(Dolan)
September 20, 1988
5:30 p.m.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1988

Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, distinguished delegates. Half a world away -- far from this place of peace -- the firing, the killing, the bloodshed in two merciless conflicts have for the first time in recent memory diminished. After adding terrible new names to the rollcall of human horror -- names such as Halabja, Maidan Shahr and Buldak -- there is today hope of peace in the Persian Gulf and Afghanistan.

So, too, in the highlands and coastal cities of southern Africa -- places of civil war, places of occupation by foreign troops -- talk of peace is heard, peace for the tortured nation of Angola. Six thousand five hundred miles further west, in the Southeast Asian country of Cambodia, there is hope now of a settlement, hope now of the removal of Vietnam's occupying forces. And finally in this hemisphere, where only 12 years ago one-third of the people of Latin America lived under democratic rule, some 90 percent do so today; and especially in Central America nations such as El Salvador, once threatened by the anarchy of the death squad and the specter of totalitarian rule, now know the hope of self-government and the prospect of economic growth.

And, another change, Mr. Secretary-General. A change that if it endures may go down as one of the signal accomplishments of our history -- a change that is cause for shaking of the head in wonder -- is also upon us. A change going to the source of

post-war tensions, and to the once seemingly impossible dream of ending the twin threats of our time -- totalitarianism and thermonuclear world war.

For the first time, the differences between East and West -- fundamental differences over important moral questions dealing with the worth of the individual and whether governments shall control people or people control governments -- for the first time, these differences have shown signs of easing. Easing to the point where there are not just troop withdrawals from places like Afghanistan but also talk in the East of reform and greater freedom of press, of assembly, and of religion. Yes, fundamental differences remain. But should talk of reform become more than that, should it become reality -- there is the prospect of not only a new era in Soviet-American relations but a new age of world peace. For such reform can bring peace; history teaches and my country has always believed that where the rights of the individual and the people are enshrined, war is a distant prospect; for it is not people who make war, governments do that.

I stand at this podium then in a moment of hope. Hope, not just for the peoples of the United States or the Soviet Union but for all the peoples of the world. And hope too for the dream of peace among nations, the dream that began the United Nations.

Precisely because of these changes, today, the United Nations has the opportunity to live and breathe and work as never before. Already you, Mr. Secretary-General, through your persistence, patience, and unyielding will have in working toward

peace in Afghanistan and the Persian Gulf shown how valuable the United Nations can be.

And in Geneva at this very hour, there are numerous negotiations underway: multilateral negotiations at the U.N. Conference on Disarmament as well as bilateral negotiations on a range of issues between the Soviets and ourselves. And these negotiations, some of them under U.N. auspices, involve a broad arms control agenda; strategic offensive weapons; strategic defense and space; nuclear testing; and chemical warfare -- whose urgency we have witnessed anew in recent days.

And, Mr. Secretary-General, the negotiators are busy -- for the first time in many years they are engaged in more than an academic exercise. There is movement. The logjam is broken. Only recently, when the United States and the Soviet Union signed the I.N.F. agreement, an entire class of U.S. and Soviet nuclear missiles will be eliminated for the first time in history. Progress continues on a plan to reduce, in massive number, strategic weapons. And talks will begin soon on conventional reductions in Europe.

Much of the reason for all of this goes back, I believe, to Geneva itself; to the small chateau along the lake where I and the General Secretary of the Soviet Union had the first of several fireside chats -- exchanges characterized by frankness, but friendliness too. I said at the first meeting in Geneva that this was a unique encounter between two people who had the power to start World War III or to begin a new age of peace among nations. And I also said peace conferences, arms negotiations,

proposals for treaties could make sense only if they were part of a wider context -- a context that sought to explore and resolve the deeper, underlying differences between us. I said to Mr. Gorbachev then as I have said to you before: Nations do not mistrust each other because they are armed, they are armed because they mistrust each other.

In that place, by that peaceful lake in neutral Switzerland, Mr. Gorbachev and I did begin a new relationship based not just on engagement over the single issue of arms control but on a broader agenda about our deeper differences; an agenda of human rights, regional conflicts, and bilateral exchanges between our peoples. Even on the arms control issue itself, we agreed to go beyond the past. To seek not just treaties that permit building weapons to higher levels but revolutionary agreements that actually reduced, and even eliminated, whole classes of nuclear weapons.

What was begun that morning in Geneva has had impact. In the I.N.F. treaty. In my recent visit to Moscow. In my opportunity to meet there with Soviet citizens and dissidents and speak of human rights. And to speak too in the Lenin Hills of Moscow to the young people of the Soviet Union about the wonder and splendor of human freedom. The results of that morning in Geneva are seen in peace conferences now under way around the world on regional conflicts; and in the work of the U.N. here in New York as well as in Geneva.

But Mr. Secretary-General, history teaches caution; indeed, that very building in Geneva, where important negotiations have

taken place -- the Geneva Accords on Afghanistan, the Iran-Iraq negotiations, for example -- we see it today as stone-like testimony to a failed dream of peace in another time. The Palais des Nations was the headquarters of the League of Nations -- an institution that was to symbolize an end to all war. And yet that institution and its noble purpose ended with the Second World War, ended because the chance for peace was not seized in the 1930's by the nations of the world, ended because humanity did not find the courage to isolate the aggressors, to reject schemes of government that serve the state not the people.

We are here today, Mr. Secretary-General, determined that no such fate shall befall the United Nations. We are determined that the U.N. should succeed and serve the cause of peace for humankind.

So, Mr. Secretary-General, we realize that even in this time of hope, the chance of failure is real. But this knowledge does not discourage us. It spurs us on. For the stakes are high: Do we falter and fail now and bring down upon ourselves the just anger of future generations? Or do we to continue the work of the founders of this institution and see to it that at last, freedom is enshrined and humanity knows war no longer. And that this place, this floor shall be truly "the world's last battlefield."

We are determined it shall be so. So we turn now to the agenda of peace. Let us begin by addressing a concern that was much on my mind when I met with Mr. Gorbachev in the Kremlin as well as on the minds of Soviet citizens I met in Moscow. It is

also an issue that I know is of immediate importance to the delegates of this Assembly who this fall commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

That declaration says plainly what those who seek peace can forget only at the greatest peril, that peace rests on one foundation: observing "the inalienable rights of all members of the human family." In a century where human rights have been denied by totalitarian governments on a scale never before seen in history -- with so many millions deliberately starved or eliminated as a matter of state policy -- a history one writer of our time has called a story of "blood, stupidity and barbed wire" -- few can wonder why peace has proved so elusive.

Let us understand. If we would have peace, we must acknowledge the elementary rights of our fellow-human beings. In our own land. And in other lands. If we would have peace, the trampling of the human spirit must cease. Human rights is not for some, some of the time. Human rights, as the universal declaration of this Assembly adopted in 1948 proclaims is: "for all people and all nations." And for all time.

This regard for human rights as the foundation of peace is at the heart of the U.N. Those who starve in Ethiopia, those who die among the Kurds, those who face racial injustice in South Africa, those who cannot write or speak freely in the Soviet Union, those who cannot worship in the Ukraine, those who struggle on boats in the South China Sea, those who cannot publish or assemble in Managua -- all of this is more than just an agenda item on your calendar. It must be a first concern; an

issue above others. For when human rights concerns are not paramount at the United Nations -- when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is not honored in these halls and meeting rooms -- then the very credibility of this organization is at stake, the very purpose of its existence in question.

That is why when human rights progress is made, the United Nations grows stronger and the United States is glad of it. Following a 2-year effort led by the United States, for example, the U.N. Human Rights Commission took a major step toward ending the double standards and cynicism that had characterized too much of its past. For years, Cuba, a blatant violator of its citizens' human rights has escaped U.N. censure or even scrutiny. This year, Cuba has responded to pressure generated by the Human Rights Commission by accepting an investigation into it's human rights abuses, dictator Castro has already begun to free some political prisoners, improve prison conditions, and tolerate the existence of a small independent national human rights group.

More must be done; the United Nations must be relentless and unyielding in seeking change. In Cuba and elsewhere. This is a first and fundamental mission of this body, and this respect for human rights, the most elementary obligation of its members. Indeed, wherever one turns in the world today there is new awareness, a growing passion for human rights -- the people of the world grow united; new groups, new coalitions form; coalitions that monitor government, that work against discrimination, that fight religious or political repression, unlawful imprisonment, torture or execution. As those I spoke to

at Spaso House said to me last June: such movements make a difference.

Turning now to regional conflicts, we feel again the uplift of hope. In the Gulf War between Iran and Iraq -- one of the bloodiest conflicts since W.W.II. -- we have a cease-fire. The resolution and the firmness of the allied nations in keeping the Persian Gulf open to international shipping not only upheld the rule of law, it helped prevent further spread of the conflict and laid the basis for peace. So too, the Security Council's decisive resolution in July a year ago has become the blueprint for a peaceful Gulf. Let this war -- a war in which there has been no victor or vanquished only victims, let this war end now. Let both Iran and Iraq cooperate with the Secretary-General and the Security Council in implementing Resolution 598. Let peace come.

Moving on to a second region -- when I first addressed the U.N. General Assembly in 1983, world attention was focused on the brutal invasion and illegal occupation of Afghanistan. After nearly 9 long years of war, the courage and determination of the Afghan people and the Afghan freedom fighters have held sway -- today an end to the occupation is in sight. On April 14, the U.S.S.R. signed the Geneva Accords, which were negotiated under U.N. auspices by Pakistan and the Kabul regime. We encourage the Soviet Union to complete its troop withdrawal at the earliest possible date so that the Afghan people can freely determine their future without further outside interference.

In southern Africa, too, years of patient diplomacy and support for those in Angola who seek self-determination are having their effect. We look forward to an accord between the governments of Angola, Cuba, and South Africa that will bring about a complete withdrawal of all foreign troops -- primarily Cuban -- from Angola. We look forward as well to full implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 435 and our longstanding goal of independence for Namibia.

Mr. Secretary-General, we must also give renewed attention to Cambodia, a nation whose freedom and independence we seek just as avidly as we sought the freedom and independence of Afghanistan. We urge the rapid removal of all Vietnamese troops, and a settlement that will prevent the return of the Khmer Rouge to power, permitting instead the establishment of a genuinely representative government -- a government that will at last respect fully the rights of the people of Cambodia and end the hideous suffering they have so bravely and needlessly borne.

In other critical areas, we applaud the Secretary-General's efforts to structure a referendum on the Western Sahara. And in the Mediterranean, direct talks between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities hold much promise for accord in that divided island nation.

In each of these areas, then, we see progress and, again, we are glad of it. Only a few years ago, Mr. Secretary-General, all of these and other conflicts were burning dangerously out of control. Indeed, the invasion of Afghanistan and the apparent failure of will among democratic and peace-loving nations to

deter such events seemed to cause a climate where aggression by nations large and small was epidemic, a climate the world had not seen since the 1930's. Only this time, larger war was avoided, avoided because the free and peaceful nations of the world recovered their strength of purpose and will. And now the United Nations is providing valuable assistance in helping this epidemic to recede.

And because we are resolved to keep it so, I would be remiss in my duty if I did not now take note here of the one exception to progress in regional conflicts. I refer here to the continuing deterioration of human rights in Nicaragua and the refusal of the tiny elite now ruling that nation to honor promises of democracy made to their own people and to the international community. This elite -- in calling itself revolutionary -- seeks no real revolution; the use of the term is subterfuge, deception for hiding the oldest, most corrupt vice of all -- man's age-old will to power, his lust to control the lives and steal the freedom of others.

That is why as President, I will continue to urge the Congress and the American public to stand behind those who resist this attempt to impose a totalitarian regime on the people of Nicaragua; that the United States will continue to stand with those who are threatened by this regime's aggression against its neighbors in Central America.

Today, I also call on the Soviet Union to show in Central America the same spirit of constructive realism it has shown in other regional conflicts. To assist in bringing conflict in

Central America to a close by halting the flow of billions of dollars worth of arms and ammunition to the Sandinista regime, a regime whose goals of regional domination -- while ultimately doomed -- can continue to cause great suffering to the people of that area and risk to Soviet-American relations unless action is taken now.

Moving now to the arms control agenda, I have mentioned already the importance of the I.N.F. treaty and the momentum developed in the START negotiations. The draft START treaty is a lengthy document, filled with bracketed language designating sections of disagreement between the two sides. But through this summer in Geneva those brackets have diminished; there is every reason to believe this process can continue. I can tell this Assembly that it is highly doubtful such a treaty can be accomplished in a few months, but I can tell you a year from now is a possibility, more than a possibility. But we have no deadline. No agreement is better than a bad agreement. The United States remains hopeful and we acknowledge the spirit of cooperation shown by the Soviet Union in these negotiations. We also look for that spirit to be applied to our concerns about compliance with existing agreements.

So too, our discussions on nuclear testing and defense and space have been useful. But let me here stress to the General Assembly that much of the momentum in nuclear arms control negotiations is due to technological progress itself, especially in the potential for space-based defensive systems. I believe that the United States determination to research and develop and,

when ready, deploy such defensive systems -- systems targeted to destroy missiles not people -- accounts for a large share of the progress made in recent years in Geneva. With such systems, for the first time, in case of accidental launch or the act of a madman somewhere, major powers will not be faced with the single option of massive retaliation but will instead have the chance of a saner choice -- to shield an attack instead of avenging it. So too, as defensive systems grow in effectiveness they reduce the threat and the value of greater and greater offensive arsenals. Only recently, briefings I have received in the Oval Office indicate that progress towards such systems may be even more rapid and less costly than we had at first thought. Today, the United States reaffirms its commitment to its Strategic Defense Initiative and our promise to share the benefits of its technology with others.

And yet, even as diplomatic and technological progress holds out the hope of at last diminishing the awful cloud of nuclear terror we have lived under in the post-war era, even at this moment another ominous terror is loose once again in the world. A terror we thought the world had put behind, a terror that looms at us now from the long, buried past; from ghostly, scarring trenches and the haunting, wan faces of millions dead in one of the most inhumane conflicts of all time.

Gas warfare. Chemical warfare. Mr. Secretary-General, distinguished delegates, the terror of it. The horror of it. We condemn it. The use of chemical weapons in the Iran-Iraq war -- beyond its tragic human toll -- jeopardizes the moral and legal

protocols that have held these weapons in check since World War I. Let this tragedy spark reaffirmation of the Geneva protocol outlawing the use of chemical weapons. We call upon Iran and Iraq to renounce any use of chemical weapons. And we urge Iraq to cooperate in negotiating a verifiable, truly global ban on chemical weapons at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

It is also incumbent upon all civilized nations to once and for all -- and on a verifiable and global basis -- ban the use of chemical and gas warfare.

Finally, Mr. Secretary-General, we must redouble our efforts to stop further proliferations of nuclear weapons in the world. Likewise, proliferation in other high-technology weapons such as ballistic missiles is reaching global proportions, exacerbating regional rivalries in ways that can have global implications. The number of potential suppliers is growing at an alarming rate and more must be done to halt the spread of these weapons. This was a matter of discussion last week between Secretary Shultz and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze. Talks between American and Soviet experts begin on this today. And we hope to see a multilateral effort, to avoid having areas of tension like the Middle East become even more deadly battlegrounds than they already are.

In all these areas, then, we see not only progress but also the potential for an increasingly vital role for multilateral efforts and institutions like the United Nations. That is why now more than ever the United Nations must continue to increase its effectiveness through budget and program reform. The U.N.

already has proposed sweeping measures affecting personnel reductions, budgeting by consensus, and the establishment of program priorities. These actions are extremely important. The progress on reforms has allowed me to release funds withheld under congressional restrictions. I expect the reform program will continue and that further funds will be released in our new fiscal year.

And let me say here we congratulate the United Nations on the work it has done in two areas of special concern. First, the work of the World Health Organization in coordinating and advancing research on AIDS is vital. All international efforts in this area must be redoubled. The AIDS crisis is a grave one; we must move as one to meet it.

So too is the drug crisis. And here too, Mr. Secretary-General, I want to commend you for your leadership and dedication. It was you who, in May 1985, proposed the convening of a World Conference to deal with all aspects of the drug problem. The Conference was a resounding success. We are also moving towards a new convention against illicit trafficking, a major step forward.

Yes, the United Nations is a better place than it was 8 years ago -- but so too is the world. But the real issue of reform in the United Nations is not limited just to fiscal and administrative improvements but also to a higher sort of reform, an intellectual and philosophical reform, a reform of old views about the relationship between the individual and the state.

Few developments, for example, have been more encouraging to the United States than the Special Session this body held on Africa 2-1/2 years ago. A session in which the United Nations joined as one in a call for free market incentives and a lessening of state controls to spur economic development.

At one of the first international assemblies of my Presidency in Cancun, Mexico, I said history demonstrates that time and again, in place after place, economic growth and human progress make their greatest strides in countries that encourage economic freedom. That individual farmers, laborers, owners, traders, and managers are the heart and soul of development. Trust them. Because where they are allowed to create and build, where they are given a personal stake in deciding economic policies and benefitting from their success, then societies become more dynamic, prosperous, progressive, and free. We believe in freedom. We know it works.

And this, Mr. Secretary-General and distinguished delegates, is the immutable lesson of the postwar era: that freedom works. Even more, that freedom and peace work together. Every year that passes everywhere in the world this lesson is taking hold, from the People's Republic of China to Cameroon from Bolivia to Botswana and, yes, in the citadel of Marxism-Leninism itself. No, my country did not invent this synergy of peace and freedom but, believe me, we impose no restrictions on the free export of our more than two centuries of experience with it. Free people blessed by economic opportunity and protected by laws that respect the dignity of the individual are not driven toward war

or the domination of others. Here then is the way to world peace.

And yet, we Americans champion freedom not only because it is practical and beneficial but because it is also just, morally right. And here, Mr. Secretary-General, I hope you will permit me to note I have addressed this assemblage more than any of my predecessors and that this will be the last occasion I will do so. So, I hope too I may be permitted now some closing reflections.

The world is now witnessing another celebration of international cooperation; at the Olympics we see nations joining together in the competition of sports and we see young people, who know precious little of the resentments of their elders, coming together as one.

One of our young athletes -- from a home of modest means -- said that she drew the strength for her achievement from another source of riches -- "we were wealthy as a family," she said, about the love she was given and values she was taught.

Mr. Secretary-General, I dare to hope that in the sentiment of that young athlete, we see a sign of the rediscovery of old and tested values, values such as family -- the first and most important unit of society where all values and learning begins, an institution to be cherished and protected. Values too such as work, community, freedom and faith. For it is here we find the deeper rationale for the cause of human rights and world peace we have seen.

And our own experience on this continent, the American experience, though brief has had one unmistakable encounter, an insistence on the preservation of one sacred truth. It is a truth that our first President, our Founding Father, passed on in the first farewell address made to the American people. It is a truth that I hope now you will permit me to mention in these remarks of farewell.

A truth that embodied in our Declaration of Independence -- that the case for inalienable rights, that the idea of human dignity, that the notion of conscience above compulsion can be made only in the context of higher law, a higher order. Only in the context of what one of the founders of this organization, Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold, has called "devotion to something which is greater and higher than we are ourselves."

This is the endless cycle, the final truth to which humankind seems always to return. That religion and morality, that faith in something higher, are prerequisites for freedom. And that justice and peace within ourselves is the first step towards justice and peace in the world and for the ages.

Yes, this is a place of great debate and grave discussion, and yet I cannot help but note here that one of our Founding Fathers, the most worldly of men and an internationalist, Benjamin Franklin, interrupted the proceedings of our own Constitutional Convention to make much the same point.

And I cannot help but think this morning of other beginnings. Of where and when I first read those words "and they shall beat their swords into plowshares...." and "your young men

shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams...." This morning my thoughts go to her who gave me many things in life but whose most important gift was the knowledge of the happiness and solace to be gained in prayer. It is the greatest help I have had in my Presidency and I recall here Lincoln's words when he said only the most foolish of men would think he could confront the duties of the office I now hold without turning to someone stronger, a power greater than all others.

I think then of her and others like her in that small town in Illinois, gentle people who possessed something that sometimes those who hold positions of power forget to prize. No, none of them could ever have imagined the boy from the South side of Rock River would come to this moment and have this opportunity. But had they been told it would happen, I think they would have been a bit disappointed if I had not spoken here for what they knew so well: that when we grow weary of the world and its troubles, when our faith in humanity falters, it is then we must seek comfort -- and refreshment of spirit, in a deeper source of wisdom, one greater than ourselves.

And so if future generations do say of us that in our time peace came closer, that we did bring about new seasons of truth and justice, it will be cause for pride. But it shall be a cause of greater pride still, if it also said that we were wise enough to know the deliberations of great leaders and great bodies are but overture; that the truly majestic music -- the music of freedom, of justice and peace -- is the music made in forgetting self and seeking in silence the will of him who made us.

Thank you for your hospitality over the years. I bid you now farewell.

6817

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

September 21, 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR ANTHONY R. DOLAN

FROM: PAUL SCHOTT STEVENS

SUBJECT: NSC Suggestions on UNGA Speech

Attached at Tab A are NSC comments on draft UNGA speech. Also we ask you to consider including additional comments in two areas: first, that relations between the United States and the Soviet Union cannot be fully normalized until the unnatural division of Europe comes to an end, and second, that we will continue to work for a sound and lasting solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. We feel that these references should be made, but we are unsure where they best fit.

Attachment
Tab A Draft UNGA Speech

cc: Rhett Dawson

(Dolan)
September 20, 1988
5:30 p.m.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1988

Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, distinguished delegates. Half a world away -- far from this place of peace -- the firing, the killing, the bloodshed in two merciless conflicts have for the first time in recent memory diminished. After adding terrible new names to the rollcall of human horror -- names such as Halabja, Maidan Shahr and Buldak -- there is today hope of peace in the Persian Gulf and Afghanistan.

[Full name was left out of our earlier input]

So, too, in the highlands and coastal cities of southern Africa -- places of civil war, places of occupation by foreign troops -- talk of peace is heard, peace for the tortured nation of Angola. Six thousand five hundred miles further ~~west~~ east, in the Southeast Asian country of Cambodia, there is hope now of a settlement, hope now of the removal of Vietnam's occupying forces. And finally in this hemisphere, where only 12 years ago one-third of the people of Latin America lived under democratic rule, some 90 percent do so today; and especially in Central America nations such as El Salvador, once threatened by the anarchy of the death squad and the specter of totalitarian rule, now know the hope of self-government and the prospect of economic growth.

And, another change, Mr. Secretary-General. A change that if it endures may go down as one of the signal accomplishments of our history -- a change that is cause for shaking of the head in wonder -- is also upon us. A change going to the source of

post-war tensions, and to the once seemingly impossible dream of ending ~~the twin threats~~ two principal of our time -- totalitarianism and thermonuclear world war.

[current language seems to ignore other major problems, eg. Famine]

For the first time, the differences between East and West -- fundamental differences over important moral questions dealing with the worth of the individual and whether governments shall control people or people control governments -- for the first time, these differences have shown signs of easing. Easing to the point where there are not just troop withdrawals from places like Afghanistan but also talk in the East of reform and greater freedom of press, of assembly, and of religion. Yes, fundamental differences remain. But should talk of reform become more than that, should it become reality -- there is the prospect of not only a new era in Soviet-American relations but a new age of world peace. For such reform can bring peace; history teaches and my country has always believed that where the rights of the individual and the people are enshrined, war is a distant prospect; for it is not people who make war, governments do that.

I stand at this podium then in a moment of hope. Hope, not just for the peoples of the United States or the Soviet Union but for all the peoples of the world. And hope too for the dream of peace among nations, the dream that began the United Nations.

Precisely because of these changes, today, the United Nations has the opportunity to live and breathe and work as never before. Already you, Mr. Secretary-General, through your persistence, patience, and unyielding will have in working toward

peace in Afghanistan and the Persian Gulf shown how valuable the United Nations can be. We salute you for these accomplishments. [Applause line?]

And in Geneva at this very hour, there are numerous negotiations underway: multilateral negotiations at the ~~U.N.~~ Conference on Disarmament as well as bilateral negotiations on a range of issues between the Soviets and ourselves. And these negotiations, some of them under U.N. auspices, involve a broad arms control agenda; strategic offensive weapons; strategic defense and space; nuclear testing; and chemical warfare -- whose urgency we have witnessed anew in recent days. [Not a UN conference]

And, Mr. Secretary-General, the negotiators are busy. ~~-- for the first time in many years they are engaged in more than an academic exercise.~~ There is movement. ~~The logjam is broken.~~ Only recently, when the United States and the Soviet Union signed the I.N.F. agreement, an entire class of U.S. and Soviet nuclear missiles ~~will be~~ was eliminated for the first time in history. Progress continues on ~~a plan~~ negotiations to reduce, in massive number, strategic weapons with effective verification. And talks will begin soon on conventional reductions in Europe. [Current language says previous efforts were pointless...] [Better describes our position]

Much of the reason for all of this goes back, I believe, to Geneva itself; to the small chateau along the lake where I and the General Secretary of the Soviet Union had the first of several fireside chats -- exchanges characterized by frankness, but friendliness too. I said at the first meeting in Geneva that this was a unique encounter between two people who had the power to start World War III or to begin a new age of peace among nations. And I also said peace conferences, arms negotiations,

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[more accurate]

What was begun that morning in Geneva has had impact. In the I.N.F. treaty. In my recent visit to Moscow. In my opportunity to meet there with Soviet citizens and dissidents and speak of human rights. And to speak too in the Lenin Hills of Moscow to the young people of the Soviet Union about the wonder and splendor of human freedom. The results of that morning in Geneva are seen in peace conferences now under way around the world on regional conflicts; and in the work of the U.N. here in New York as well as in Geneva.

But Mr. Secretary-General, history teaches caution; indeed, that very building in Geneva, where important negotiations have

taken place -- the Geneva Accords on Afghanistan, the Iran-Iraq negotiations, for example -- we see it today as stone-like testimony to a failed dream of peace in another time. The Palais des Nations was the headquarters of the League of Nations -- an institution that was to symbolize an end to all war. And yet that institution and its noble purpose ended with the Second World War, ended because the chance for peace was not seized in the 1930's by the nations of the world, ended because humanity did not find the courage to isolate the aggressors, to reject schemes of government that serve the state not the people.

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So, Mr. Secretary-General, we realize that even in this time of hope, the chance of failure is real. But this knowledge does not discourage us. It spurs us on. For the stakes are high: Do we falter and fail now and bring down upon ourselves the just anger of future generations? Or do we to continue the work of the founders of this institution and see to it that at last, freedom is enshrined and humanity knows war no longer. And that this place, this floor shall be truly "the world's last battlefield."

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Let us understand. If we would have peace, we must acknowledge the elementary rights of our fellow-human beings. In our own land. And in other lands. If we would have peace, the trampling of the human spirit must cease. Human rights is not for some, some of the time. Human rights, as the universal declaration of this Assembly adopted in 1948 proclaims is: "for all people and all nations." And for all time.

An important issue in US-Israeli relations]

Further, we must continue our efforts to protect the universal Declaration of Human Rights from being debased as it was through the infamous "Zionism is Racism" Resolution.

This regard for human rights as the foundation of peace is at the heart of the U.N. Those who starve in Ethiopia, those who die among the Kurds, those who face racial injustice in South Africa, those who cannot write or speak freely in the Soviet Union, those who cannot worship in the Ukraine, those who struggle on boats in the South China Sea, those who cannot publish or assemble in Managua -- all of this is more than just an agenda item on your calendar. It must be a first concern; an

issue above others. For when human rights concerns are not paramount at the United Nations -- when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is not honored in these halls and meeting rooms -- then the very credibility of this organization is at stake, the very purpose of its existence in question.

That is why when human rights progress is made, the United Nations grows stronger and the United States is glad of it. Following a 2-year effort led by the United States, for example, the U.N. Human Rights Commission took a major step toward ending the double standards and cynicism that had characterized too much of its past. For years, Cuba, a blatant violator of its citizens' human rights has escaped U.N. censure or even scrutiny. This year, Cuba has responded to pressure generated by the Human Rights Commission by accepting an investigation into it's human rights abuses, ~~dictator~~ Fidel Castro has already begun to free some political prisoners, improve prison conditions, and tolerate the existence of a small independent national human rights group.

unnecessarily inflamatory]

More must be done; the United Nations must be relentless and unyielding in seeking change. In Cuba and elsewhere. This is a first and fundamental mission of this body, and this respect for human rights, the most elementary obligation of its members. Indeed, wherever one turns in the world today there is new awareness, a growing passion for human rights -- the people of the world grow united; new groups, new coalitions form; coalitions that monitor government, that work against discrimination, that fight religious or political repression, unlawful imprisonment, torture or execution. As those I spoke to

at Spaso House said to me last June: such movements make a difference.

Turning now to regional conflicts, we feel again the uplift of hope. In the Gulf War between Iran and Iraq -- one of the bloodiest conflicts since W.W.II. -- we have a cease-fire. The resolution and the firmness of the allied nations in keeping the Persian Gulf open to international shipping not only upheld the rule of law, it helped prevent further spread of the conflict and laid the basis for peace. So too, the Security Council's decisive resolution in July a year ago has become the blueprint for a peaceful Gulf. Let this war -- a war in which there has been no victor or vanquished only victims, let this war end now. Let both Iran and Iraq cooperate with the Secretary-General and the Security Council in implementing Resolution 598. Let peace come.

[Typo?]

Moving on to a second region -- when I first addressed the U.N. General Assembly in 1983, world attention was focused on the brutal invasion and illegal occupation of Afghanistan. After nearly 9 long years of war, the courage and determination of the Afghan people and the Afghan freedom fighters have held sway -- today an end to the occupation is in sight. On April 14, the U.S.S.R. signed the Geneva Accords, which were negotiated under U.N. auspices by Pakistan and the Kabul regime. We encourage the Soviet Union to complete its troop withdrawal at the earliest possible date so that the Afghan people can freely determine their future without further outside interference. And we urge the international community to join us in support of the UN's major relief efforts in Afghanistan, led so ably by Sadruddin Aga Kahn.

In southern Africa, too, years of patient diplomacy and support for those in Angola who seek self-determination are having their effect. We look forward to an accord between the governments of Angola, Cuba, and South Africa that will bring about a complete withdrawal of all foreign troops -- primarily Cuban -- from Angola. We look forward as well to full implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 435 and our longstanding goal of independence for Namibia.

current language could be interpreted as giving inappropriate credit to UN efforts]

Mr. Secretary-General, ~~we must also give renewed attention~~ there are new hopes for ~~to~~ Cambodia, a nation whose freedom and independence we seek just as avidly as we sought the freedom and independence of Afghanistan. We urge the rapid removal of all Vietnamese troops, and a settlement that will prevent the return of the Khmer Rouge to power, permitting instead the establishment of a genuinely representative government -- a government that will at last respect fully the rights of the people of Cambodia and end the hideous suffering they have so bravely and needlessly borne.

In other critical areas, we applaud the Secretary-General's efforts to structure a referendum on the Western Sahara. And in the Mediterranean, direct talks between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities hold much promise for accord in that divided island nation.

In each of these areas, then, we see progress and, again, we are glad of it. Only a few years ago, Mr. Secretary-General, all of these and other conflicts were burning dangerously out of control. Indeed, the invasion of Afghanistan and the apparent failure of will among democratic and peace-loving nations to

deter such events seemed to cause a climate where aggression by nations large and small was epidemic, a climate the world had not seen since the 1930's. Only this time, larger war was avoided, avoided because the free and peaceful nations of the world recovered their strength of purpose and will. And now the United Nations is providing valuable assistance in helping this epidemic to recede.

And because we are resolved to keep it so, I would be remiss in my duty if I did not now take note here of the one exception to progress in regional conflicts. I refer here to the continuing deterioration of human rights in Nicaragua and the refusal of the tiny elite now ruling that nation to honor promises of democracy made to their own people and to the international community. This elite -- in calling itself revolutionary -- seeks no real revolution; the use of the term is subterfuge, deception for hiding the oldest, most corrupt vice of all -- man's age-old will to power, his lust to control the lives and steal the freedom of others.

That is why as President, I will continue to urge the Congress and the American public to stand behind those who resist this attempt to impose a totalitarian regime on the people of Nicaragua; that the United States will continue to stand with those who are threatened by this regime's aggression against its neighbors in Central America.

Today, I also call on the Soviet Union to show in Central America the same spirit of constructive realism it has shown in other regional conflicts. To assist in bringing conflict in

Central America to a close by halting the flow of billions of dollars worth of arms and ammunition to the Sandinista regime, a regime whose goals of regional domination -- while ultimately doomed -- can continue to cause great suffering to the people of that area and risk to Soviet-American relations unless action is taken now.

Moving now to the arms ~~control~~ reduction agenda, I have mentioned already the importance of the I.N.F. treaty and the momentum developed in the START negotiations. The draft START treaty is a lengthy document, filled with bracketed language designating sections of disagreement between the two sides. But through this summer in Geneva those brackets have diminished; there is every reason to believe this process can continue. I can tell this Assembly that it is highly doubtful such a treaty can be accomplished in a few months, but I can tell you a year from now is a possibility, more than a possibility. But we have no deadline. No agreement is better than a bad agreement. The United States remains hopeful and we acknowledge the spirit of cooperation shown by the Soviet Union in these negotiations. We also look for that spirit to be applied to our concerns about compliance with existing agreements.

So too, our discussions on nuclear testing and defense and space have been useful. But let me here stress to the General Assembly that much of the momentum in nuclear arms control negotiations is due to technological progress itself, especially in the potential for space-based defensive systems. I believe that the United States determination to research and develop and,

when ready, deploy such defensive systems -- systems targeted to destroy missiles not people -- accounts for a large share of the progress made in recent years in Geneva. With such systems, for the first time, in case of accidental launch or the act of a madman somewhere, major powers will not be faced with the single option of massive retaliation but will instead have the chance of a saner choice -- to shield against an attack instead of avenging it. So too, as defensive systems grow in effectiveness they reduce the threat and the value of greater and greater offensive arsenals. Only recently, briefings I have received in the Oval Office indicate that progress towards such systems may be even more rapid and less costly than we had at first thought. Today, the United States reaffirms its commitment to its Strategic Defense Initiative and our ~~promise~~ offer to share the benefits of ~~its~~ strategic ~~technology~~ defenses with others.

better way to state this point... Technology sharing is a touchy problem.

And yet, even as diplomatic and technological progress holds out the hope of at last diminishing the awful cloud of nuclear terror we have lived under in the post-war era, even at this moment another ominous terror is loose once again in the world. A terror we thought the world had put behind, a terror that looms at us now from the long, buried past; from ghostly, scarring trenches and the haunting, wan faces of millions dead in one of the most inhumane conflicts of all time.

Gas warfare. Chemical warfare. Mr. Secretary-General, distinguished delegates, the terror of it. The horror of it. We condemn it. The use of chemical weapons in the Iran-Iraq war -- beyond its tragic human toll -- jeopardizes the moral and legal

protocols that have held these weapons in check since World War I. Let this tragedy spark reaffirmation of the Geneva protocol outlawing the use of chemical weapons. We call upon Iran and Iraq to renounce any use of chemical weapons. And we urge ~~Iraq~~ all Nations to cooperate in negotiating a verifiable, truly global ban on chemical weapons at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

[last thought shouldn't be limited to Iraq]

It is also incumbent upon all civilized nations to once and for all -- and on a verifiable and global basis -- ban the use of chemical and gas warfare.

Finally, Mr. Secretary-General, we must redouble our efforts to stop further proliferations of nuclear weapons in the world. Likewise, proliferation in other high-technology weapons such as ballistic missiles is reaching global proportions, exacerbating regional rivalries in ways that can have global implications. The number of potential suppliers is growing at an alarming rate and more must be done to halt the spread of these weapons. This was a matter of discussion last week between Secretary Shultz and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze. Talks between American and Soviet experts begin on this today. And we hope to see a multilateral effort, to avoid having areas of tension like the Middle East become even more deadly battlegrounds than they already are.

In all these areas, then, we see not only progress but also the potential for an increasingly vital role for multilateral efforts and institutions like the United Nations. That is why now more than ever the United Nations must continue to increase its effectiveness through budget and program reform. The U.N.

[State wants to add this to head off a Soviet initiative]

That is why we support proposals adopted this year by the Special Committee on Charter review to ~~strengthen~~ strengthen the Security Council and the [illegible] of the Secretary General of the United Nations.

already has proposed sweeping measures affecting personnel reductions, budgeting by consensus, and the establishment of program priorities. These actions are extremely important. The progress on reforms has allowed me to release funds withheld under congressional restrictions. I expect the reform program will continue and that further funds will be released in our new fiscal year.

And let me say here we congratulate the United Nations on the work it has done in two areas of special concern. First, the work of the World Health Organization in coordinating and advancing research on AIDS is vital. All international efforts in this area must be redoubled. The AIDS crisis is a grave one; we must move as one to meet it.

So too is the drug crisis. And here too, Mr. Secretary-General, I want to commend you for your leadership and dedication. It was you who, in May 1985, proposed the convening of a World Conference to deal with all aspects of the drug problem. The Conference was a resounding success. We are also moving towards a new convention against illicit trafficking, a major step forward.

Yes, the United Nations is a better place than it was 8 years ago -- but so too is the world. But the real issue of reform in the United Nations is not limited just to fiscal and administrative improvements but also to a higher sort of reform, an intellectual and philosophical reform, a reform of old views about the relationship between the individual and the state.

Few developments, for example, have been more encouraging to the United States than the Special Session this body held on Africa 2-1/2 years ago. A session in which the United Nations joined as one in a call for free market incentives and a lessening of state controls to spur economic development.

At one of the first international assemblies of my Presidency in Cancun, Mexico, I said history demonstrates that time and again, in place after place, economic growth and human progress make their greatest strides in countries that encourage economic freedom. That individual farmers, laborers, owners, traders, and managers are the heart and soul of development. Trust them. Because where they are allowed to create and build, where they are given a personal stake in deciding economic policies and benefitting from their success, then societies become more dynamic, prosperous, progressive, and free. We believe in freedom. We know it works.

And this, Mr. Secretary-General and distinguished delegates, is the immutable lesson of the postwar era: that freedom works. Even more, that freedom and peace work together. Every year that passes everywhere in the world this lesson is taking hold, from the People's Republic of China to Cameroon from Bolivia to Botswana and, yes, in the citadel of Marxism-Leninism itself. No, my country did not invent this synergy of peace and freedom but, believe me, we impose no restrictions on the free export of our more than two centuries of experience with it. Free people blessed by economic opportunity and protected by laws that respect the dignity of the individual are not driven toward war

or the domination of others. Here then is the way to world peace.

And yet, we Americans champion freedom not only because it is practical and beneficial but because it is also just, morally right. And here, Mr. Secretary-General, I hope you will permit me to note I have addressed this assemblage more than any of my predecessors and that this will be the last occasion I will do so. So, I hope too I may be permitted now some closing reflections.

The world is now witnessing another celebration of international cooperation; at the Olympics we see nations joining together in the competition of sports and we see young people, who know precious little of the resentments of their elders, coming together as one.

One of our young athletes -- from a home of modest means -- said that she drew the strength for her achievement from another source of riches -- "we were wealthy as a family," she said, about the love she was given and values she was taught.

Mr. Secretary-General, I dare to hope that in the sentiment of that young athlete, we see a sign of the rediscovery of old and tested values, values such as family -- the first and most important unit of society where all values and learning begins, an institution to be cherished and protected. Values too such as work, community, freedom and faith. For it is here we find the deeper rationale for the cause of human rights and world peace we have seen.

And our own experience on this continent, the American experience, though brief has had one unmistakable encounter, an insistence on the preservation of one sacred truth. It is a truth that our first President, our Founding Father, passed on in the first farewell address made to the American people. It is a truth that I hope now you will permit me to mention in these remarks of farewell.

A truth that embodied in our Declaration of Independence -- that the case for inalienable rights, that the idea of human dignity, that the notion of conscience above compulsion can be made only in the context of higher law, a higher order. Only in the context of what one of the founders of this organization, Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold, has called "devotion to something which is greater and higher than we are ourselves."

This is the endless cycle, the final truth to which humankind seems always to return. That religion and morality, that faith in something higher, are prerequisites for freedom. And that justice and peace within ourselves is the first step towards justice and peace in the world and for the ages.

Yes, this is a place of great debate and grave discussion, and yet I cannot help but note here that one of our Founding Fathers, the most worldly of men and an internationalist, Benjamin Franklin, interrupted the proceedings of our own Constitutional Convention to make much the same point.

And I cannot help but think this morning of other beginnings. Of where and when I first read those words "and they shall beat their swords into plowshares...." and "your young men

shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams...." This morning my thoughts go to her who gave me many things in life but whose most important gift was the knowledge of the happiness and solace to be gained in prayer. It is the greatest help I have had in my Presidency and I recall here Lincoln's words when he said only the most foolish of men would think he could confront the duties of the office I now hold without turning to someone stronger, a power greater than all others.

I think then of her and others like her in that small town in Illinois, gentle people who possessed something that sometimes those who hold positions of power forget to prize. No, none of them could ever have imagined the boy from the South side of Rock River would come to this moment and have this opportunity. But had they been told it would happen, I think they would have been a bit disappointed if I had not spoken here for what they knew so well: that when we grow weary of the world and its troubles, when our faith in humanity falters, it is then we must seek comfort -- and refreshment of spirit, in a deeper source of wisdom, one greater than ourselves.

And so if future generations do say of us that in our time peace came closer, that we did bring about new seasons of truth and justice, it will be cause for pride. But it shall be a cause of greater pride still, if it also said that we were wise enough to know the deliberations of great leaders and great bodies are but overture; that the truly majestic music -- the music of freedom, of justice and peace -- is the music made in forgetting self and seeking in silence the will of him who made us.

Thank you for your hospitality over the years. I bid you now farewell.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 21, 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR ANTHONY R. DOLAN
DEPUTY ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT AND
DIRECTOR OF SPEECHWRITING

FROM: ARTHUR B. CULVAHOUSE, JR.
COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Presidential Remarks: United Nations General Assembly (09/20, 5:30 p.m. Draft)

Counsel's office has reviewed the above-referenced Presidential remarks, and we recommend several minor changes to the material that was added on the use of chemical weapons.

1. In the sentence beginning at the bottom of page 12 and continuing at the top of page 13, we know of no "moral" protocol on the use of chemical weapons. We suggest substituting "principles" for "protocols" at the top of page 13. We also have our doubts about the accuracy of a statement that the international protocols on the use of chemical weapons have, in fact, constrained their use.

2. In the second full sentence at the top of page 13, we note that the United States distinguishes between the use of chemical weapons for offensive and defensive purposes. Since their use for defensive purposes is consistent with international law, we recommend substituting "the illegal" for "any."

Except as noted above, we have no additional comments on the proposed address.

cc: Rhett B. Dawson

We continue to work together with a number of African leaders who also believe there can be no end to conflict in the region until there is national reconciliation within Angola.

In southern Africa, too, years of patient diplomacy and support for those in Angola who seek self-determination are having their effect. We look forward to an accord between ~~the governments of~~ Angola, Cuba, and South Africa that will bring about a complete withdrawal of all foreign troops -- primarily Cuban -- from Angola. We look forward as well to full implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 435 and our longstanding goal of independence for Namibia.

[current language can be interpreted as giving inappropriate credit to our efforts]

Mr. Secretary-General, there are new hopes for ~~we must also give renewed attention~~ to Cambodia, a nation whose freedom and independence we seek just as avidly as we sought the freedom and independence of Afghanistan. We urge the rapid removal of all Vietnamese troops, and a settlement that will prevent the return of the Khmer Rouge to power, permitting instead the establishment of a genuinely representative government -- a government that will at last respect fully the rights of the people of Cambodia and end the hideous suffering they have so bravely and needlessly borne.

In other critical areas, we applaud the Secretary-General's efforts to structure a referendum on the Western Sahara. And in the Mediterranean, direct talks between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities hold much promise for accord in that divided island nation.

In each of these areas, then, we see progress and, again, we are glad of it. Only a few years ago, Mr. Secretary-General, all of these and other conflicts were burning dangerously out of control. Indeed, the invasion of Afghanistan and the apparent failure of will among democratic and peace-loving nations to

6817 Add-on

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

September 21, 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR ANTHONY R. DOLAN

FROM: PAUL SCHOTT STEVENS

SUBJECT: Additional Points for UNGA Speech

In response to your request, we are providing additional information on drug policy and Angola for incorporation into the President's UNGA Speech.

Attachments
Tab A Drug Policy Language
Tab B Revised Language on Angola

cc: Rhett Dawson

So too is the drug crisis. And here too, Mr. Secretary-General, I want to commend you for your leadership and dedication. It was you who, in May 1985, proposed the convening of a World Conference to deal with all aspects of the drug problem. The International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Tratticking (ICDAIT), which was subsequently convened in June 1987 was a resounding success.

Your leadership has also encouraged excellent achievements by the U.N. drug entities: DND and INCB have made great strides and UNFDAC has captured the attention of some countries that have been otherwise unresponsive to bilateral approaches on drugs.

Recently the Economic Summit Nations convened a narcotics experts group -- or special task force -- to propose methods of improving cooperation in all areas of the fight including national, bilateral and multilateral efforts. The representatives identified important action items aimed at reducing the demand and controlling the illicit supply.

In fact it was the goal of reducing the supply of drugs that led to the highly successful 30-nation International Drug Enforcement Conference (IDEC) operation in August which led to the seizure of over 11 tons of cocaine, 1,200 arrests, and the destruction ot 13 clandestine laboratories, 7 airstrips and 244 tons of marijuana.

We are also moving towards a new convention against illicit tratticking. This important treaty will be completed in December and will greatly enhance international cooperation in the fight against drug tratticking. The adoption of such an international

convention will represent a major step forward. Be assured that the United States will approach the Plenipotentiary Conference in a spirit of cooperation and it is my fervent hope that all countries will do the same so that this important instrument in our global fight against the menace of drugs can be successfully completed.

The 1980s have begun to see dramatic changes in attitudes around the world about illegal drug use and in the growing willingness by nations, non-governmental organizations, and individuals to act to prevent drug abuse. The American people are profoundly concerned about the drug problem, deeply angered, and extremely motivated. We will not tolerate illegal drug use or trafficking. We are making war on drugs and I am pleased that this is one war the United Nations has endorsed. Acting together the international community can and must put a stop to this form of modern-day slavery called drug addiction, to put an end to the violence which it has spawned, create a drug-free society for future generations, and ensure that the forces of life and hope triumph over the forces of death and despair.

We continue to work together with a number of African leaders who also believe there can be no end to conflict in the region until there is national reconciliation within Angola.

In southern Africa, too, years of patient diplomacy and support for those in Angola who seek self-determination are having their effect. We look forward to an accord between ~~the governments of~~ Angola, Cuba, and South Africa that will bring about a complete withdrawal of all foreign troops -- primarily Cuban -- from Angola. We look forward as well to full implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 435 and our longstanding goal of independence for Namibia.

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Mr. Secretary-General, there are new hopes for ~~we must also give renewed attention to~~ Cambodia, a nation whose freedom and independence we seek just as avidly as we sought the freedom and independence of Afghanistan. We urge the rapid removal of all Vietnamese troops, and a settlement that will prevent the return of the Khmer Rouge to power, permitting instead the establishment of a genuinely representative government -- a government that will at last respect fully the rights of the people of Cambodia and end the hideous suffering they have so bravely and needlessly borne.

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In each of these areas, then, we see progress and, again, we are glad of it. Only a few years ago, Mr. Secretary-General, all of these and other conflicts were burning dangerously out of control. Indeed, the invasion of Afghanistan and the apparent failure of will among democratic and peace-loving nations to

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

6817 a/o

September 21, 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR TONY DOLAN

FROM: PAUL SCHOTT STEVENS

SUBJECT: UNGA Speech Add-on

As I believe you are aware, there has been discussion of making an insert to the President's UNGA speech concerning an initiative on the 1925 Geneva Protocol on chemical weapons. The following language has been developed and approved on an interagency basis, for insertion in the speech. It would immediately follow the sentence that reads, "Let this tragedy spark reaffirmation of the Geneva Protocol outlawing the use of chemical weapons." The language to be inserted reads:

> "I call upon the signatories to that Protocol, as well as other concerned states, to convene a conference to consider actions that we can take together to reverse the serious erosion of this treaty."

cc: Rhett Dawson

(Dolan)
September 20, 1988
5:30 p.m.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1988

Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, distinguished delegates. Half a world away -- far from this place of peace -- the firing, the killing, the bloodshed in two merciless conflicts have for the first time in recent memory diminished. After adding terrible new names to the rollcall of human horror -- names such as Halabja, Maidan Shahr and Buldak -- there is today hope of peace in the Persian Gulf and Afghanistan.

So, too, in the highlands and coastal cities of southern Africa -- places of civil war, places of occupation by foreign troops -- talk of peace is heard, peace for the tortured nation of Angola. Six thousand five hundred miles further west, in the Southeast Asian country of Cambodia, there is hope now of a settlement, hope now of the removal of Vietnam's occupying forces. And finally in this hemisphere, where only 12 years ago one-third of the people of Latin America lived under democratic rule, some 90 percent do so today; and especially in Central America nations such as El Salvador, once threatened by the anarchy of the death squad and the specter of totalitarian rule, now know the hope of self-government and the prospect of economic growth.

And, another change, Mr. Secretary-General. A change that if it endures may go down as one of the signal accomplishments of our history -- a change that is cause for shaking of the head in wonder -- is also upon us. A change going to the source of

post-war tensions, and to the once seemingly impossible dream of ending the twin threats of our time -- totalitarianism and thermonuclear world war.

For the first time, the differences between East and West -- fundamental differences over important moral questions dealing with the worth of the individual and whether governments shall control people or people control governments -- for the first time, these differences have shown signs of easing. Easing to the point where there are not just troop withdrawals from places like Afghanistan but also talk in the East of reform and greater freedom of press, of assembly, and of religion. Yes, fundamental differences remain. But should talk of reform become more than that, should it become reality -- there is the prospect of not only a new era in Soviet-American relations but a new age of world peace. For such reform can bring peace; history teaches and my country has always believed that where the rights of the individual and the people are enshrined, war is a distant prospect; for it is not people who make war, governments do that.

I stand at this podium then in a moment of hope. Hope, not just for the peoples of the United States or the Soviet Union but for all the peoples of the world. And hope too for the dream of peace among nations, the dream that began the United Nations.

Precisely because of these changes, today, the United Nations has the opportunity to live and breathe and work as never before. Already you, Mr. Secretary-General, through your persistence, patience, and unyielding will have in working toward

peace in Afghanistan and the Persian Gulf shown how valuable the United Nations can be.

And in Geneva at this very hour, there are numerous negotiations underway: multilateral negotiations at the U.N. Conference on Disarmament as well as bilateral negotiations on a range of issues between the Soviets and ourselves. And these negotiations, some of them under U.N. auspices, involve a broad arms control agenda; strategic offensive weapons; strategic defense and space; nuclear testing; and chemical warfare -- whose urgency we have witnessed anew in recent days.

And, Mr. Secretary-General, the negotiators are busy -- for the first time in many years they are engaged in more than an academic exercise. There is movement. The logjam is broken. Only recently, when the United States and the Soviet Union signed the I.N.F. agreement, an entire class of U.S. and Soviet nuclear missiles will be eliminated for the first time in history. Progress continues on a plan to reduce, in massive number, strategic weapons. And talks will begin soon on conventional reductions in Europe.

Much of the reason for all of this goes back, I believe, to Geneva itself; to the small chateau along the lake where I and the General Secretary of the Soviet Union had the first of several fireside chats -- exchanges characterized by frankness, but friendliness too. I said at the first meeting in Geneva that this was a unique encounter between two people who had the power to start World War III or to begin a new age of peace among nations. And I also said peace conferences, arms negotiations,

proposals for treaties could make sense only if they were part of a wider context -- a context that sought to explore and resolve the deeper, underlying differences between us. I said to Mr. Gorbachev then as I have said to you before: Nations do not mistrust each other because they are armed, they are armed because they mistrust each other.

In that place, by that peaceful lake in neutral Switzerland, Mr. Gorbachev and I did begin a new relationship based not just on engagement over the single issue of arms control but on a broader agenda about our deeper differences; an agenda of human rights, regional conflicts, and bilateral exchanges between our peoples. Even on the arms control issue itself, we agreed to go beyond the past. To seek not just treaties that permit building weapons to higher levels but revolutionary agreements that actually reduced, and even eliminated, whole classes of nuclear weapons.

What was begun that morning in Geneva has had impact. In the I.N.F. treaty. In my recent visit to Moscow. In my opportunity to meet there with Soviet citizens and dissidents and speak of human rights. And to speak too in the Lenin Hills of Moscow to the young people of the Soviet Union about the wonder and splendor of human freedom. The results of that morning in Geneva are seen in peace conferences now under way around the world on regional conflicts; and in the work of the U.N. here in New York as well as in Geneva.

But Mr. Secretary-General, history teaches caution; indeed, that very building in Geneva, where important negotiations have

taken place -- the Geneva Accords on Afghanistan, the Iran-Iraq negotiations, for example -- we see it today as stone-like testimony to a failed dream of peace in another time. The Palais des Nations was the headquarters of the League of Nations -- an institution that was to symbolize an end to all war. And yet that institution and its noble purpose ended with the Second World War, ended because the chance for peace was not seized in the 1930's by the nations of the world, ended because humanity did not find the courage to isolate the aggressors, to reject schemes of government that serve the state not the people.

We are here today, Mr. Secretary-General, determined that no such fate shall befall the United Nations. We are determined that the U.N. should succeed and serve the cause of peace for humankind.

So, Mr. Secretary-General, we realize that even in this time of hope, the chance of failure is real. But this knowledge does not discourage us. It spurs us on. For the stakes are high: Do we falter and fail now and bring down upon ourselves the just anger of future generations? Or do we to continue the work of the founders of this institution and see to it that at last, freedom is enshrined and humanity knows war no longer. And that this place, this floor shall be truly "the world's last battlefield."

We are determined it shall be so. So we turn now to the agenda of peace. Let us begin by addressing a concern that was much on my mind when I met with Mr. Gorbachev in the Kremlin as well as on the minds of Soviet citizens I met in Moscow. It is

also an issue that I know is of immediate importance to the delegates of this Assembly who this fall commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

That declaration says plainly what those who seek peace can forget only at the greatest peril, that peace rests on one foundation: observing "the inalienable rights of all members of the human family." In a century where human rights have been denied by totalitarian governments on a scale never before seen in history -- with so many millions deliberately starved or eliminated as a matter of state policy -- a history one writer of our time has called a story of "blood, stupidity and barbed wire" -- few can wonder why peace has proved so elusive.

Let us understand. If we would have peace, we must acknowledge the elementary rights of our fellow-human beings. In our own land. And in other lands. If we would have peace, the trampling of the human spirit must cease. Human rights is not for some, some of the time. Human rights, as the universal declaration of this Assembly adopted in 1948 proclaims is: "for all people and all nations." And for all time.

This regard for human rights as the foundation of peace is at the heart of the U.N. Those who starve in Ethiopia, those who die among the Kurds, those who face racial injustice in South Africa, those who cannot write or speak freely in the Soviet Union, those who cannot worship in the Ukraine, those who struggle on boats in the South China Sea, those who cannot publish or assemble in Managua -- all of this is more than just an agenda item on your calendar. It must be a first concern; an

issue above others. For when human rights concerns are not paramount at the United Nations -- when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is not honored in these halls and meeting rooms -- then the very credibility of this organization is at stake, the very purpose of its existence in question.

That is why when human rights progress is made, the United Nations grows stronger and the United States is glad of it. Following a 2-year effort led by the United States, for example, the U.N. Human Rights Commission took a major step toward ending the double standards and cynicism that had characterized too much of its past. For years, Cuba, a blatant violator of its citizens' human rights has escaped U.N. censure or even scrutiny. This year, Cuba has responded to pressure generated by the Human Rights Commission by accepting an investigation into it's human rights abuses, dictator Castro has already begun to free some political prisoners, improve prison conditions, and tolerate the existence of a small independent national human rights group.

More must be done; the United Nations must be relentless and unyielding in seeking change. In Cuba and elsewhere. This is a first and fundamental mission of this body, and this respect for human rights, the most elementary obligation of its members. Indeed, wherever one turns in the world today there is new awareness, a growing passion for human rights -- the people of the world grow united; new groups, new coalitions form; coalitions that monitor government, that work against discrimination, that fight religious or political repression, unlawful imprisonment, torture or execution. As those I spoke to

at Spaso House said to me last June: such movements make a difference.

Turning now to regional conflicts, we feel again the uplift of hope. In the Gulf War between Iran and Iraq -- one of the bloodiest conflicts since W.W.II. -- we have a cease-fire. The resolution and the firmness of the allied nations in keeping the Persian Gulf open to international shipping not only upheld the rule of law, it helped prevent further spread of the conflict and laid the basis for peace. So too, the Security Council's decisive resolution in July a year ago has become the blueprint for a peaceful Gulf. Let this war -- a war in which there has been no victor or vanquished only victims, let this war end now. Let both Iran and Iraq cooperate with the Secretary-General and the Security Council in implementing Resolution 598. Let peace come.

Moving on to a second region -- when I first addressed the U.N. General Assembly in 1983, world attention was focused on the brutal invasion and illegal occupation of Afghanistan. After nearly 9 long years of war, the courage and determination of the Afghan people and the Afghan freedom fighters have held sway -- today an end to the occupation is in sight. On April 14, the U.S.S.R. signed the Geneva Accords, which were negotiated under U.N. auspices by Pakistan and the Kabul regime. We encourage the Soviet Union to complete its troop withdrawal at the earliest possible date so that the Afghan people can freely determine their future without further outside interference.

In southern Africa, too, years of patient diplomacy and support for those in Angola who seek self-determination are having their effect. We look forward to an accord between the governments of Angola, Cuba, and South Africa that will bring about a complete withdrawal of all foreign troops -- primarily Cuban -- from Angola. We look forward as well to full implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 435 and our longstanding goal of independence for Namibia.

Mr. Secretary-General, we must also give renewed attention to Cambodia, a nation whose freedom and independence we seek just as avidly as we sought the freedom and independence of Afghanistan. We urge the rapid removal of all Vietnamese troops, and a settlement that will prevent the return of the Khmer Rouge to power, permitting instead the establishment of a genuinely representative government -- a government that will at last respect fully the rights of the people of Cambodia and end the hideous suffering they have so bravely and needlessly borne.

In other critical areas, we applaud the Secretary-General's efforts to structure a referendum on the Western Sahara. And in the Mediterranean, direct talks between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities hold much promise for accord in that divided island nation.

In each of these areas, then, we see progress and, again, we are glad of it. Only a few years ago, Mr. Secretary-General, all of these and other conflicts were burning dangerously out of control. Indeed, the invasion of Afghanistan and the apparent failure of will among democratic and peace-loving nations to

deter such events seemed to cause a climate where aggression by nations large and small was epidemic, a climate the world had not seen since the 1930's. Only this time, larger war was avoided, avoided because the free and peaceful nations of the world recovered their strength of purpose and will. And now the United Nations is providing valuable assistance in helping this epidemic to recede.

And because we are resolved to keep it so, I would be remiss in my duty if I did not now take note here of the one exception to progress in regional conflicts. I refer here to the continuing deterioration of human rights in Nicaragua and the refusal of the tiny elite now ruling that nation to honor promises of democracy made to their own people and to the international community. This elite -- in calling itself revolutionary -- seeks no real revolution; the use of the term is subterfuge, deception for hiding the oldest, most corrupt vice of all -- man's age-old will to power, his lust to control the lives and steal the freedom of others.

That is why as President, I will continue to urge the Congress and the American public to stand behind those who resist this attempt to impose a totalitarian regime on the people of Nicaragua; that the United States will continue to stand with those who are threatened by this regime's aggression against its neighbors in Central America.

Today, I also call on the Soviet Union to show in Central America the same spirit of constructive realism it has shown in other regional conflicts. To assist in bringing conflict in

Central America to a close by halting the flow of billions of dollars worth of arms and ammunition to the Sandinista regime, a regime whose goals of regional domination -- while ultimately doomed -- can continue to cause great suffering to the people of that area and risk to Soviet-American relations unless action is taken now.

Moving now to the arms control agenda, I have mentioned already the importance of the I.N.F. treaty and the momentum developed in the START negotiations. The draft START treaty is a lengthy document, filled with bracketed language designating sections of disagreement between the two sides. But through this summer in Geneva those brackets have diminished; there is every reason to believe this process can continue. I can tell this Assembly that it is highly doubtful such a treaty can be accomplished in a few months, but I can tell you a year from now is a possibility, more than a possibility. But we have no deadline. No agreement is better than a bad agreement. The United States remains hopeful and we acknowledge the spirit of cooperation shown by the Soviet Union in these negotiations. We also look for that spirit to be applied to our concerns about compliance with existing agreements.

So too, our discussions on nuclear testing and defense and space have been useful. But let me here stress to the General Assembly that much of the momentum in nuclear arms control negotiations is due to technological progress itself, especially in the potential for space-based defensive systems. I believe that the United States determination to research and develop and,

when ready, deploy such defensive systems -- systems targeted to destroy missiles not people -- accounts for a large share of the progress made in recent years in Geneva. With such systems, for the first time, in case of accidental launch or the act of a madman somewhere, major powers will not be faced with the single option of massive retaliation but will instead have the chance of a saner choice -- to shield an attack instead of avenging it. So too, as defensive systems grow in effectiveness they reduce the threat and the value of greater and greater offensive arsenals. Only recently, briefings I have received in the Oval Office indicate that progress towards such systems may be even more rapid and less costly than we had at first thought. Today, the United States reaffirms its commitment to its Strategic Defense Initiative and our promise to share the benefits of its technology with others.

And yet, even as diplomatic and technological progress holds out the hope of at last diminishing the awful cloud of nuclear terror we have lived under in the post-war era, even at this moment another ominous terror is loose once again in the world. A terror we thought the world had put behind, a terror that looms at us now from the long, buried past; from ghostly, scarring trenches and the haunting, wan faces of millions dead in one of the most inhumane conflicts of all time.

Gas warfare. Chemical warfare. Mr. Secretary-General, distinguished delegates, the terror of it. The horror of it. We condemn it. The use of chemical weapons in the Iran-Iraq war -- beyond its tragic human toll -- jeopardizes the moral and legal

protocols that have held these weapons in check since World War I. Let this tragedy spark reaffirmation of the Geneva protocol outlawing the use of chemical weapons. We call upon Iran and Iraq to renounce any use of chemical weapons. And we urge Iraq to cooperate in negotiating a verifiable, truly global ban on chemical weapons at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

It is also incumbent upon all civilized nations to once and for all -- and on a verifiable and global basis -- ban the use of chemical and gas warfare.

Finally, Mr. Secretary-General, we must redouble our efforts to stop further proliferations of nuclear weapons in the world. Likewise, proliferation in other high-technology weapons such as ballistic missiles is reaching global proportions, exacerbating regional rivalries in ways that can have global implications. The number of potential suppliers is growing at an alarming rate and more must be done to halt the spread of these weapons. This was a matter of discussion last week between Secretary Shultz and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze. Talks between American and Soviet experts begin on this today. And we hope to see a multilateral effort, to avoid having areas of tension like the Middle East become even more deadly battlegrounds than they already are.

In all these areas, then, we see not only progress but also the potential for an increasingly vital role for multilateral efforts and institutions like the United Nations. That is why now more than ever the United Nations must continue to increase its effectiveness through budget and program reform. The U.N.

already has proposed sweeping measures affecting personnel reductions, budgeting by consensus, and the establishment of program priorities. These actions are extremely important. The progress on reforms has allowed me to release funds withheld under congressional restrictions. I expect the reform program will continue and that further funds will be released in our new fiscal year.

And let me say here we congratulate the United Nations on the work it has done in two areas of special concern. First, the work of the World Health Organization in coordinating and advancing research on AIDS is vital. All international efforts in this area must be redoubled. The AIDS crisis is a grave one; we must move as one to meet it.

So too is the drug crisis. And here too, Mr. Secretary-General, I want to commend you for your leadership and dedication. It was you who, in May 1985, proposed the convening of a World Conference to deal with all aspects of the drug problem. The Conference was a resounding success. We are also moving towards a new convention against illicit trafficking, a major step forward.

Yes, the United Nations is a better place than it was 8 years ago -- but so too is the world. But the real issue of reform in the United Nations is not limited just to fiscal and administrative improvements but also to a higher sort of reform, an intellectual and philosophical reform, a reform of old views about the relationship between the individual and the state.

Few developments, for example, have been more encouraging to the United States than the Special Session this body held on Africa 2-1/2 years ago. A session in which the United Nations joined as one in a call for free market incentives and a lessening of state controls to spur economic development.

At one of the first international assemblies of my Presidency in Cancun, Mexico, I said history demonstrates that time and again, in place after place, economic growth and human progress make their greatest strides in countries that encourage economic freedom. That individual farmers, laborers, owners, traders, and managers are the heart and soul of development. Trust them. Because where they are allowed to create and build, where they are given a personal stake in deciding economic policies and benefitting from their success, then societies become more dynamic, prosperous, progressive, and free. We believe in freedom. We know it works.

And this, Mr. Secretary-General and distinguished delegates, is the immutable lesson of the postwar era: that freedom works. Even more, that freedom and peace work together. Every year that passes everywhere in the world this lesson is taking hold, from the People's Republic of China to Cameroon from Bolivia to Botswana and, yes, in the citadel of Marxism-Leninism itself. No, my country did not invent this synergy of peace and freedom but, believe me, we impose no restrictions on the free export of our more than two centuries of experience with it. Free people blessed by economic opportunity and protected by laws that respect the dignity of the individual are not driven toward war