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(Dolan)
April 23, 1986
7:00 p.m.

VICE PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION
FRIDAY, APRIL 25, 1986

I want to say how delighted I am to be here. I always enjoy being in New Orleans with its international flavor; in fact, on the way down I was thinking how very French New Orleans still is and I mentioned this to the pilot of Air Force Two. And he said, "we'll find out, sir, when we enter their air space."

But, you know, that's the difference between the Vice President and some European governments -- they can say no to the President. Well, I've been telling people for a long time and the events of last week proved it, saying no to Ronald Reagan just plain doesn't make sense.

In any case, I think you can see I've come down here today determined not to duck any of the important issues. And, by the way, I'm using that word against the advice of my staff -- they said never mention ~~the word~~ "duck" in front of the N.R.A.

To be serious, ladies and gentlemen, I know it's traditional for political figures to come to your convention, make all the right noises -- maybe a thumping speech about gun control -- and tell you exactly what they think you want to hear.

So, let's get something straight at the outset. I'm not here today to pound the podium or thump the campaign tub; but I am delighted to restate as Vice President, something this Administration has been saying for years, something our President has been saying and something I've put on the record many times since I was a Texas congressman. To make an important point

about a critical public issue and to make it as vividly and emphatically as I know how. Whatever the good intentions, depriving Americans of their constitutional right to keep and bear arms is wrong, wrong, wrong. We must never forget that making it tougher for the law-abiding only makes it easier for the lawbreaker, disarming honest citizens only helps hardened criminals, and society ~~isn't safer when good citizens are~~ ^{can never be made safer by making} defenseless.

Now, let's face it; if we started talking about every attempt by the liberals over the past two decades to pass harsh gun control legislation we could be here most of the day. Every one of these measures the liberals were pushing ~~for~~ back in the 60's and 70's had the three hallmarks of liberal legislation: they were sweeping and all-inclusive; they required Draconian enforcement by the Federal Government, and they were guaranteed to have exactly the opposite of their intended effect -- to be counterproductive, to backfire.

And I'm not just talking about the issue of gun control. Because, on all the major issues, the liberal ideologues of the 60's and 70's never stopped telling us they had just the right panaceas. Did we want to help the poor and expand the economy? They had the easy answers -- just tax and tax and spend and spend -- don't worry about deficits, inflation, or interest rates; prosperity is just another billion dollar program away.

And we know what happened. By the late 70's and early 80's every one of us was waking up to news about skyrocketing inflation, crippling interest rates, punitive taxation, climbing

unemployment, rising poverty rates, declining productivity, shrinking savings, and an economy that was dead in the water than a Libyan gunboat. That was the mess Ronald Reagan inherited in 1980; that was what he was left to deal with after years of liberal mismanagement and economic snake oil.

And foreign policy? Were we worried about war and peace? American security? The fate of freedom? That one was easy for the liberals too. The American people were contributing to international tensions, ^{and} by having an inordinate fear of communism, ^{and} by misunderstanding the Soviets. ^{What} we had to do was reduce the defense budget, ^{and} cease provoking the Soviets, and Blame America First. And, ^{once again,} the liberals wrought chaos: planes that couldn't fly, ships that couldn't leave port, ^a rapid deployment forces ^{that were} ^{was} neither rapid, deployable or much ^a force -- an invasion of Afghanistan, the Iranian hostages, and Soviet-backed Communist expansionism everywhere from Nicaragua to Angola to Cambodia. ^{So,} Foreign policy, too, was another mess Ronald Reagan ^{had to deal with} ~~inherited and had to deal with~~ ^{thanks} to years of liberal domination in American politics.

Or crime? The liberals knew what was wrong. The felons and hardened criminals were even more misunderstood than the Soviets, society was to blame, we had to be more sympathetic; ^{we had to} ^{only not try} ~~work out~~ ^{a little} ^{the} ~~a kind of informal detente with career criminals.~~ ^{solutions;} So they ^{gave} us their best ~~medicine:~~ lenient judges, light sentences, ~~and~~ easy talk about perfect justice ^{even as their} ^{these} policies ~~that~~ set loose on our streets one of the worst ^{assortment} ^{of} ~~collections~~ of thugs and murderers in this Nation's history.

Here too, ~~was~~ another massive failure Ronald Reagan had to deal with when he came into office.

And so it went -- the economy, foreign policy, crime -- other issues like prayer in the schools -- the liberals had it all their own way during so much of the 60's and 70's. And, believe me, Ronald Reagan, myself, and other members of the Administration had a bird's eye view of what liberal ^{rem} ~~policies~~ had done to America when we ~~had~~ ^{stupid} to address all these problems in 1981.

But, you know, there is one thing we will be forever grateful for; one problem we didn't have to deal with. Because on one issue the liberals didn't get what they wanted. All of their fevered, unceasing attempts to deny Americans their constitutional right to keep and bear arms came to naught. And they came to naught because of one single group of honest, vigorous citizens -- everyday Americans who understood the danger of intrusive Government, ~~and~~ who were unafraid to stand up to Washington, who showed all of America how to use grass roots politics to thwart the liberal agenda.

Ladies and gentlemen of the National Rifle Association -- even now when you mention to liberals in Washington three simple letters "N" "R" "A" -- it's like asking a French critic his opinion of German opera. ^(You may have noticed:) ^(a little) They get foamy around the mouth; they look for a rug to chew on. But, members of the N.R.A., never forget: just when everything was going their way, it was you who stopped the liberals cold. They wanted to pass ~~draconian~~ ^{unwise}, ^{unfair}

intenable
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victory for you; ~~it was a great political victory for~~ and the American people.

You know, a lot of people have just plain forgotten how sweeping the proposed gun control legislation was in those days. I can remember when I was serving as a Congressman in the late 60's and the District of Columbia passed a harsh new law requiring registration of every kind of firearm. And there I was, a member of the National Rifle Association, down at the police station registering the two or three rifles I owned. And I remember asking the policemen in charge how effective he thought the law would be. "Oh, about 40 percent," he said. ~~But~~ besides the lack of effectiveness, he also made the other point the N.R.A. has been making right along: it was ~~only~~ the honest citizen ~~not the criminal~~ who was down at the station house signing the proper forms ~~and registering his guns~~ -- not the criminal.

And, you see, here's a perfect illustration of what the liberal mind and liberal legislation were all about: it ~~was~~ ^{wanted} to ~~do~~ ^{get} Government ~~doing~~ ^{to do} everything but its essential and constitutional duties. And ~~it's~~ ^{that's} here I want to say something about one of the great myths about the N.R.A. ~~spread by the Washington liberals.~~ ^{it's on this point}

Some of your critics like to claim: you're a single issue, special interest group, ~~and that claim just doesn't bear up under~~ ^{I say} scrutiny. Even if you ~~don't talk about~~ ^{put aside for the moment} all the safety and training programs, all the other public service activities of the N.R.A., ~~it's~~ ^{it's} important to remember that throughout the gun control controversy the N.R.A. ~~has been~~ ^{all} reminding us that the liberal passion for gun control was just further evidence of a

Deeper crisis:
~~much larger problem:~~ the refusal to come to terms with the
career criminals who haunted our streets, ^{or} who ran the syndicates *and*
~~who sought to undermine our social order,~~
~~even as they thumbed their~~
~~noses at the forces of law enforcement.~~ It's to your credit that
you didn't just criticize draconian attempts to control firearms,
but that you pointed to the much larger problem: a criminal
justice system that wasn't coming to terms with one of the most
pressing social evils in America. ~~And by that I mean:~~ those
corrupt members of our society who consciously chose to earn
their living by victimizing their fellow-citizens.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, the recent statistics on crime
speak for themselves. When ^{those statistics} ~~they~~ first started going down a few
years ago, some people were trying to explain them away by
suggesting that it was only a function of demographics, that it
merely reflected the fact that the number of those in the
crime-prone age was actually shrinking. Well, the truth is, that
correlation just doesn't hold. For two reasons: first, because
back in the 70's the number in some of those crime-prone groups
actually declined slightly even while violent crime was
skyrocketing; and, second, in recent years even while crime has
~~declined~~ decreased the number in some crime-prone groups was ^{actually increased.} declining.

So let's be clear: crime is coming down for ^{some} ~~clearly~~ ^{easily}
understood reasons: all across this Nation, the American people
have been demanding what the N.R.A. was calling for a long time
ago. It's time to return to certain traditional values and
beliefs, values and beliefs that say simply: right and wrong

matters, the individual is responsible for his actions and society has a right to protect itself from those who would prey on the innocent.

Crime is coming down because local State and Federal Governments ~~led~~ I am proud to say by this Administration ~~that~~ ^{giving out tougher sentences and keeping} are appointing tougher judges who are ~~putting~~ ^{putting} career criminals in ~~jail for~~ ^{where they belong} longer and longer periods of time. ^{that are keeping}

So, I am here to tell you today -- it's no accident the crime rate is coming down and staying down; it's no accident that drug prosecutions are increasing, ~~or~~ that organized crime prosecutions have quadrupled since 1981 -- it's all the result of tough new crime laws, tough new prosecutions, tough new judges.

^{it's the result of a new show of} But most of all ~~a~~ will at the very top of our national Government ^{our streets} to punish the guilty, to protect the innocent and make ~~America~~ ^{safe and secure} safe and secure again. ^a

matters, the individual is responsible for his actions and society has a right to protect itself from those who would prey on the innocent.

Crime is coming down because local State and Federal Governments -- led I am proud to say by this Administration -- are appointing tougher judges who are putting career criminals in jail for longer and longer periods of time.

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Now appointing judges, getting the criminal code revised including tough new mandatory sentences, setting up that Florida drug task force I headed, and then establishing 11 more around the country, adding more than a thousand new Federal investigators and prosecutors, improving Federal cooperation with local and State law enforcement -- these were just some of the things that we were able to accomplish with the support of the American people and especially with help of groups like the N.R.A. So, ladies and gentlemen, I come here today not just to say we're starting to win the war against crime, but to extend to you my personal thanks -- and the President's personal thanks -- for the tremendous assistance the members of the National Rifle

Association have given this Administration and all of law enforcement *in the way on crime.*

And it's precisely because you do have such a record of success *and* on a much broader range of issues than your critics like to admit *it's* precisely because you are one of the most effective public action groups in America that I come here today.

Because we need your help -- I'm unashamed to say it -- the President, the Administration, all of us need your help. In a very short time, the House of Representatives will be facing a crucial vote, one that is as important to America's security as the war against crime *we've* just talked about.

Let me take a moment now and explain.

A few months ago, a Presidential task force I headed completed its work. Its subject matter was one I've been personally concerned with for many years, especially since my days as head of the C.I.A. And in the past few years, and especially the past few weeks, it's matter all of the world has had to address. I am speaking, of course, *about* the threat, and the reality of terrorism.

Now I don't intend to speak at length today about Colonel Qadhafi. But *then is* in case anyone here doesn't know: Colonel Qadhafi is the leader of Libya. More exactly, he is *the* *mad* *crackbrained* dictator of *that* *unhappy* *nation,* *a* *crack* *brained* bully *un* who thinks he can go around killing innocent people -- especially Americans -- with impunity. Now Colonel Qadhafi and his fellow terrorists were, I believe, recently *a* and *at least* temporarily disabused of this dangerous notion when they received *early warning* a wake-up call from a squadron of F-111s. Let me assure each of

you here today; in fact, let me assure the entire world; if the Colonel and his murderous clones do not stop stop killing innocent people, the United States will not hesitate to ~~again~~ extend to them ^{the same} such courtesies. *we should show a maho.*

Enough said on that subject. What I do want to draw your attention to is a very important point the President made the other night, a point our commission on terrorism made most emphatically. And that was the existence of an international ^{terror} terrorist network. More specifically, the President was talking about the crisis in Nicaragua, where a Sandinista regime is attempting to turn their nation into a totalitarian state and a beachhead for Soviet aggression on the North American continent.

also The President discussed the connections of this Sandinista regime with the Libyans and international terrorism. Here's what he said: *insert A*

So my fellow members of the N.R.A. -- we've got a bill in Congress that would help the freedom fighters who are trying to return democracy to Nicaragua and end this terrorist threat at our borders. The House of Representatives voted that bill down by only a narrow margin; I think with your support and the support of groups like yours we can get that bill up for consideration again soon and then ^{get it} passed. Together I believe we can stop the threat of ~~yes~~ *yes* a Libya on our doorstep. *help him*

for So I'm here today to ask you to help President Reagan, ^{to} help the freedom fighters, the freedom fighters who seek to bring the promises of freedom and democracy again to their land.

THE SANDINISTAS HAVE PROVIDED REFUGE FOR ALL SORTS OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISTS. MEMBERS OF THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT HAVE OPENLY CHARGED THAT NICARAGUA IS HARBORING SOME OF ITALY'S WORST TERRORISTS. AND WE HAVE EVIDENCE THAT IN ADDITION TO ITALY'S RED BRIGADES, OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE WORLD'S MOST VICIOUS TERRORIST GROUPS -- WEST GERMANY'S BAADER-MEINHOF GANG, THE BASQUE E.T.A., THE P.L.O., AND THE TUPAMAROS -- HAVE FOUND A HAVEN IN NICARAGUA. THEY HAVE ACTIVELY SUPPORTED THE SALVADORAN REBELS WHO HAVE FREQUENTLY USED TERROR, INCLUDING THE KILLING OF FOUR MARINES IN A CAFE LAST SUMMER -- AND THESE ARE THE SAME REBELS WHO CELEBRATED THE CHALLENGER EXPLOSION AND SAID OUR ASTRONAUTS WERE WAR CRIMINALS AND DESERVED WHAT THEY GOT.

THAT PICTURE MAKING THE ROUNDS SHOWING DANIEL ORTEGA STANDING WITH MU'AMMAR QADHAFI AND RAISING HIS FIST IN A GESTURE OF SOLIDARITY IS VERY MUCH TO THE POINT.

I HOPE EVERY MEMBER OF CONGRESS WILL REFLECT ON THE FACT THAT THE SANDINISTAS HAVE BEEN TRAINING, SUPPORTING, AND DIRECTING AS WELL AS SHELTERING TERRORISTS; AND, IN THIS SENSE THEY ARE TRYING TO BUILD A LIBYA ON OUR DOORSTEP. AND IT'S THE CONTRAS, THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS, WHO ARE STOPPING THEM,

SO YOU SEE IT GOES BACK TO WHAT RICHARD WEAVER HAS SAID AND WHAT HERITAGE IS ALL ABOUT: IDEAS DO HAVE CONSEQUENCES, RHETORIC IS POLICY, WORDS ARE ACTIONS.

AND JUST IN CASE THE MEANING OF LAST WEEK'S EVENTS ARE STILL UNCLEAR TO THOSE WHO WOULD TERRORIZE AND MURDER AMERICANS, LET ME EXPLAIN ONCE MORE.

(Dolan)
April 23, 1986
5:00 p.m.

VICE PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION
FRIDAY, APRIL 25, 1986

I want to say how delighted I am to be here. I always enjoy being in New Orleans with its international flavor; in fact, on the way down I was thinking how very French New Orleans still is and I mentioned this to the pilot of Air Force Two. And he said, "we'll find out, sir, when we enter their air space."

But, you know, that's the difference between the Vice President and some European governments -- they can say no to the President. Well, I've been telling people for a long time and the events of last week proved it, saying no to Ronald Reagan just plain doesn't make sense.

In any case, I think you can see I've come down here today determined not to duck any of the important issues. And, by the way, I'm using that word against the advice of my staff -- they said never mention the word "duck" in front of the N.R.A.

To be serious, ladies and gentlemen, I know it's traditional for political figures to come to your convention, make all the right noises -- maybe a thumping speech about gun control -- and tell you exactly what they think you want to hear.

So, let's get something straight at the outset. I'm not here today to pound the podium or thump the campaign tub; but I am delighted to restate as Vice President, something this Administration has been saying for years, something our President has been saying and something I've put on the record many times since I was a Texas congressman. To make an important point

about a critical public issue and to make it as vividly and emphatically as I know how. ^{whenever the soul} Despite ~~all the best~~ intentions, in ~~the world~~, depriving Americans of their constitutional right to keep and bear arms is ~~still~~ wrong, wrong, wrong. We ^{must never forget} need to learn that making it tougher for the law-abiding only makes it easier for the lawbreaker, disarming honest citizens only helps hardened criminals and society isn't safer when good citizens are defenseless.

Now, let's face it; if we started talking about every attempt by the liberals over the past two decades to pass harsh gun control legislation we could be here most of the day. Every one of these measures the liberals were pushing for back in the 60's and 70's had the three hallmarks of liberal legislation: they were sweeping ^{and all-inclusive,} they required Draconian enforcement by the Federal Government, and they were guaranteed to have exactly the opposite of their intended effect -- to backfire, to be counterproductive.

And I'm not just talking about the issue of gun control. Because, on all the major issues, the liberal ideologues of the 60's and 70's never stopped telling us they had just the right panaceas. Did we want to help the poor and expand the economy? They had the easy answers -- just tax and tax and spend and spend -- don't worry about deficits, inflation, or interest rates; prosperity is just another billion dollar program away.

And we know what happened. By the late 70's and early 80's every one of us was waking up to news about skyrocketing inflation, crippling interest rates, punitive taxation, climbing unemployment, rising poverty rates, declining productivity,

shrinking savings, and an economy that was dead in the water than a Libyan gunboat. That was the mess Ronald Reagan inherited in 1980; that was what he was left to deal with after years of liberal mismanagement and economic snake oil.

And foreign policy? Were we worried about war and peace? American security? The fate of freedom? That one was easy for the liberals too. The American people were contributing to international tensions, by having an inordinate fear of communism, by misunderstanding the Soviets; what we had to do was reduce the defense budget, cease provoking the Soviets, and Blame America First. And once again the liberals wrought chaos: planes that couldn't fly, ships that couldn't leave port, rapid deployment forces that were neither rapid, deployable or much a force -- an invasion of Afghanistan, the Iranian hostages, and Soviet-backed Communist expansionism everywhere from Nicaragua, to Angola, to Cambodia. ~~And there was another mess Ronald Reagan inherited and had to deal with thanks to all the years of liberal domination of American politics.~~ *Foreign policy too*

Or crime? The liberals knew what was wrong. The felons and hardened criminals were even more misunderstood than the Soviets, society was to blame, we had to be more sympathetic; ~~couldn't~~ we *had to* work out a kind of *informal* detente with career criminals? So they gave us their best medicine: lenient judges, lighter sentences, and *easy talk* vision of perfect justice *about* even as they established policy that set loose on our streets one of the worst collections of thugs and murderers in this Nation's history. *Have too* And ~~this~~ was another massive failure Ronald Reagan ~~inherited and~~ had to deal with *when he came into office.*

And so it went -- the economy, foreign policy, crime -- other issues like prayer in the schools -- the liberals had it all their own way during so much of the 60's and 70's. And, believe me, Ronald Reagan, myself, and other members of the Administration ⁽⁺⁰⁾ ~~addressing~~ all these problems in 1981 had a bird's eye view of what liberal policies had done to America *when we had* ↓

But you know there is one thing we will be forever grateful for; one problem we didn't have to deal with. Because on one issue the liberals didn't get what they wanted. All of their fevered, unceasing attempts to deny Americans their constitutional right to keep and bear arms came to naught. And they came to naught because of one single group of honest, vigorous citizens -- everyday Americans who understood the danger of intrusive Government -- who were unafraid to stand up to Washington, who showed all of America how to use grass roots politics to thwart the liberal agenda.

Ladies and gentlemen of the National Rifle Association -- even now when you mention to liberals in Washington ~~those~~ three simple letters "N" "R" "A" -- it's like asking a French critic his opinion of German opera. They get ~~all~~ foamy around the mouth; [↑] They look for the ~~nearest~~ ^a rug to chew on. But, members of the N.R.A., *many forget:* just when everything was going their way, it was you who stopped the liberals cold. They wanted to pass draconian ¹ ~~unwise~~ *legislation; you didn't let them;* ~~laws, you drove 'em crazy and I say it was a great political victory,~~ *So, you and I.* ~~a victory for the American people.~~

You know a lot of people have just plain forgotten how sweeping the proposed ^(gun control) legislation was in those days. I can

remember when I was serving as a Congressman in the late 60's ^{and} the District of Columbia passed a harsh new law requiring registration of every kind of firearm. And there I was, a member of the National Rifle Association down at the police station registering the two or three rifles I owned. And I remember asking the policemen in charge how effective he thought the law would be. 'Oh, about 40 percent,' he said. But besides the lack of effectiveness he also made the other point the N.R.A. has been making right along: it was only the honest citizen ^{was} not the criminal who ^{was} down at the station house ^{signing the proper} registering their ~~firearms.~~ ^{honest.}

And, you see, ^{here's} there's a perfect illustration of what the liberal mind and liberal legislation ^{was} all about: it's get Government doing everything but its essential and constitutional duties. And ^{it's here} ~~yet there's also something here that speaks to one~~ ^{I want to say something about} of the great myths about the N.R.A. ~~and gives an honest portrait~~ ^{of what the N.R.A. is all about.}

Some of your critics like to ^{claim:} say: 'you're a single issue, ~~or~~ special interest group and that claim just doesn't bear up under scrutiny. Even if you ^{then} don't talk about all the safety and training programs ^{all the public service activities of} the N.R.A. is involved in, it's important to ~~remember that right along~~ ^{throughout the gun control controversy} the N.R.A. has been reminding us that the liberal passion for gun control was just further evidence of a much larger problem: the refusal to come to terms with the career criminals who haunted our streets, ^{who say} or run the syndicates, ^{who} ~~ought to undergo our social order~~ ^{and regularly} thumbed their noses at the forces of law enforcement. ^{It's to your credit that you} The N.R.A. didn't just criticize draconian attempts

to control firearms: ^{Just that you} it pointed to the much larger problem: a criminal justice system that wasn't coming to terms with one of the most pressing social evils in America. ^{And by that I mean;} those corrupt members of our society who consciously chose to earn their living by victimizing their fellow-citizens. ^(recent) ^(on crime)

Now, ladies and gentlemen, the ~~criminal~~ ^(recent) statistics speak for themselves. When they first started going down a few years ago, some people were trying to explain them away by suggesting that it was only a function of demographics, that it merely reflected the fact that the number of those in the crime prone age was actually shrinking. Well, the truth is that correlation ^{just} doesn't hold. ^{of these} For two reasons: First, because back in the 70's the number in some crime-prone groups ^{actually} declined slightly even while violent crime ^{was} skyrocketing; and, second, ^{of the} because in recent years the number in some crime-prone groups ^{even while crime has decreased} ~~had actually increased while~~ during this period crime was declining.

So let's be clear: crime is coming down for ~~a~~ clearly understood reasons: all across this Nation, the American people have been demanding what the N.R.A. was calling for a long time ago. ~~that~~ ^{It's} It's time to return to certain traditional values and beliefs, values and beliefs that say simply: right and wrong matters, the individual is responsible for his actions and society has a right to protect itself from those who would prey on the innocent.

Crime is coming down because local State and Federal Governments -- led I am proud to say ~~they are~~ led by this

Administration -- are appointing tougher judges who are putting career criminals in jail for longer and longer periods of time.

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April 23, 1986
4:30 p.m.

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To be serious, ladies and gentlemen, I know it's traditional for political figures to come to your convention, make all the right noises -- maybe a thumping speech about gun control and tell you exactly what they think you want to hear.

So, let's get something straight at the outset. I'm not here today to pound the podium or thump the campaign tub; but I am delighted to restate as Vice President, something this Administration has been saying ^{for years} and something our President has been saying ~~for years~~ and something I've put on the record many times since I was a Texas congressman. To make ^{an important} ~~this~~ point about

^{Critical}
an ~~important~~ public issue like ~~arm control~~, and to make it as
~~as a humanitarian reason~~ ^{Despite all the best intentions in the world}
vividly and emphatically as I know how ~~depriving~~ ^{still} America of
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than a Libyan gunboat. That was the mess Ronald Reagan inherited in 1980; that was what he was left to deal with after years of liberal mismanagement and economic snake oil.

And foreign policy? Were we worried about war and peace, American security, ⁸⁴ the fate of freedom? That one was easy for the liberals too. The American people were contributing to international tensions, by having an inordinate fear of communism, by misunderstanding the Soviets; what we had to do was reduce the defense budget, ~~and~~ cease provoking the Soviets and Blame America First. And once again the liberals wrought chaos: planes that couldn't fly, ships that couldn't leave port, rapid deployment forces that were neight ^{rapid, deployed} ~~repaid, deployable~~ or much a force -- an invasion of Afghanistan, the Iranian hostages, and Soviet-backed Communist expansionism everywhere from Nicaragua to Angola to Cambodia. And there was another mess Ronald Reagan inherited and had to deal with thanks to all the years of liberal domination of American politics.

Or crime? The liberals knew what was wrong. The felons and hardened criminals were even more misunderstood than the Soviets, society was to blame, we had to be more sympathetic, couldn't we work out a kind of detente with career criminals? So they gave us their best medicine: lenient judges, lighter sentences, and a vision of perfect justice -- even as they established policy that set loose on our streets one of the worst collections of thugs and murderers in this Nation's history. And ^{this} ~~there~~ was another failure Ronald Reagan inherited and had to deal with.

Massive ~~failure~~

And so it went -- the economy, foreign policy, crime -- other issues like prayer in the schools -- the liberals had it all their own way during so much of the 60's and 70's. And *believe me*, Ronald Reagan, myself, and other members of the Administration addressing all these problems in 1981 had a bird's eye view of what liberal policies had done to America.

But you know there is one thing we will be forever grateful for; one ~~crisis~~ *problem* we didn't have to deal with. Because on one issue the liberals didn't get what they wanted. All of their fevered, unceasing attempts to deny Americans their constitutional right to keep and bear arms came to naught. And they came to naught because of one single group of honest, vigorous citizens -- everyday Americans who understood the danger of intrusive Government, who were unafraid to stand up to Washington, who showed all of America that how to use grass roots politics to thwart the liberal agenda.

Ladies and gentlemen of the National Rifle Association -- even now when you mention to liberals in Washington those three simple letters "N" "R" "A" -- it's like asking a French critic his opinion of German opera. They get all foamy around the mouth. They look for the nearest rug to chew on. *But members* Ladies and gentlemen of the N.R.A., just when everything was going their way, it was you who stopped the liberals cold. *They wanted to pass draconian laws,* You drove 'em crazy ~~then and you're doing it now;~~ and I say keep it up. and I say *later* ~~later~~ *a victory* ~~it was~~ *for* a great political victory for Me American people

(Dolan)
April 23, 1986
11:30 a.m.

VICE PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION
FRIDAY, APRIL 25, 1986

I want to say how delighted I am to be here. I ~~greatly~~ ^{always} enjoy ~~being~~ being in New Orleans with its international flavor; in fact, on the way down I was thinking how very French New Orleans still is and I mentioned this to the pilot of Air Force Two. And he said, "We'll find out, sir, when we enter their air space."

But, you know, that's the difference between the Vice President and some European governments -- they can say no to the President. Well, ~~as a few people in this country and the events of last week proved, saying no to Ronald Reagan just plain doesn't make sense.~~ ^{I've been saying for a long time}

In any case, I think you can see I've come down here today determined not to duck any of the important issues. And, by the way, I'm using that word against the advice of my staff -- they said never mention the word 'duck' in front of the N.R.A.

To be serious, ladies and gentlemen, I know it's traditional for political figures to come to your convention, make ^{all the right noises} ~~a~~ thumping speech about gun control and tell you exactly what they think you want to hear.

So, let's get something straight at the outset. I'm not here today to pound the podium or thump the campaign tub; but I am delighted ^{regretful} ~~to be here and~~, as Vice President, ^{what are} ~~to repeat on~~ ^{seriously} ~~behalf of the Administration something the President has been saying for years~~ ^{has been saying for years} and something I've put on the record many times since I was a Texas congressman. To make this point about an important public issue ^{like gun} ~~control~~ and to make it as vividly and

depriving American of their constitutional right to keep and bear arms is wrong, wrong, wrong. We need to keep this

emphatically as I know how, ^{and} making it tougher for the law abiding makes it easier for the lawbreaker, ~~society isn't safer~~ when good citizens are defenseless, disarming honest citizens only helps hardened criminals, *So it isn't safer when good citizens are defenseless.*

Now let's face it; if we started talking about every attempt by the liberals over the past two decades to pass ^{harsh} Draconian gun control legislation we could be here most of the day. Everyone of these measures the liberals were pushing for back in the 60's and 70's had the three key hallmarks of liberal legislation; they were sweeping, they required Draconian enforcement by the Federal Government and they were guaranteed to have exactly the opposite of their intended effect ^{to} backfire, to be counterproductive.

And I'm not just talking about the issue of gun control. Because, on all the major issues, the liberal ideologues of the 60's and 70's never stopped telling us they had just the right panacea? Did we want to help the poor and expand the economy? Why they had the easy answer ^{to} -- ~~just have the Federal Government spend more money and~~ [don't worry about deficits, inflation, or interest rates] -- just tax and tax and spend and spend; prosperity is just another billion dollar program away.

^{and} And we know what happened. By the late 70's and early 80's every one of us was waking up in the morning to news about skyrocketing inflation, crippling interest rates, punitive taxation, climbing unemployment, rising poverty rates, declining productivity, shrinking savings, and an economy that was deader in the water than a Libyan gunboat. That was the mess Ronald

Reagan inherited in 1980; that was what he was left to deal with after years of liberal mismanagement and economic snake oil.

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collections of thugs and murderers in this Nation's history. And the ^{there} failure on crime was another mess Ronald Reagan inherited and had to deal with. ^{loser}

And so ~~on~~ it went -- the economy, foreign policy, crime -- other issues like prayer in the schools -- the liberals had it all their own way during so much of the 60's and 70's. And ^{let} Ronald Reagan and myself and ~~the~~ other members of the

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Administration with the help of the American people had to address all these problems in 1981. *had a bird's eye view of what liberal policies had done to Russia.*

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you didn't keep it up.

I want to say how delighted I am to be here. I greatly enjoyed being in New Orleans with its international flavor. In fact on the way down I was thinking how very French New Orleans still is and I mentioned this to the pilot of Air Force Two. And he said: "We'll find out sir when we enter their air space."

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And I'm not just talking about the issue of gun control. Because, on all the major issues, the liberal ideologues of the 60s and 70s never stopped telling us they had just the right panacea. Did we want to help the poor and expand the economy? Why they had the easy answer -- just have the federal government spend more money - don't worry about deficits inflation or interest rates -- just tax and tax and spend and spend; prosperity is just another billion dollars program away..

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the liberals once again had all the answers. WE misunderstood the Soviets; the American people contributing to international tensions by having an inordinate fear of communism; what we had to do was balance America first, reduce the defense budget and cease provoking the Soviets. And once again the liberals wrought chaos: planes that couldn't fly, ships that could leave port, Rapid Deployment forces that were never repaid, deployable or much a force, -- an invasion of Afghanistan, the Iranian hostages and Soviet-backed communist expansions everywhere from Nicaragua to Angola to Cambodia.

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And so on it went-- the economy, foreign policy, crime, -- other issues like prayer in the schools -- the liberals had it all their own way during so much of the 60s and 70s. And Ronald Reagan and myself and the other members of the administration with the help of the American people had to address all these problems in 1981.

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bureaucrats could run our lives and spend our paychecks. Helping the poor, expanding the economy. That was easy they told us; just get the federal government to spend as much money. During the heyday of liberalism, they told us that federal spending was nothing to worry about, that deficits were of no concern, that higher and higher taxes funding more and more wasteful programs would help the poor and bring economic progress. Bring us economic progress and deficit spending was nothing to worry about, Oh, liberal elitism, counterproductive is thy name.

or as the counterproductive as surely as. Like a great deal of the liberal agenda, almost all of these measures were seeping, they called for draconian enforcement about the various attempts by

Ladies and gentlemen, you know how I could go speak extensively about the legislative through a history of we have just lived through five decades of the most one of the most ideological eras in our history. On the foreign policy issues, many of our public officials felt a compulsion to blame America first. The result was a disastrous situation in Southeast Asia, setback all around the globe -- in Iran Afghanistan, in Angola and North Africa everywhere Soviet expansion went on the other hand went unchallenged. On the domestic front, proposing massive new spending schemes became the road to success.

On every one of these fronts.

One organization stood firm -- learned the obbrium of the far left and some of those in the mled. you stood against and you are to congratulated. On your the liberals the lbieral did so much damage but in one place they met nothing but defeat and you of the NRA did it/. I salue you for it.²

tht doesn't mean the threat is voer.

t it was alwasy balme Aremcia firts The liberal dream of

we don't diarm criminals by diarming the honest citizen; we don't make it tougher on the lawbreakr by making it tougher on the law abiding, we don't amek society safer by making our ctiziens defenseslesse. leaving our citizens dfenseeelss does n make socity safer, making ti toughr on the la abiding make sit easier on the lawbreakers and diarming honest citiens does mean disarming criminals. making it eaeir on lawbreakers for the lawabiding to defend thesemvels. ong record 've had a fairly long career in public life; and the record is clear. I don't have to do any tub thumping on these points. the record is there for all to see. you can check the record. and tell you what they think you want to hear about the issues like that.

Let me begin by saying today that I don't think I have to make any thumping speeches on these points. I think some of you knwo the press .

funraising.