “destined to come down within the divine plan” because as he said, “it lives a lie.”

The following text and Evil Empire Speech comes from The National Center for Public Policy Research.

On March 8, 1983, President Reagan delivered an address to a meeting of the National Association of Evangelicals in Orlando, Florida. It referred to communism as “the focus of evil in the modern world,” and quickly became known as his “Evil Empire Speech.” The speech was delivered at a time when Congress was debating a resolution in support of a “nuclear freeze,” a doctrine supported by the Soviet Union that would have prevented the deployment of U.S. cruise and Pershing II Missiles in Europe. On March 7, President Reagan had met in the White House with a group of conservative leaders and pro-defense elected officials on the subject of the nuclear freeze. The President advised that his Administration was stalwart in opposition to the nuclear freeze, but meeting participants nonetheless urged him to use his presidential “bully pulpit” more often on the topic. Following the meeting, according to a contemporaneous report by the President's National Security Advisor Judge William Clark, the President added paragraphs to a speech he was scheduled to deliver the next day to the National Association of Evangelicals. Those additional paragraphs turned it from a routine, if worthy, speech to one that electrified dissidents behind the Iron Curtain and appalled Reagan's domestic opposition, including much of the press. The speech was destined to go down in history as one of Reagan's most influential addresses.

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Reverend clergy all, Senator Hawkins, distinguished members of the Florida congressional delegation, and all of you:

I can't tell you how you have warmed my heart with your welcome. I'm delighted to be here today.

Those of you in the National Association of Evangelicals are known for your spiritual and humanitarian work. And I would be especially remiss if I didn't discharge right now one personal debt of gratitude. Thank you for your prayers. Nancy and I have felt their presence many times in many ways. And believe me, for us they've made all the difference.

The other day in the East Room of the White House at a meeting there, someone asked me whether I was aware of all the people out there who were praying for the President. And I had to say, “Yes, I am. I've felt it. I believe in intercessionary prayer.”

But I couldn't help but say to that questioner after he'd asked the question that -- or at least say to them that if sometimes when he was praying he got a busy signal, it was just me in there ahead of him.

[Laughter]

I think I understand how Abraham Lincoln felt when he said, "I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go."

From the joy and the good feeling of this conference, I go to a political reception.

[Laughter]

Now, I don't know why, but that bit of scheduling reminds me of a story -- [laughter] -- which I'll share with you.

An evangelical minister and a politician arrived at Heaven's gate one day together. And St. Peter, after doing all the necessary formalities, took them in hand to show them where their quarters would be. And he took them to a small, single room with a bed, a chair, and a table and said this was for the clergyman. And the politician was a little worried about what might be in store for him. And he couldn't believe it then when St. Peter stopped in front of a beautiful mansion with lovely grounds, many servants, and told him that these would be his quarters.

And he couldn't help but ask, he said, "But wait, how -- there's something wrong -- how do I get this mansion while that good and holy man only gets a single room?" And St. Peter said, "You have to understand how things are up here. We've got thousands and thousands of clergy. You're the first politician who ever made it."

[Laughter]

But I don't want to contribute to a stereotype.

[Laughter]

So, I tell you there are a great many God-fearing, dedicated, noble men and women in public life, present company included. And yes, we need your help to keep us ever mindful of the ideas and the principles that brought us into the public arena in the first place. The basis of those ideals and principles is a commitment to freedom and personal liberty that, itself, is grounded in the much deeper realization that freedom prospers only where the blessings of God are avidly sought and humbly accepted.

The American experiment in democracy rests on this insight. Its discovery was the great triumph of our Founding Fathers, voiced by William Penn when he said, "If we will not be governed by God, we must be governed by tyrants."

Explaining the inalienable rights of men, Jefferson said, "The God who gave us life, gave us liberty at the same time."

And it was George Washington who said that "of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports."

And finally, that shrewdest of all observers of American democracy, Alexis de Tocqueville, put it eloquently after he had gone on a search for the secret of America's greatness and genius -- and he said, "Not until I went into the churches of America and heard her pulpits aflame with righteousness did I understand the greatness and the genius of America. America is good. And if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great."

Well, I'm pleased to be here today with you who are keeping America great by keeping her good. Only

through your work and prayers and those of millions of others can we hope to survive this perilous century and keep alive this experiment in liberty -- this last, best hope of man.

I want you to know that this administration is motivated by a political philosophy that sees the greatness of America in you, her people, and in your families, churches, neighborhoods, communities -- the institutions that foster and nourish values like concern for others and respect for the rule of law under God.

Now, I don't have to tell you that this puts us in opposition to, or at least out of step with, a prevailing attitude of many who have turned to a modern-day secularism, discarding the tried and time-tested values upon which our very civilization is based. No matter how well intentioned, their value system is radically different from that of most Americans. And while they proclaim that they're freeing us from superstitions of the past, they've taken upon themselves the job of superintending us by government rule and regulation. Sometimes their voices are louder than ours, but they are not yet a majority.

An example of that vocal superiority is evident in a controversy now going on in Washington. And since I'm involved, I've been waiting to hear from the parents of young America. How far are they willing to go in giving to government their prerogatives as parents?

Let me state the case as briefly and simply as I can. An organization of citizens, sincerely motivated and deeply concerned about the increase in illegitimate births and abortions involving girls well below the age of consent, sometime ago established a nationwide network of clinics to offer help to these girls and, hopefully, alleviate this situation. Now, again, let me say, I do not fault their intent. However, in their well-intentioned effort, these clinics have decided to provide advice and birth control drugs and devices to underage girls without the knowledge of their parents.

For some years now, the federal government has helped with funds to subsidize these clinics. In providing for this, the Congress decreed that every effort would be made to maximize parental participation. Nevertheless, the drugs and devices are prescribed without getting parental consent or giving notification after they've done so. Girls termed "sexually active" -- and that has replaced the word "promiscuous" -- are given this help in order to prevent illegitimate birth or abortion.

Well, we have ordered clinics receiving federal funds to notify the parents such help has been given. One of the nation's leading newspapers has created the term "squeal rule" in editorializing against us for doing this, and we're being criticized for violating the privacy of young people. A judge has recently granted an injunction against an enforcement of our rule. I've watched TV panel shows discuss this issue, seen columnists pontificating on our error, but no one seems to mention morality as playing a part in the subject of sex.

Is all of Judeo-Christian tradition wrong? Are we to believe that something so sacred can be looked upon as a purely physical thing with no potential for emotional and psychological harm? And isn't it the parents' right to give counsel and advice to keep their children from making mistakes that may affect their entire lives?

Many of us in government would like to know what parents think about this intrusion in their family by government. We're going to fight in the courts. The right of parents and the rights of family take precedence over those of Washington-based bureaucrats and social engineers.

But the fight against parental notification is really only one example of many attempts to water down traditional values and even abrogate the original terms of American democracy. Freedom prospers when religion is vibrant and the rule of law under God is acknowledged. When our Founding Fathers passed the First Amendment, they sought to protect churches from government interference. They never intended to construct a wall of hostility between government and the concept of religious belief itself.

The evidence of this permeates our history and our government. The Declaration of Independence mentions the Supreme Being no less than four times. "In God We Trust" is engraved on our coinage. The Supreme Court opens its proceedings with a religious invocation. And the members of Congress open their sessions with a prayer. I just happen to believe the schoolchildren of the United States are entitled to the same privileges as Supreme Court Justices and Congressmen.

Last year, I sent the Congress a constitutional amendment to restore prayer to public schools. Already this session, there's growing bipartisan support for the amendment, and I am calling on the Congress to act speedily to pass it and to let our children pray.

Perhaps some of you read recently about the Lubbock school case, where a judge actually ruled that it was unconstitutional for a school district to give equal treatment to religious and nonreligious student groups, even when the group meetings were being held during the students' own time. The First Amendment never intended to require government to discriminate against religious speech.

Senators Denton and Hatfield have proposed legislation in the Congress on the whole question of prohibiting discrimination against religious forms of student speech. Such legislation could go far to restore freedom of religious speech for public school students. And I hope the Congress considers these bills quickly. And with your help, I think it's possible we could also get the constitutional amendment through the Congress this year.

More than a decade ago, a Supreme Court decision literally wiped off the books of 50 States statutes protecting the rights of unborn children. Abortion on demand now takes the lives of up to one and a half million unborn children a year. Human life legislation ending this tragedy will some day pass the Congress, and you and I must never rest until it does. Unless and until it can be proven that the unborn child is not a living entity, then its right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness must be protected.

You may remember that when abortion on demand began, many, and, indeed, I'm sure many of you, warned that the practice would lead to a decline in respect for human life, that the philosophical premises used to justify abortion on demand would ultimately be used to justify other attacks on the sacredness of human life -- infanticide or mercy killing. Tragically enough, those warnings proved all too true. Only last year a court permitted the death by starvation of a handicapped infant.

I have directed the Health and Human Services Department to make clear to every health care facility in the United States that the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 protects all handicapped persons against discrimination based on handicaps, including infants. And we have taken the further step of requiring that each and every recipient of Federal funds who provides health care services to infants must post and keep posted in a conspicuous place a notice stating that "discriminatory failure to feed and care for handicapped infants in this facility is prohibited by Federal law." It also lists a 24-hour, toll-free number so that nurses and others may report violations in time to save the infant's life.

In addition, recent legislation introduced in the Congress by Representative Henry Hyde of Illinois not only increases restrictions on publicly financed abortions, it also addresses this whole problem of infanticide. I urge the Congress to begin hearings and to adopt legislation that will protect the right of life to all children, including the disabled or handicapped.

Now, I'm sure that you must get discouraged at times, but you've done better than you know, perhaps. There's a great spiritual awakening in America, a renewal of the traditional values that have been the bedrock of America's goodness and greatness.

One recent survey by a Washington-based research council concluded that Americans were far more

religious than the people of other nations; 95 percent of those surveyed expressed a belief in God and a huge majority believed the Ten Commandments had real meaning in their lives. And another study has found that an overwhelming majority of Americans disapprove of adultery, teenage sex, pornography, abortion, and hard drugs. And this same study showed a deep reverence for the importance of family ties and religious belief.

I think the items that we've discussed here today must be a key part of the Nation's political agenda. For the first time the Congress is openly and seriously debating and dealing with the prayer and abortion issues -- and that's enormous progress right there. I repeat: America is in the midst of a spiritual awakening and a moral renewal. And with your Biblical keynote, I say today, "Yes, let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream.

"Now, obviously, much of this new political and social consensus I've talked about is based on a positive view of American history, one that takes pride in our country's accomplishments and record. But we must never forget that no government schemes are going to perfect man. We know that living in this world means dealing with what philosophers would call the phenomenology of evil or, as theologians would put it, the doctrine of sin.

There is sin and evil in the world, and we're enjoined by Scripture and the Lord Jesus to oppose it with all our might. Our nation, too, has a legacy of evil with which it must deal. The glory of this land has been its capacity for transcending the moral evils of our past. For example, the long struggle of minority citizens for equal rights, once a source of disunity and civil war, is now a point of pride for all Americans. We must never go back. There is no room for racism, anti-Semitism, or other forms of ethnic and racial hatred in this country.

I know that you've been horrified, as have I, by the resurgence of some hate groups preaching bigotry and prejudice. Use the mighty voice of your pulpits and the powerful standing of your churches to denounce and isolate these hate groups in our midst. The commandment given us is clear and simple: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." But whatever sad episodes exist in our past, any objective observer must hold a positive view of American history, a history that has been the story of hopes fulfilled and dreams made into reality. Especially in this century, America has kept alight the torch of freedom, but not just for ourselves but for millions of others around the world.

And this brings me to my final point today. During my first press conference as President, in answer to a direct question, I pointed out that, as good Marxist-Leninists, the Soviet leaders have openly and publicly declared that the only morality they recognize is that which will further their cause, which is world revolution. I think I should point out I was only quoting Lenin, their guiding spirit, who said in 1920 that they repudiate all morality that proceeds from supernatural ideas -- that's their name for religion -- or ideas that are outside class conceptions. Morality is entirely subordinate to the interests of class war. And everything is moral that is necessary for the annihilation of the old, exploiting social order and for uniting the proletariat.

Well, I think the refusal of many influential people to accept this elementary fact of Soviet doctrine illustrates an historical reluctance to see totalitarian powers for what they are. We saw this phenomenon in the 1930's. We see it too often today. This doesn't mean we should isolate ourselves and refuse to seek an understanding with them. I intend to do everything I can to persuade them of our peaceful intent, to remind them that it was the West that refused to use its nuclear monopoly in the forties and fifties for territorial gain and which now proposes 50-percent cut in strategic ballistic missiles and the elimination of an entire class of land-based, intermediate-range nuclear missiles.

At the same time, however, they must be made to understand we will never compromise our principles and standards. We will never give away our freedom. We will never abandon our belief in God. And we will never stop searching for a genuine peace. But we can assure none of these things America stands for through

the so-called nuclear freeze solutions proposed by some.

The truth is that a freeze now would be a very dangerous fraud, for that is merely the illusion of peace. The reality is that we must find peace through strength.

I would agree to a freeze if only we could freeze the Soviets' global desires. A freeze at current levels of weapons would remove any incentive for the Soviets to negotiate seriously in Geneva and virtually end our chances to achieve the major arms reductions which we have proposed. Instead, they would achieve their objectives through the freeze.

A freeze would reward the Soviet Union for its enormous and unparalleled military buildup. It would prevent the essential and long overdue modernization of United States and allied defenses and would leave our aging forces increasingly vulnerable. And an honest freeze would require extensive prior negotiations on the systems and numbers to be limited and on the measures to ensure effective verification and compliance. And the kind of a freeze that has been suggested would be virtually impossible to verify. Such a major effort would divert us completely from our current negotiations on achieving substantial reductions.

A number of years ago, I heard a young father, a very prominent young man in the entertainment world, addressing a tremendous gathering in California. It was during the time of the Cold War, and communism and our own way of life were very much on people's minds. And he was speaking to that subject. And suddenly, though, I heard him saying, "I love my little girls more than anything -- --" And I said to myself, "Oh, no, don't. You can't -- don't say that."

But I had underestimated him. He went on: "I would rather see my little girls die now, still believing in God, than have them grow up under communism and one day die no longer believing in God."

There were thousands of young people in that audience. They came to their feet with shouts of joy. They had instantly recognized the profound truth in what he had said, with regard to the physical and the soul and what was truly important.

Yes, let us pray for the salvation of all of those who live in that totalitarian darkness -- pray they will discover the joy of knowing God. But until they do, let us be aware that while they preach the supremacy of the state, declare its omnipotence over individual man, and predict its eventual domination of all peoples on the Earth, they are the focus of evil in the modern world.

It was C.S. Lewis who, in his unforgettable "Screwtape Letters," wrote: "The greatest evil is not done now in those sordid 'dens of crime' that Dickens loved to paint. It is not even done in concentration camps and labor camps. In those we see its final result. But it is conceived and ordered (moved, seconded, carried and minuted) in clear, carpeted, warmed, and well-lighted offices, by quiet men with white collars and cut fingernails and smooth-shaven cheeks who do not need to raise their voice."

Well, because these "quiet men" do not "raise their voices"; because they sometimes speak in soothing tones of brotherhood and peace; because, like other dictators before them, they're always making "their final territorial demand," some would have us accept them at their word and accommodate ourselves to their aggressive impulses. But if history teaches anything, it teaches that simple-minded appeasement or wishful thinking about our adversaries is folly. It means the betrayal of our past, the squandering of our freedom.

So, I urge you to speak out against those who would place the United States in a position of military and moral inferiority. You know, I've always believed that old Screwtape reserved his best efforts for those of you in the church. So, in your discussions of the nuclear freeze proposals, I urge you to beware the temptation of pride -- the temptation of blithely declaring yourselves above it all and label both sides equally at fault, to ignore

the facts of history and the aggressive impulses of an evil empire, to simply call the arms race a giant misunderstanding and thereby remove yourself from the struggle between right and wrong and good and evil.

I ask you to resist the attempts of those who would have you withhold your support for our efforts, this administration's efforts, to keep America strong and free, while we negotiate real and verifiable reductions in the world's nuclear arsenals and one day, with God's help, their total elimination.

While America's military strength is important, let me add here that I've always maintained that the struggle now going on for the world will never be decided by bombs or rockets, by armies or military might. The real crisis we face today is a spiritual one; at root, it is a test of moral will and faith.

Whittaker Chambers, the man whose own religious conversion made him a witness to one of the terrible traumas of our time, the Hiss-Chambers case, wrote that the crisis of the Western World exists to the degree in which the West is indifferent to God, the degree to which it collaborates in communism's attempt to make man stand alone without God. And then he said, for Marxism-Leninism is actually the second oldest faith, first proclaimed in the Garden of Eden with the words of temptation, "Ye shall be as gods."

The Western world can answer this challenge, he wrote, "but only provided that its faith in God and the freedom He enjoins is as great as communism's faith in Man."

I believe we shall rise to the challenge. I believe that communism is another sad, bizarre chapter in human history whose last pages even now are being written. I believe this because the source of our strength in the quest for human freedom is not material, but spiritual. And because it knows no limitation, it must terrify and ultimately triumph over those who would enslave their fellow man. For in the words of Isaiah: "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increased strength But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary."

Yes, change your world. One of our Founding Fathers, Thomas Paine, said, "We have it within our power to begin the world over again." We can do it, doing together what no one church could do by itself.

God bless you, and thank you very much.⁶

Endnotes:

1. Kengor, Paul, God and Ronald Reagan a spiritual life, Page 233; Reagan Books, New York, NY, 2004.
2. Kengor, Paul, God and Ronald Reagan a spiritual life, Page 402; Reagan Books, New York, NY, 2004.
3. Paul, Pope John, Memory and Identity, Page 3-49; New York, New York, Rizzoli International Publishing, 2005.
4. Kengor, Paul, God and Ronald Reagan a spiritual life, Page 104; Reagan Books, New York, NY, 2004.
5. Weible, Wayne, Medjugorje The Message, Page 307-308; Paraclete Press, Brewster, Massachusetts, 1989.
6. The National Center for Public Policy Research, Evil Empire Speech by Ronald Reagan, March 8, 1983, <http://www.nationalcenter.org/ReaganEvilEmpire1983.html>
Photo, courtesy of the Library of Congress, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov>

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