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~~THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN. ....~~

February 10, 1976

BUDGET BRIEFING: FOR MILITARY ORGANIZATIONS  
FEBRUARY 10, 1976

It is good to see all of you and welcome you to the White House. I know that Secretary Kissinger and Secretary ~~Rumsfeld~~ *Olson* have briefed you fully on the elements of our new defense budget and the policies of their respective departments.

Actually, foreign policy and defense policy are both part of a single national policy, the policy that carries out the first duty of the Federal Government, which is to make the United States and its people safe and secure in a dangerous world.

Throughout our 200 years of independence, we have become the strongest nation in history, and as President I mean to keep our military strength certain and our powder dry.

But our world has also become much more dangerous. It is also my duty to do all I can to reduce the level of danger by diplomatic means.

So my policy for national security can be summed up in three words: Peace through strength.

I believe ~~that~~ <sup>and</sup> this Administration believes ~~it~~ it is far better to seek negotiations with the Soviet Union, based on strength, than to permit a runaway nuclear arms race and risk a nuclear holocaust.

Under ~~the~~ <sup>my</sup> Administration, the United States ~~has had~~ <sup>is at</sup> peace ~~for more than a year.~~ <sup>almost</sup> There are no Americans ~~in~~ <sup>from</sup> battle anywhere in the world today.

Under this Administration, ~~We~~ <sup>greatly</sup> have strengthened our essential alliances with Western Europe and with Japan.

~~Under this Administration,~~ <sup>T</sup> the United States has taken a strong and forthright stand in the United Nations on behalf of our own national interests.

~~Under this Administration,~~ <sup>We</sup> challenged the Soviet Union in its intervention in Angola and if the Congress had stood with us we would have had the opportunity to let the Angolans settle their future among themselves.

(MORE)

(3)

~~Under this Administration, We have worked to achieve~~ an  
unprecedented increase in United States foreign trade which  
has insured ~~and created~~ hundreds of thousands of <sup>American</sup> jobs.

~~Under this Administration,~~ the United States has used  
its unique position of confidence on both sides to accomplish  
an historic breakthrough in peace negotiations between Egypt  
and Israel, and continues to seek a just and lasting peace  
throughout the Middle East.

~~Under this Administration,~~ a strong military presence  
and decisive action by the United States coupled with the ele-  
ments of our Pacific Doctrine have stabilized international  
relations in Asia and the Far East.

I believe [and this Administration believes] that the  
<sup>112.4</sup>  
\$ 100.1 billion requested in my fiscal 1977 Defense budget  
represents the best way to make our country secure, ~~and~~ to deter  
war by maintaining the military strength we need to negotiate  
from strength, not weakness.

(MORE)

(4)

We will not prevail in this protracted struggle with the enemies of freedom, big or small, by warming over the *old* rhetoric of the Cold War or *by* fast and fancy gunplay with weapons that can destroy most of the human race.

We will win this struggle, and we are winning it, by the patient and painstaking pursuit of our own national interest through continuing my present policies of peace through strength.

Anyone who has ever been in the armed forces, especially in wartime, knows that the final objective you gain from that experience, the continuing mission you take with you when you leave the service, is to work for a peaceful world for your children and your grandchildren.

The veterans of all nations will tell you that.

But as Americans, we have an extra responsibility. We did not seek it, but it was thrust upon us. We cannot escape it and we will not. Circumstances, destiny, fate or whatever you call it -- the fact is ~~that~~ the United States of America ~~is today and as far ahead as we can imagine~~ *is* the world's best

and perhaps its only hope of peace with freedom.

On our strength, our power, our prudence and our perseverance rests mankind's hope for a better world.

Whatever chance there is <sup>permanent</sup> for peace depends upon America's resolution and rational leadership.

I am committed to such a steady course and I am encouraged by your strong and steadfast support.

# # #

UNDER THIS ADMINISTRATION, WE HAVE REAFFIRMED IN MY  
PERSONAL TALKS WITH ASIAN LEADERS / OUR INTENTION TO REMAIN  
A PACIFIC POWER AND WE HAVE MAINTAINED THE FORCES NECESSARY  
TO CONTRIBUTE TO PEACE AND STABILITY IN THAT REGION.