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News Summary

OFFICE OF THE PRESS SECRETARY

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1986 -- 6 a.m. EST EDITION

TODAY'S HEADLINES

NATIONAL NEWS

Reagan Says Defense Cuts Would Be "Reckless" -- President Reagan, seeking to sustain defense spending increases that Congress wants to arrest, asserted last night that proposals to cut military spending are "reckless, dangerous, and wrong" and would impair American security and threaten the prospects for a nuclear arms reduction agreement with the Soviets. (Multiple Sources)

White House Blasts Rumor On Shuttle -- White House spokesman Larry Speakes yesterday heatedly denied what he described as a vicious and false rumor that the White House pressured NASA to launch the ill-fated Challenger space shuttle on Jan. 28 to coincide with the President's State of the Union speech. (Washington Times)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Reagan Resists Pleas To Delay Contra Issue -- President Reagan yesterday pushed his request to provide Nicaragua's anti-Sandinista rebels with \$100 million in aid, despite congressional pleas to delay the proposal. (Washington Post, Washington Times, AP)

NETWORK NEWS (Wednesday Evening)

MARCOS -- A frail-looking Ferdinand Marcos arrived today in Honolulu.

SPEECH -- The President's goal tonight is nothing less than to begin turning around national opinion on defense spending.

ARMS CONTROL -- The White House has taken issue with Gorbachev's suggestion that unless some agreements are reached on arms control there would be nothing to talk about at a second summit.

PEACE AND NATIONAL SECURITY

"Peace does not exist of its own will. It depends on us -- on our courage to build it and guard it and pass it on to future generations...."

(President Reagan's
Address to the Nation, 2/26)

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NATIONAL NEWS

REAGAN URGES SUPPORT FOR DEFENSE GOALS

President Reagan appealed to the American people last night to support his request for increased military spending, saying that cuts in the defense budget would jeopardize arms control negotiations with the Soviet Union and "may put peace itself at risk."

In a nationally televised address from the Oval Office, Reagan argued that it would be "reckless, dangerous and wrong" to reduce the U.S. military budget in the face of the "enormous weapons investment" of the Soviets.

Administration advisers said they hoped Reagan's speech would help to change public perceptions that the United States is spending too much for defense, but congressional leaders of both parties predicted during the day that Congress would make reductions in the Administration's budget requests.
(Lou Cannon, Washington Post, A1)

Reagan's TV Talk Attempts To Save Military Build-Up

Alarmed by opinion surveys indicating a sharp drop in public support for his trillion-dollar military build-up, President Reagan launched a drive Wednesday night to save his arms programs from threatened cuts this year in Congress.
(Knight-Ridder story, Denver Post)

Reagan Says Defense Cuts Would Be "Reckless"

President Reagan, seeking to sustain defense spending increases that Congress wants to arrest, asserted last night that proposals to cut military spending are "reckless, dangerous, and wrong" and would impair American security and threaten the prospects for a nuclear arms reduction agreement with the Soviets.
(Boston Globe)

Reagan Asks Nation To Save Arms Build-Up

Alarmed by opinion surveys indicating a sharp drop in public support for his trillion-dollar military build-up, President Reagan launched a drive Wednesday night to save his arms programs from threatened cuts this year in Congress.
(Des Moines Register)

Reagan: Defense Cuts Reckless

President Reagan Wednesday declared that it would be "reckless, dangerous and wrong" for Congress to reduce his \$320 billion military budget request, saying cuts "could fatally compromise our negotiating position with the Soviets."
(AP wires)

Reagan: Cuts In Defense "Dangerous"

Looking to shore up national support for his defense budget, President Reagan warned Congressional foes Wednesday night that it would be "reckless, dangerous and wrong" to cut military spending. Linking his request for \$311.6 billion in new defense spending to arms reduction talks with the Soviet Union, Reagan said, "Any slackening now would invite the very dangers that America must avoid and could fatally compromise our negotiating position."
Atlanta Constitution

Reagan Tries To Save Defense Build-Up Plan

In a bluntly-worded address from the Oval Office, President Reagan declared that the contemplated cutbacks in his \$311 billion military spending request for fiscal year 1987 would be "reckless, dangerous, and wrong," and represent "backsliding of the most irresponsible kind."

(Arizona Republic)

Reagan Asks Public To Prod Congress To Sustain Escalated Defense Spending

President Reagan appealed to the American people Wednesday night to help him overcome growing Congressional resistance to higher defense spending and sustain the defense build-up that he called "the most persuasive argument we have to convince our adversaries to negotiate seriously."

(Los Angeles Times story, Kansas City Times)

Some Reagan Defense Points Miss Mark

President Reagan drew on a number of familiar anecdotes and arguments last night to bolster his plea for increased spending on arms. The record shows some of them to be in dispute or incorrect. Many of Reagan's statements last night are beyond dispute. But other statements appear more open to question.

(Fred Hiatt & George Wilson, News Analysis, Washington Post, A11)

On Offensive, Reagan Decries Defense Cuts

Cutting the defense budget now would be "reckless, dangerous and wrong," President Reagan said last night in an unusual televised speech aimed at gaining an early advantage in what is certain to be a bloody spending battle on Capitol Hill.

Mr. Reagan said there are "two simple reasons" not to cut defense spending, despite budgetary pressures. "One, it's not cheap," he said. "Two, it's not safe."

(Mary Belcher, Washington Times, A1)

Reagan/Defense

In contrast to President Reagan's gloomy assessment Wednesday of the U.S.-Soviet military balance, the Defense Department has painted a rosier picture of U.S. gains in the superpower arms race.

Although Reagan at one point acknowledged that "we have begun to close some of these gaps" between U.S. and Soviet military power, he said at another, "as a consequence of their (Moscow's) enormous weapons investment, major military imbalances still exist between our two countries."

Yet Secretary Weinberger, in his annual report to Congress presented earlier this month, said the Administration's \$1.2 trillion investment in the military over the last five years has brought about sufficient parity between the superpowers to deter a Soviet attack against the United States and its allies.

(Richard Gross, News Analysis, UPI)

Congress Prepares To Cut Back Defense Despite Televised Reagan Bid For More

Despite President Reagan's televised plea for support of an increased defense budget, Congress is preparing to make cuts that would have wide-ranging effects on the military posture of the United States and the non-communist world.

The Presidential budget message came as the Pentagon has escalated its warning that the world military balance -- while essentially stable -- is in danger of tilting once more against the United States unless the Reagan defense buildup continues.

(Walter Andrews, News Analysis, Washington Times, A5)

Reagan Defends Military Spending Plan

President Reagan, drumming up public support for his \$311 billion defense budget, says any attempt to cut military spending is "reckless, dangerous and wrong" and will put America's security in jeopardy.

Reagan said the nation has made considerable progress in its military buildup in the past five years, which totaled \$1.2 trillion in Pentagon spending. But, he added, the "hard, cold reality of our defense deficit" demands nothing less than the amount he is seeking for fiscal year 1987.

(Helen Thomas, UPI)

Reagan Asks For Increased Military Spending But Doesn't Say Who'll Pay

President Reagan says the nation would pay a terrible price for cutting back the 12 percent increase he wants in the defense budget. But his latest appeal avoided discussing another part of the equation: who will pay the bill?

"If we listen to those who would abandon our defense program, we will not only jeopardize negotiations with the Soviet Union -- we may put peace itself at risk," Reagan told the nation Wednesday night in a televised speech from the Oval Office.

(Donald Rothberg, AP)

President/Defense Spending

In going on the warpath Wednesday to save his \$311.6 billion military budget, President Reagan scarcely mentioned his immediate enemy: The deficit. This year, public and congressional determination to cut the deficit seems to be his chief obstacle.

But his 23-minute pitch to rescue next year's defense spending plan from all-but-certain cuts pulled together all the arguments he has made the past five years to justify the military buildup.

(William Ringle, News Analysis, Gannett)

CBO SAYS REAGAN BUDGET MISSES TARGET

President Reagan's budget falls \$15.7 billion short of the \$144 billion Gramm-Rudman-Hollings deficit-reduction target for fiscal 1987, largely because defense spending was underestimated, the Congressional Budget Office said yesterday.

The nonpartisan CBO concluded that Reagan underestimated deficits by \$151 billion over the next five years, enough to miss the fiscal 1991 target of a balanced budget by \$40 billion.

(Helen Dewar, Washington Post, A4)

WHITE HOUSE BLASTS RUMOR ON SHUTTLE

White House spokesman Larry Speakes yesterday heatedly denied what he described as a vicious and false rumor that the White House pressured NASA to launch the ill-fated Challenger space shuttle on Jan. 28 to coincide with the President's State of the Union speech.

"Some source over there said Donald Regan had called NASA and said 'Get that thing up'", Speakes said. "Absolutely not. It's the most vicious and distorted rumor I've ever heard. I'll bet you a dollar not a soul here has gotten that from an official source. You got it from your press colleagues."
(Washington Times, A8)

DEAVER FIRM SAID TO OVER-REPORT AMOUNT OF SOUTH KOREAN CONTRACTS

Former top Reagan Administration White House aide Michael Deaver over-reported by \$950,000 contracts his public affairs company has with the South Korean government, the Korean Embassy here said. Embassy officials said Korea had only one \$475,000 contract with the Deaver firm, not three.

Yesterday, Deaver made it official, eliminating claims to two of the contracts, which the company said had been filed during a period of confusion over which organization would be the conduit for funds for a single contract.
(Stuart Auerbach, Washington Post, A7)

BENNETT DEFENDS PLANNED SCHOOL AID CHANGE

Secretary William Bennett testified yesterday before a House committee on the Reagan Administration's proposal to convert federal school aid for low-income children into a voucher plan, describing the measure as a way to expand opportunities for students who are "captive to a poor education."
(Lawrence Feinberg, Washington Post, A21)

House Foes Call Bennett Voucher Plan "Fraud"

Hostile members of the House Education and Labor Committee told Secretary Bennett yesterday that the Reagan Administration's voucher proposal for disadvantaged schoolchildren is a "fraud" and a "swindle." Rep. Charles Hayes (D-Ill) asked if the Administration regards disadvantaged students as "expendable."

(Carol Innerst, Washington Times, A5)

GOVT. WOULD LOSE \$250 MILLION IN CONRAIL SALE TO NORFOLK SOUTHERN

The government would take a \$250 million loss over the period 1987-1991 by selling Conrail to Norfolk Southern Corp., according to the Congressional Budget Office's analysis of President Reagan's 1987 budget plan.

The analysis, released Wednesday by the nonpartisan CBO, said the government would get \$1.25 billion from Norfolk Southern for Conrail, the federally owned freight rail carrier serving shippers in the northeast and midwest.
(George Lobsenz, UPI)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

MARCOS' U.S. SUPPORT ENDED SUNDAY NIGHT

The Reagan Administration sent messages to President Marcos that time had run out for his regime through three separate private channels last Sunday evening, nearly 12 hours before this viewpoint was made public in an early morning White House announcement, U.S. and Philippine sources said yesterday.

The messages to the Philippine president flowed from a crucial National Security Council meeting Sunday afternoon at which Philip Habib reported bluntly to President Reagan that "the Marcos era had ended," sources said. (Don Oberdorfer & David Hoffman, Washington Post, A1)

A Fatigued Marcos Arrives In Hawaii

HONOLULU -- A frail former president Marcos arrived here today aboard a U.S. Air Force transport plane to begin a new life in exile. The man who had governed the Philippines with a strong hand for two decades appeared to be ill and in a deep state of fatigue.

American pressure had played an important role in leading Marcos to his decision to avoid a bloody battle with his opponents, and now the former leader was accepting an offer of sanctuary from President Reagan.

(Daniel Southerland, Washington Post, A1)

Marcos Arrives In Hawaii, Assured His U.S. Loot Safe

Deposed Filipino President Marcos, his final destination still uncertain, arrived in Hawaii yesterday and was met by a Reagan Administration promise that it would not seize his vast U.S. holdings.

The White House, however, would not say whether it would resist any future effort by the new president of the Philippines, Corazon Aquino, to claim the Marcos assets -- estimated by congressional sources at more than \$350 million.

(Jeremiah O'Leary, Washington Times, A7)

Reagan Praises Philippines' Peaceful Change Of Leaders

President Reagan last night hailed the peaceful transfer of power in the Philippines as a "triumph of democracy" and said that "despite a flawed election, the Filipino people were understood."

Reagan opened his nationally televised address on defense by describing this week's events in the Philippines as a "stirring demonstration of what men and women committed to democratic ideals can achieve." It was his first public comment on the Philippines since his controversial remark Feb. 10 that there was "fraud on both sides" in the recent election.

(David Hoffman, Washington Post, A29)

Conservatives On Hill Salute Delicate Moves

Conservative members of Congress yesterday hailed the Reagan Administration's handling of the crisis in the Philippines and said it showed the United States practiced what it preached. The moral, conservatives say, is that the United States should not support foreign governments, even if they were stridently anti-communist, if those governments do not have the popular support of the people.

(Rita McWilliams, Washington Times, A1)

U.S. ENVOY RETURNS TO MANILA

MANILA -- Philip Habib returned to Manila today for talks with government and other officials on possible help for the new administration of Corazon Aquino, an American embassy spokesman said. "He is here on behalf of President Reagan to show U.S. support for the Aquino government and to offer any assistance we can," the spokesman said.

(Reuter)

WHITE HOUSE WON'T LINK SUMMIT AND ARMS TALKS

The White House yesterday rejected linkage of a summit meeting in the United States to progress in the Geneva arms talks, as Soviet leader Gorbachev seemed to hint in a major speech Tuesday in Moscow.

Spokesman Larry Speakes said "we can have a productive meeting without progress in Geneva. But at the same time we wish to make progress at Geneva and can do so if the Soviets would like it."

(Walter Pincus, Washington Post, A10)

ARMS TALKS PESSIMISM CASTING DOUBT OVER SUMMIT PLANNED LATER THIS YEAR

GENEVA, Switzerland -- The current round of arms talks is ending in an atmosphere of pessimism so deep that it casts doubt over the projected summit meeting this year between President Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev.

Soviet sources here indicated that Mr. Gorbachev's expressed lack of interest Tuesday in a second summit was more than a ploy. The current pessimism contrasts sharply with the optimistic opening of this round of talks, which followed the euphoria of November's summit.

(Andrew Borowiec, Washington Times, A6)

HOUSE DEFIES REAGAN, URGES NUCLEAR TEST BAN

The House, defying President Reagan, last night passed a resolution calling for negotiations with the Soviet Union on a comprehensive ban on nuclear weapons testing. The resolution has no binding effect on the White House but was a political defeat for Mr. Reagan. The resolution passed 268-148, with 49 Republicans supporting it.

(Washington Times, A3)

HOUSE CALLS ON REAGAN TO NEGOTIATE GLOBAL NUCLEAR TEST BAN

The House has called on the Reagan Administration to negotiate with the Soviet Union for a global ban on all nuclear weapons tests. The vote followed more than four hours of debate in the Democratic-controlled body, which overcame a lobbying effort by the Reagan Administration. President Reagan made several telephone calls to congressmen urging them to oppose the resolution, according to House members.

(Tim Ahern, AP)

U.S. READIES MISSILE SALE TO SAUDIS

In an effort to get an Arab arms sale through Congress, the Reagan Administration is preparing to seek approval to sell Saudi Arabia a package of missiles worth more than \$300 million, according to Administration and congressional officials.

The package may be sent to the Capitol within the week, some sources said. But others have suggested that the White House may not give final approval to the proposed package at this time because of concerns that it would repeat the political fight that forced the Administration last month to postpone a \$1.5 billion arms sale to Jordan indefinitely.

(Charles Babcock, Washington Post, A14)

\$25 MILLION IN AID RELEASED TO HAITI

The Reagan Administration, citing the new Haitian government's moves towards democracy and improvements in human rights, yesterday released \$25.5 million in aid that had been withheld because of rights abuses during the final weeks of Jean-Claude Duvalier's rule. The State Department announced that Secretary Shultz had determined that the improved rights situation in Haiti since Duvalier's departure permitted freeing the funds.

(Washington Post, A19)

REAGAN BEGINS PUSH FOR \$100 MILLION FOR NICARAGUAN REBELS

President Reagan has begun lobbying for congressional approval of \$100 million in military and other U.S. aid for the American-backed rebels fighting the Soviet-supported government of Nicaragua.

But Reagan was warned Wednesday during meetings with legislators that there is strong opposition to the plan. At the same time, 18 senators asked him to withhold his plan until a group of Latin American nations puts together a regional summit meeting.

(Tim Ahern, AP)

18 Senators Want Contra Aid Plan Withdrawn

Critics and defenders of the Reagan Administration's request for aid to Nicaraguan rebels began staking out battle positions yesterday, led by a bipartisan group of 18 senators who asked that the package be withdrawn. "This would be a particularly bad time for the United States to increase the level of conflict in Central America," said the Senators, 16 Democrats and 2 Republicans. They asked that the request wait until President Reagan holds further discussion with Latin American leaders engaged in regional peace negotiations.

(Joanne Omang & Walter Pincus, Washington Post, A31)

Reagan Resists Pleas To Delay Contra Issue

President Reagan yesterday pushed his request to provide Nicaragua's anti-Sandinista rebels with \$100 million in aid, despite congressional pleas to delay the proposal.

A bipartisan group of 18 senators, led by Sens. Paul Simon, Illinois Democrat, and Mark Hatfield, Oregon Republican, urged the President to pull back his request for aid to the estimated 20,000 rebels fighting the Marxist Sandinista regime.

(Jeremiah O'Leary & James Morrison, Washington Times, A2)

REPORT SAYS CONTRAS MUST WIN POPULAR SUPPORT

The U.S.-backed Nicaraguan rebel army must take "firm steps" to win popular support from the Nicaraguan people or face military defeat, according to a study prepared by two American rebel supporters.

The eight-page report, "From a Proxy Force to a National Liberation Movement," agrees with the Reagan Administration that the Contra rebels need renewed U.S. military aid if they are to challenge the Soviet-supplied Nicaraguan army.
(Robert Parry, AP)

NICARAGUA VOWS NOT TO GIVE IN TO U.S. PRESSURE

MANAGUA -- Defense Minister Humberto Ortega has responded to President Reagan's proposal to boost support for anti-Sandinista rebels. At a military ceremony yesterday, Ortega pledged Nicaragua's left-wing government would never bow to U.S. pressure and would continue fighting until the U.S.-backed rebels and even a U.S. invasion were beaten.

"As long as there is no negotiated solution...as long as Reagan continues turning his back on Latin America...what is left for us but to carry on fortifying defense and the military organization of the people?" Ortega said.
(Matthew Campbell, Reuter)

U.S. AIDE SAYS A STRONG YEN COULD TRIGGER TRADE ACTION

A senior U.S. official said tonight that a yen valued at about 195 to the dollar, as a leading Japanese businessman has suggested, would be likely to prod Congress to pass protectionist trade legislation.

Clayton Yeutter made the comment when Japanese businessmen told him during a Tokyo-Washington television dialogue that a zone around 195 yen against the dollar would be acceptable.
(Robert Trautman, Reuter)

-end of A-Section-

NETWORK NEWS SUMMARY

(Wednesday Evening, February 26, 1986)

PHILIPPINES/MARCOS

CBS's Dan Rather: A frail-looking Ferdinand Marcos arrived today in Honolulu. The fallen Philippine dictator needed a helping shoulder to leave the plane. The island-state is maybe the last stop in his journey into exile. (ALL NETS LEAD)

CBS's Bill Redeker reports that Marcos was welcomed to Honolulu by his old friend, Democrat Governor George Ariyoshi. Accompanied by his wife, Imelda, family and other supporters, the ousted ruler may accept his old friend's invitation to live here. Although the governor welcomes Marcos, many in the state's large Filipino community do not. Should he settle down in Hawaii, the former president could live comfortably in a fashionable neighborhood above Honolulu. The Marcos family reportedly owns two homes here, worth about \$2 million.

(TV Coverage: Various Marcos properties worth millions.) Marcos denies owning much of this property, but the new Aquino administration is taking inventory, trying to reclaim what many believe was stolen. And there is a move on Capitol Hill to try and freeze Marcos' assets, until it can be determined whether American aid money was diverted to his personal use. No one is saying whether or even how long the former president will stay here. But by fleeing the problems of his own country, he may be unable to escape some new ones in this country.

CBS's Bob Simon reports that members of Aquino's new cabinet became instant celebrities. There was a new confidence here. The stock market closed higher today, and the business community went on the march, cheered by the knowledge that Marcos won't be around anymore to milk their profits. Meanwhile, measures were being taken to prevent any more wealth from leaving the land. Police found 13 crates of brand-new money inside a van heading for the port. And at the airport, it was the baggage of departing passengers that was being searched. (ALL NETS LEAD)

ABC's Peter Jennings: In the Philippines today the new Aquino government is taking its very first steps.

ABC's Ted Koppel reports from the Philippines: Hour by hour, the influence of Marcos is beginning to be purged here, and hour by hour Marcos moved further away from his homeland.

ABC's Al Dale reports from Hawaii: The former president and his party of some 90 people arrived at Hickam Air Force Base from Guam after a seven hour flight aboard a U.S. Air Force C-141 Starlifter. He had to be helped down the steps, followed by his wife Imelda, family members and military officers loyal to him.

Dale continues:

Marcos was greeted by Hawaii's governor and the commander of the base before being led to a motorcade, which would take them to visiting dignitaries quarters on the base.

(TV Coverage of Marcos arrival.)

How long he will stay here is not known, the State Department making it clear it is not pushing him to disclose his long-range plans. Outside the main gate, some 200 Marcos supporters gathered to welcome him. There is speculation that the immediate family may go to stay with close associates, who live in a fashionable hillside district in Honolulu, as early as tomorrow. But Marcos' arrival does not please everyone. The mayor of Honolulu says no local tax money will be spent to protect him. There is some concern that if he stays, political turmoil could result from within the sizeable Filipino community on these islands. But supporters of Corazon Aquino say they will not create a problem, in the spirit of her policy of reconciliation.

Koppel: It was for Aquino her first full day in office, and she wasted no time fulfilling two of her most important and once-controversial campaign pledges.

ABC's Jim Laurie: In one of her first moves as president, Aquino made preparations tonight for a political amnesty. She called on Gen. Ramos to draw up documents freeing political prisoners jailed by Marcos. Throughout the night, a military task force met. Just after midnight, Aquino government TV reported:

(Aquino: "They are hoping to release about 50 percent of all political detainees later today.")

Following up another Aquino campaign pledge, Ramos reshuffled the entire military command, purging all of Marcos' old generals. In her first news conference as president, Aquino named her 17-member cabinet -- a mix of longtime opposition leaders and one-time Marcos supporters. Despite all the moves, Aquino called on Filipinos to give her more time. But if people were impatient, there was no sign today as thousands continued to celebrate, many still on the grounds of the presidential palace. Whatever problems she may now face, she has begun to move. And she still enjoys a reservoir of enthusiastic support.

Koppel: At her news conference, Aquino said she will not seek the extradition of Marcos, but there will be an investigation of those military men accused of murdering and torturing civilians. Such an investigation is likely to create huge tensions for some of the very military commanders who brought Aquino to power. I raised that issue with her top aide, Mr. Arroyo.

(Arroyo: "When the history of the Philippines is known, perhaps we will beat the record of Argentina in magnitude of the kind of torture this country has suffered through the Marcos government.")

Arroyo also said there will be a new board of inquiry to look into the assassination of Benigno Aquino.

ABC's Mark Litke reports on the Philippine problems President Aquino now has to deal with: a largely undisciplined, unprofessional armed force; private armies armed by Marcos still employed by powerful pro-Marcos warlords; the communist insurgency; a poor economy.

NBC's Tom Brokaw: Ferdinand Marcos, who was transformed in a matter of a few hours from one of the most powerful leaders in the Pacific to an exile on the run is getting a feel tonight for what it's like to be a man without a country. He arrived at Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii looking like an ailing tourist. He has secret service protection, but Marcos is not entirely welcome in that island-state.

NBC's George Lewis in Honolulu: Marcos did not look well as he arrived: he had to be assisted by a military aid as he limped down the airplane ramp. He was greeted by an old friend, Hawaii Governor George Ariyoshi, the only elected official who showed up. There was unusually tight security for Marcos and his entourage of 88. During an earlier stopover in Guam, there had been telephone death threats against the deposed president. A small group of Marcos supporters tried to get on the base, but were kept outside. Tonight, Marcos, his wife, Imelda, other family members and associates will be the guests of the U.S. military. This, while federal and local officials work out security arrangements. Marcos has a couple of rich friends here who own hillside mansions, it's believed the former president will stay in one of them. Whether Marcos should be permitted to stay here is the subject of a good deal of controversy. There are deep divisions among Hawaii's politicians and among members of this state's Filipino community. (NBC-lead)

NBC's Steve Mallory from Manila: The Philippines without Marcos, day one: (crowd cheering) the people rejoice. The newly elected president, Corazon Aquino and Vice President, Salvadore Laurel made an impromptu public appearance and then got down to business, setting the tone for the nation's future.

(Aquino: "It's now time to heal the wounds, to forget the past so we can speed up the reconciliation and recovery of the nation.")

The economic stagnation, high unemployment, widespread poverty are the prime target areas. Mrs. Aquino announced her cabinet of men and women with the experience to deal with these problems, and who also have the respect of the people. The faith in the new leadership began showing as the nation returned to normal. The relatively peaceful four-day revolution was over.

MARCOS GIFTS

Brokaw: President Reagan and his wife Nancy received some \$25,000 in gifts from the Marcos'. Among them, a six foot tree and an American eagle both made of mother of pearl. Most of these gifts have been turned over to the federal archives. But the Reagans kept for their personal use a vibrating chair and an ottoman. Vice President Bush received a motorized massage chair from Marcos. A vice presidential spokesman said that's now being stored in a closet. But at the White House, a spokesman said the Reagans are still using their chair.

(NBC-3)

DUVALIER

NBC's Anne Garrels: Both Marcos and Duvalier were U.S. friends who misused their power, and in both cases the U.S. asked them to step down to avoid bloodshed. But in Marcos' case, he was only asking for safe haven.

(Bernard Kalb: "The United States has offered a welcome to him, etc., and that's where I'm going to leave it.")

(Rep. Stephen Solarz: "I think it was a price worth paying and I think that commitment should be respected.")

Marcos also came here because the Philippines has no extradition treaty with the United States. President Aquino has since said she has no intention of trying to bring him back. But Marcos may have trouble keeping the vast wealth he is believed to have illegally transferred to the United States. Mrs. Aquino does want that back. Congressman Solarz is introducing legislation to help her.

(Solarz: "I hope that it will be possible for the Philippine government to repatriate these resources to their own country where they are desperately needed.") (NBC-2)

PRESIDENT'S SPEECH

Brokaw: The security of the United States is a major topic at the White House tonight, where President Reagan will address the American people in a nationally televised speech. The President will push his plan for increased military spending.

NBC's Chris Wallace: The President's goal tonight is nothing less than to begin turning around national opinion on defense spending. Officials here admit that's a tall order -- even for the Great Communicator.

(TV Coverage: President in Cabinet Room.)

The President gave a sneak preview of his basic theme in a speech today: that with the U.S. facing serious threats, and negotiating with the Soviets, this is no time to halt the defense build-up.

(President: "Strength is the most persuasive argument we have to convince our adversaries to give up their hostile intentions, to negotiate seriously, and to stop bullying other nations.")

Over the last five years, defense spending has increased more than 50 percent after inflation. What has Mr. Reagan worried is that last year, Congress cut the Pentagon budget, for the first time in 15 years. And his proposal this year for a real increase of eight percent is also in trouble. In the Democratic response tonight, Rep. Wright will say that the President can't keep giving the Pentagon a blank check with the nation so deeply in debt. At the White House today, even Republicans were negative.

(Rep. Michel: "What the President initially asked for is going to be pared down to some degree, and that's what the debate is all ultimately going to be about -- how much.")

White House polling shows the public now thinks the defense budget is big enough. And it's turned off by stories of Pentagon waste. And, after last year's summit, they feel the threat against the U.S. has diminished. A former Reagan Defense official says the Pentagon can get by on less -- if the money is spent more wisely.

-more-

Wallace continues:

(Lawrence Korb: "The issue is to make the most out of the dollars that are available. I wish they were more, but the best we can hope for ... is to keep the budget level.")

Some advisers didn't want the President to make this speech, seeing it as a losing battle. But Mr. Reagan and top national security officials were determined -- to fight for his defense budget.

(NBC-8; CBS-3; ABC-6)

ARMS CONTROL/GORBACHEV

Rather: President Reagan's aides were busy today, trying to put the most positive possible spin on Soviet leader Gorbachev's threat to put off the next summit meeting unless there's arms control progress first. White House spokesman Larry Speakes said, "That kind of linkage simply won't work," and, said the two superpower chiefs, "can have a productive meeting with or without arms control progress." (CBS-8)

Donaldson: The White House has taken issue with Soviet leader

Gorbachev's suggestion that unless some agreements are reached on arms control there would be nothing to talk about at a second superpower summit meeting. "That kind of linkage simply won't work," said a spokesman, who insisted the two leaders will have plenty to talk about, agreements or not. (ABC-5)

SOVIET PARTY CONGRESS

Rather: In Moscow, today's first foreign guest speaker: Soviet client, Cuba's Fidel Castro, putting his mouth where his money is, denouncing "U.S. imperialism," as he put it. (CBS-9)

ABC's Walter Rogers reports that guests at the party conference, like Castro, thought it prudent to flatter the Russian hosts.

(Castro, through translator: "The brilliant report by Mikhail Gorbachev, the heroic deeds of the Soviet people, show nothing could ever check their indomitable march.")

Castro's condemnation of American imperialism earned him a standing ovation in Moscow and the approval of his principal patron.

(TV Coverage: Gorbachev shown clapping.)

Poland's Jaruzelski was also grateful for Moscow's support, especially after the economic dislocation of the Solidarity days. But members of the Politburo, taking their cue from Gorbachev yesterday, did indulge in self-criticism. (ABC-7)

SOVIET SYSTEM

ABC's George Will and Radio Moscow's Vladimir Posner debate:

Will: After nearly 70 years of the revolution, you're still burning up significant resources jamming foreign broadcasts, which indicates that the state fundamentally distrusts its own citizens.

(ABC Debate -- continued)

Posner: We do not distrust our own citizens. Just recently, as a matter of fact, we broadcast a program in which Americans and Soviets debated very hot issues, as they're considered in your country....If you look at the Soviet citizen, I would wager that he's more informed about the world and about your country than your citizen is about ours....He knows that you live better than we do. He knows that you have a higher standard of living. He knows your problems much more than your citizen knows ours.

CHALLENGER COMMISSION FINDINGS

Rather: NASA officials were grilled closely today by the shuttle disaster investigating team. By day's end, it was clear the investigators didn't like a lot of what they heard.

CBS's Eric Engberg reports that NASA spent a day on the carpet, its officials explaining why Challenger was launched, despite engineering objections that a key part might fail in the cold weather. One by one, the commission members pointed to lapses in the chain of command, which had kept senior officials in the dark about the potential for disaster.

(Chairman Rogers: "I think all of us feel there's been a breakdown of sorts in the process.")

Commission members appeared increasingly disturbed that commission members who approved the launch didn't know that opposition to the launch was almost unanimous among Thiokol engineers most concerned about cold weather. (CBS-5)

ABC's Lynn Sherr reports NASA officials denied they put pressure on Morton Thiokol engineers to reverse their original recommendation that Challenger not fly. The presidential commissioners seemed particularly incredulous that the controversy over the launch decision had not been relayed to key NASA officials. Today acting NASA Administrator William Graham acknowledged to congressmen he is taking action to improve the decision-making process. (ABC-2)

NBC's Robert Hager: Today, NASA's Lawrence Mulloy: "I cannot conceive how they or think that NASA could pressure them into making an unsafe decision." The commission was skeptical of that and shocked at the fact that no word of the hours of debate over safety of the O-rings at low temperatures ever reached top officials. Mulloy's boss, Stanley Reindhartz was the one who could have passed on the concerns higher up.

(Reindhartz: "I felt that the Thiokol and Marshall people had fully examined that concern and it had been satisfactorily dispositioned based on the evidence.") (NBC-5)

CHANCELLOR COMMENTARY ON NASA

There's a story they tell in Detroit about the auto company boss who told his subordinates, "gentlemen, this company is not in the business of making cars; it's in the business of making money." So the company made cheap cars which didn't sell, and it lost money. It had lost its way. That old yarn comes to mind when we think about NASA and the space shuttle disaster. NASA has changed from an organization dealing in science and exploration into an organization dealing in transportation. NASA began as a great adventure, but in the last couple of years it's seemed to turn into a business. The U.S. government wanted the shuttle to do most of the military, commercial, and scientific work in space and to compete with the Europeans. The pressure was on. The new generation of executives at this company called NASA sought to succeed, to meet those goals. And somewhere, the dangers of manned flight got submerged by the pressures to be a successful business. There may have been human errors that led to the disaster, but part of the blame is institutional: NASA tried to go too far, too fast.

EGYPTIAN MUTINY

Rather: It is being called the worst crisis Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has faced. A mutiny by thousands of security police, that started in and around Cairo yesterday, and spread to other Egyptian cities. A mutiny that turned into a rampage of violence. Officials say tonight "scores of people were killed, and hundreds wounded." Mubarak responded with force. Tanks and armored trucks traveled the roads near the Great Pyramid, where the rebellion began. Hundreds of foreign tourists were evacuated, safely. Mubarak today blamed the violence on a "deviationist minority" of his security forces. At last word, Cairo was reported quiet -- for now.

(ABC-4, CBS-2)

NBC's Martin Fletcher: Egyptian security police left a path of destruction after they rampaged through part of Cairo, near the pyramids. The Egyptians usually control riots with the very police that today did the rioting. So, the army was called in. It apparently began when a rumor swept police barracks that draftees would have to serve an extra year. This was denied. President Mubarak called an emergency cabinet meeting, then went on national TV. This is the most violent challenge to Mubarak since he came to power four years ago. But the real cause, as seen here, is rising prices and a crumbling economy.

(NBC-7)

SUPREME COURT/RENT CONTROLS

Rather: The U.S. Supreme Court ruled eight-to-one today that cities may impose rent controls; the Justices rejected landlord claims that rent controls amount to a price-fixing conspiracy.

(CBS-6)

CALIFORNIA SENATE RACE

Rather: A judge in Los Angeles today cited insufficient evidence, and dismissed a grand jury indictment against California Republican Congressman Bobbi Fiedler, and her top aide, who is also now her fiancé. (CBS-7)

Editor's Note: CBS News aired the fourth segment of their six-part series on the nation's "farm crisis." Dan Rather mentioned that the U.S.D.A. reported Wednesday that U.S. farm exports declined more than 300 percent last year. (CBS-12)

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EDITORIALS/COLUMNISTS

PHILIPPINES

President Aquino -- "The Reagan Administration can take some satisfaction in having so far achieved its purpose of aiding a peaceful transfer of power. And it has done this in a correct way, not by emphasizing change for change itself but by stressing that the U.S. role is primarily to support democracy.... The U.S., having played its role in destroying the old order, now will have to see what it can do to help the new one succeed. That will be more difficult on the whole. But we hope that all those American politicians and journalists who have played a part in this change will keep in mind that what they said they wanted was more democracy. In a special sense, that's what they got. Now it is time to support it."
(Wall Street Journal, 2/26)

Liberation Day In Manila -- "In a sense, Mr. Marcos' last few days as president were his finest. For he, too, refused entreaties from his chief of staff Gen. Fabian C. Ver, who wanted to let the tanks roll over the masses. The president who had seemed to have lost touch with reality eventually faced reality and resigned.... In the coming months and perhaps years, what President Aquino will need most from us is some assistance and a lot of patience. She may not be as accepting of U.S. direction as Mr. Marcos was, but we need not fear the leader of a nation that has earned the designation of freedom fighter.

(Hartford Courant, 2/26)

President Aquino -- "Washington had long seemed too quick to embrace Mr. Marcos and gloss over his regime's imperfections, which eventually became too glaring to be ignored. The Reagan administration, however, began its preparations early. When opposition leader Benigno Aquino was assassinated, the State Department's Michael H. Armacost quickly visited Aquino's mother, attended the funeral, and otherwise indicated that Washington was not about to ignore the potential of a moderate, post-Marcos direction. The mission of Sen. Paul Laxalt to Marcos on behalf of President Reagan further affirmed serious White House interest in reform within the Philippines, as well as ensuring an eventual orderly succession. Congress supported the administration's thrust, with insistence on a presidential election, monitoring the outcome's fairness, and backing up of the President's offer of safe exile for Marcos if bloodshed were avoided."

(Christian Science Monitor, 2/26)

Change In The Philippines -- "The question now arises as to where the Marcoses and their entourage will go. The United States must take responsibility for its actions and its alliances over time; it must honor its word and respect its obligations. This country worked with Ferdinand Marcos, for better and, God knows, for worse over two decades. It gave and it took and it allowed him to develop a certain level of expectation as to how we would behave if he were in danger. It is up to the United States to take him in if he should wish to come. To do so would not mean that we love him. It would mean only that this country recognizes everyone's best interests -- including that of Mrs. Aquino."

(Washington Post, 2/26)

EDITORIALS/COLUMNISTS (continued)

Lesson Of The Philippines: It's The Timing That Counts -- "In the mythology of our times, Ferdinand Marcos now occupies a place alongside Somoza, 'Baby Doc' Duvalier and Batista. He is portrayed as a personalistic dictator who enjoyed no popular support, who was maintained in power entirely by the U.S., whose sole achievements were to rob and oppress his people, and who was finally driven from power when they rebelled and, through the force of moral example, compelled the U.S. to dispense with him.... In the Philippines, after early blunders, U.S. policy has guided a peaceful transition to a broad-based democratic regime. The real lesson of the Philippines is that dictators should be eased out when they are likely to be replaced by democrats -- not by worse dictators."

(New York Post, 2/26)

The Fall Of A Dictator -- "...the Reagan Administration could justifiably join in the celebration and share in the congratulation. Ferdinand Marcos' departure and Corazon Aquino's ascent to power probably could not have occurred with such relative ease without the support and assistance of U.S. officials, including President Reagan. They make it clear to Mr. Marcos that he had little choice but to leave.... President Reagan said last month that this country would consider increasing its aid to the Philippines if the election was honest and the winner undertook fundamental reforms. In the end, honesty has prevailed. Mrs. Aquino and her supporters have vowed to make the changes that Mr. Marcos resisted. If they follow through, Washington will have to keep its end of the bargain and provide the support they will need to put their country on a steady course."

(Chicago Tribune, 2/26)

This Time The U.S. Did It Right -- "Let it be said that in this important instance, the government of the United States, with bipartisan cooperation among key members of Congress and the administration, and support of the uniformed military and the intelligence agencies, delivered a unified message of support for the Filipino people which helped move a reluctant and recalcitrant Marcos toward his inevitable exit.... It is no easy thing for a great power to divorce itself from and then rid itself of a client-government leader who has outlived his usefulness and overreached his power. The United States has done that with Marcos -- and a good thing, too."

(David Broder, Washington Post, 2/26)

Finally -- "The United States, bound by historic, cultural and strategic ties to the Philippines, can be said to have acted responsibly if not always thoughtfully through the crisis. After President Reagan's press conference blunder that seemed to suggest tolerance of the rigged election results, policy lines became clear and proper. Marcos was given to understand that he had lost American support and that his safe departure and exile could be guaranteed only if he did not try to fight to hold on. Now Washington is hailing the reestablishment of democratic rule in the Philippines. It is up to Filipinos to make that democracy work. And it is up to the United States, whose long record of support for Marcos many in the Philippines won't soon forget, to do everything possible to abet that effort."

(Los Angeles Times, 2/26)

NETWORK COMMENTARY FOLLOWING PRESIDENT'S SPEECH

ABC's David Brinkley (following the speech and the Democratic response):
The Democratic Party's response to the President's speech, delivered by Rep. Jim Wright of Texas, the Majority Leader in the House.... And now, Sam Donaldson at the White House has been listening to the President's speech. Sam, why did he deliver this speech at this time?

Sam Donaldson: Well, David, we're right at the point where Congress is going to get down seriously to the battle of the budget. The next two or three months will be critical and Mr. Reagan wanted to bring his message to the American people because he's going to have a tough time selling this defense budget this year. He's had some success, as we all know, in the past. Last year, however, Congress held him to about a zero growth. And because of the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings law, in this current fiscal year, the defense budget has actually been cut, as Mr. Reagan suggested, by about \$5 or \$6 billion. So here's what the President has to do. You just heard Jim Wright lay out the case for the Democrats; Mr. Reagan has to say to the country, "We've got to cut more domestic programs. Not the programs for the poor, we've already done that, we've got to cut the middle class programs: veterans, home mortgage money, school lunches for the children of the middle class, all Medicare, all those programs. They've got to come way down. But at the same time, we've got to raise the defense budget by 8%." Well, that's a tough selling job for anyone. I won't underestimate Ronald Reagan. He is the super-salesman of the century. But he's really got his work cut out with this one.

Brinkley: Brit Hume and Charles Gibson watch over the Senate and the House every day. I have a question for both of you. Mr. Reagan wants a whole lot of money for the military at a time when the country is running deeply in the red, and Congress talks about this every day by the hour. Will he get it?

ABC's Charles Gibson: Well, David, I don't think so. The short answer to your question, I guess, is no. And that's really not me speaking. That is both Republican and Democratic member of the House who say that the constituency for the kind of defense increases that the President is talking about simply isn't there any more. The constituency is gone. As one Republican said today, you know that was fine in the early days of the Reagan Administration. And indeed, defense spending annually is up about 40% over the time that Ronald Reagan has been in office. But now, as he said, as the way he characterized it, Americans are more than willing. And the interest in those kinds of defense increases aren't there any more. That's a Republican speaking. And the point, of course, is that in this year of Gramm-Rudman law and the severe budget stringency that will be necessary, these increases in defense, if they were to come, would come, as Sam mentioned, at the cost of education and mortgage programs, etcetera....As one Democrat member said today, the President can go on television as often as he wants and ask for it, but the votes aren't there any more for the kind of increases that he's talking about....Now that, of course, is the view in the Democratic House, but the Republican Senate that Brit covers, he'll probably do a little better over there.

NETWORK COVERAGE FOLLOWING SPEECH (continued)

ABC's Brit Hume: Even over in the Republican Senate, nobody is even talking about increases along the lines the President has asked for. The feeling is that he'll get something quite a bit less than what amounts to 8% that he wants. But something. We're going to get an early test of how the President's going to do in the Senate on some of these defense-related issues because the President has asked for \$100 million in aid to the contra rebels fighting the government in Nicaragua. \$70 million of that is for military aid. Last year the President got no military aid for the contras, and his opposition up here thinks he shouldn't get any this year. Indeed, 18 senators sent him a letter this week urging him not to even ask for it. All but one of those senators, I should tell you, was a Democrat. However, the President has some things going for him in this fight and it is going to be waged over the last three weeks or months. We'll know in about a month something about how President Reagan is going to do. The things he has going for him are these: Baby Doc Duvalier, whom you mentioned earlier, and Mr. Marcos are gone in the Philippines and in Haiti with a little push from the Reagan Administration in both cases, which at least gives the President a chance to say that he is for the downfall of dictators in both right-wing and left-wing governments. In addition, the President has only asked for the aid to be re-programmed, not asked for new money, so he has helped his case there. The feeling is that he'll get some of what he wants but not all of it. Finally, I'd just like to close by mentioning something that Mark Hatfield said about contra aid today. He said, "For every contra we supply with a new gun, countless elderly Americans will go without meals." It gives you an idea how when money is tight you get down to gut issues up here pretty fast.

Brinkley: Thank you both. It sounds, from what you tell us, that Mr. Reagan wasted his time making his speech tonight.

ABC later broadcasts interviews with Soviet spokesman Vladimir Posner in Moscow.

CBS's Dan Rather: The President came out and spoke strongly, both in speaking to the Russians abroad, and to the U.S. Congress at home, on the need, as he sees it, to keep up U.S. defense spending, even at a time when other federal budget items, including social programs, are being cut deeply. The President accused Congress of "undercutting U.S. arms control negotiators by banning U.S. anti-satellite tests," and he said congressional cutting of defense spending would be "backsliding of the most irresponsible kind." But the President barely glanced over one of the most controversial defense spending items, his request for \$100 million, most of it for resumed military aid for the Contra rebels fighting the Sandinistas.

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NBC did not provide commentary.

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News Summary

OFFICE OF THE PRESS SECRETARY

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1986 -- 6 a.m. EST EDITION

TODAY'S HEADLINES

NATIONAL NEWS

Reagan Says Defense Cuts Would Be "Reckless" -- President Reagan, seeking to sustain defense spending increases that Congress wants to arrest, asserted last night that proposals to cut military spending are "reckless, dangerous, and wrong" and would impair American security and threaten the prospects for a nuclear arms reduction agreement with the Soviets. (Multiple Sources)

White House Blasts Rumor On Shuttle -- White House spokesman Larry Speakes yesterday heatedly denied what he described as a vicious and false rumor that the White House pressured NASA to launch the ill-fated Challenger space shuttle on Jan. 28 to coincide with the President's State of the Union speech. (Washington Times)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Reagan Resists Pleas To Delay Contra Issue -- President Reagan yesterday pushed his request to provide Nicaragua's anti-Sandinista rebels with \$100 million in aid, despite congressional pleas to delay the proposal. (Washington Post, Washington Times, AP)

NETWORK NEWS (Wednesday Evening)

MARCOS -- A frail-looking Ferdinand Marcos arrived today in Honolulu.

SPEECH -- The President's goal tonight is nothing less than to begin turning around national opinion on defense spending.

ARMS CONTROL -- The White House has taken issue with Gorbachev's suggestion that unless some agreements are reached on arms control there would be nothing to talk about at a second summit.

PEACE AND NATIONAL SECURITY

"Peace does not exist of its own will. It depends on us -- on our courage to build it and guard it and pass it on to future generations...."

(President Reagan's
Address to the Nation, 2/26)

NATIONAL NEWS

REAGAN URGES SUPPORT FOR DEFENSE GOALS

President Reagan appealed to the American people last night to support his request for increased military spending, saying that cuts in the defense budget would jeopardize arms control negotiations with the Soviet Union and "may put peace itself at risk."

In a nationally televised address from the Oval Office, Reagan argued that it would be "reckless, dangerous and wrong" to reduce the U.S. military budget in the face of the "enormous weapons investment" of the Soviets.

Administration advisers said they hoped Reagan's speech would help to change public perceptions that the United States is spending too much for defense, but congressional leaders of both parties predicted during the day that Congress would make reductions in the Administration's budget requests.
(Lou Cannon, Washington Post, A1)

Reagan's TV Talk Attempts To Save Military Build-Up

Alarmed by opinion surveys indicating a sharp drop in public support for his trillion-dollar military build-up, President Reagan launched a drive Wednesday night to save his arms programs from threatened cuts this year in Congress.
(Knight-Ridder story, Denver Post)

Reagan Says Defense Cuts Would Be "Reckless"

President Reagan, seeking to sustain defense spending increases that Congress wants to arrest, asserted last night that proposals to cut military spending are "reckless, dangerous, and wrong" and would impair American security and threaten the prospects for a nuclear arms reduction agreement with the Soviets.
(Boston Globe)

Reagan Asks Nation To Save Arms Build-Up

Alarmed by opinion surveys indicating a sharp drop in public support for his trillion-dollar military build-up, President Reagan launched a drive Wednesday night to save his arms programs from threatened cuts this year in Congress.
(Des Moines Register)

Reagan: Defense Cuts Reckless

President Reagan Wednesday declared that it would be "reckless, dangerous and wrong" for Congress to reduce his \$320 billion military budget request, saying cuts "could fatally compromise our negotiating position with the Soviets."
(AP wires)

Reagan: Cuts In Defense "Dangerous"

Looking to shore up national support for his defense budget, President Reagan warned Congressional foes Wednesday night that it would be "reckless, dangerous and wrong" to cut military spending. Linking his request for \$311.6 billion in new defense spending to arms reduction talks with the Soviet Union, Reagan said, "Any slackening now would invite the very dangers that America must avoid and could fatally compromise our negotiating position."
Atlanta Constitution

Reagan Tries To Save Defense Build-Up Plan

In a bluntly-worded address from the Oval Office, President Reagan declared that the contemplated cutbacks in his \$311 billion military spending request for fiscal year 1987 would be "reckless, dangerous, and wrong," and represent "backsliding of the most irresponsible kind."

(Arizona Republic)

Reagan Asks Public To Prod Congress To Sustain Escalated Defense Spending

President Reagan appealed to the American people Wednesday night to help him overcome growing Congressional resistance to higher defense spending and sustain the defense build-up that he called "the most persuasive argument we have to convince our adversaries to negotiate seriously."

(Los Angeles Times story, Kansas City Times)

Some Reagan Defense Points Miss Mark

President Reagan drew on a number of familiar anecdotes and arguments last night to bolster his plea for increased spending on arms. The record shows some of them to be in dispute or incorrect. Many of Reagan's statements last night are beyond dispute. But other statements appear more open to question.

(Fred Hiatt & George Wilson, News Analysis, Washington Post, A11)

On Offensive, Reagan Decries Defense Cuts

Cutting the defense budget now would be "reckless, dangerous and wrong," President Reagan said last night in an unusual televised speech aimed at gaining an early advantage in what is certain to be a bloody spending battle on Capitol Hill.

Mr. Reagan said there are "two simple reasons" not to cut defense spending, despite budgetary pressures. "One, it's not cheap," he said. "Two, it's not safe."

(Mary Belcher, Washington Times, A1)

Reagan/Defense

In contrast to President Reagan's gloomy assessment Wednesday of the U.S.-Soviet military balance, the Defense Department has painted a rosier picture of U.S. gains in the superpower arms race.

Although Reagan at one point acknowledged that "we have begun to close some of these gaps" between U.S. and Soviet military power, he said at another, "as a consequence of their (Moscow's) enormous weapons investment, major military imbalances still exist between our two countries."

Yet Secretary Weinberger, in his annual report to Congress presented earlier this month, said the Administration's \$1.2 trillion investment in the military over the last five years has brought about sufficient parity between the superpowers to deter a Soviet attack against the United States and its allies.

(Richard Gross, News Analysis, UPI)

Congress Prepares To Cut Back Defense Despite Televised Reagan Bid For More

Despite President Reagan's televised plea for support of an increased defense budget, Congress is preparing to make cuts that would have wide-ranging effects on the military posture of the United States and the non-communist world.

The Presidential budget message came as the Pentagon has escalated its warning that the world military balance -- while essentially stable -- is in danger of tilting once more against the United States unless the Reagan defense buildup continues.

(Walter Andrews, News Analysis, Washington Times, A5)

Reagan Defends Military Spending Plan

President Reagan, drumming up public support for his \$311 billion defense budget, says any attempt to cut military spending is "reckless, dangerous and wrong" and will put America's security in jeopardy.

Reagan said the nation has made considerable progress in its military buildup in the past five years, which totaled \$1.2 trillion in Pentagon spending. But, he added, the "hard, cold reality of our defense deficit" demands nothing less than the amount he is seeking for fiscal year 1987.

(Helen Thomas, UPI)

Reagan Asks For Increased Military Spending But Doesn't Say Who'll Pay

President Reagan says the nation would pay a terrible price for cutting back the 12 percent increase he wants in the defense budget. But his latest appeal avoided discussing another part of the equation: who will pay the bill?

"If we listen to those who would abandon our defense program, we will not only jeopardize negotiations with the Soviet Union -- we may put peace itself at risk," Reagan told the nation Wednesday night in a televised speech from the Oval Office.

(Donald Rothberg, AP)

President/Defense Spending

In going on the warpath Wednesday to save his \$311.6 billion military budget, President Reagan scarcely mentioned his immediate enemy: The deficit. This year, public and congressional determination to cut the deficit seems to be his chief obstacle.

But his 23-minute pitch to rescue next year's defense spending plan from all-but-certain cuts pulled together all the arguments he has made the past five years to justify the military buildup.

(William Ringle, News Analysis, Gannett)

CBO SAYS REAGAN BUDGET MISSES TARGET

President Reagan's budget falls \$15.7 billion short of the \$144 billion Gramm-Rudman-Hollings deficit-reduction target for fiscal 1987, largely because defense spending was underestimated, the Congressional Budget Office said yesterday.

The nonpartisan CBO concluded that Reagan underestimated deficits by \$151 billion over the next five years, enough to miss the fiscal 1991 target of a balanced budget by \$40 billion.

(Helen Dewar, Washington Post, A4)

WHITE HOUSE BLASTS RUMOR ON SHUTTLE

White House spokesman Larry Speakes yesterday heatedly denied what he described as a vicious and false rumor that the White House pressured NASA to launch the ill-fated Challenger space shuttle on Jan. 28 to coincide with the President's State of the Union speech.

"Some source over there said Donald Regan had called NASA and said 'Get that thing up'", Speakes said. "Absolutely not. It's the most vicious and distorted rumor I've ever heard. I'll bet you a dollar not a soul here has gotten that from an official source. You got it from your press colleagues." (Washington Times, A8)

DEAVER FIRM SAID TO OVER-REPORT AMOUNT OF SOUTH KOREAN CONTRACTS

Former top Reagan Administration White House aide Michael Deaver over-reported by \$950,000 contracts his public affairs company has with the South Korean government, the Korean Embassy here said. Embassy officials said Korea had only one \$475,000 contract with the Deaver firm, not three.

Yesterday, Deaver made it official, eliminating claims to two of the contracts, which the company said had been filed during a period of confusion over which organization would be the conduit for funds for a single contract. (Stuart Auerbach, Washington Post, A7)

BENNETT DEFENDS PLANNED SCHOOL AID CHANGE

Secretary William Bennett testified yesterday before a House committee on the Reagan Administration's proposal to convert federal school aid for low-income children into a voucher plan, describing the measure as a way to expand opportunities for students who are "captive to a poor education." (Lawrence Feinberg, Washington Post, A21)

House Foes Call Bennett Voucher Plan "Fraud"

Hostile members of the House Education and Labor Committee told Secretary Bennett yesterday that the Reagan Administration's voucher proposal for disadvantaged schoolchildren is a "fraud" and a "swindle." Rep. Charles Hayes (D-Ill) asked if the Administration regards disadvantaged students as "expendable."

(Carol Innerst, Washington Times, A5)

GOVT. WOULD LOSE \$250 MILLION IN CONRAIL SALE TO NORFOLK SOUTHERN

The government would take a \$250 million loss over the period 1987-1991 by selling Conrail to Norfolk Southern Corp., according to the Congressional Budget Office's analysis of President Reagan's 1987 budget plan.

The analysis, released Wednesday by the nonpartisan CBO, said the government would get \$1.25 billion from Norfolk Southern for Conrail, the federally owned freight rail carrier serving shippers in the northeast and midwest. (George Lobsenz, UPI)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

MARCOS' U.S. SUPPORT ENDED SUNDAY NIGHT

The Reagan Administration sent messages to President Marcos that time had run out for his regime through three separate private channels last Sunday evening, nearly 12 hours before this viewpoint was made public in an early morning White House announcement, U.S. and Philippine sources said yesterday.

The messages to the Philippine president flowed from a crucial National Security Council meeting Sunday afternoon at which Philip Habib reported bluntly to President Reagan that "the Marcos era had ended," sources said. (Don Oberdorfer & David Hoffman, Washington Post, A1)

A Fatigued Marcos Arrives In Hawaii

HONOLULU -- A frail former president Marcos arrived here today aboard a U.S. Air Force transport plane to begin a new life in exile. The man who had governed the Philippines with a strong hand for two decades appeared to be ill and in a deep state of fatigue.

American pressure had played an important role in leading Marcos to his decision to avoid a bloody battle with his opponents, and now the former leader was accepting an offer of sanctuary from President Reagan.

(Daniel Southerland, Washington Post, A1)

Marcos Arrives In Hawaii, Assured His U.S. Loot Safe

Deposed Filipino President Marcos, his final destination still uncertain, arrived in Hawaii yesterday and was met by a Reagan Administration promise that it would not seize his vast U.S. holdings.

The White House, however, would not say whether it would resist any future effort by the new president of the Philippines, Corazon Aquino, to claim the Marcos assets -- estimated by congressional sources at more than \$350 million.

(Jeremiah O'Leary, Washington Times, A7)

Reagan Praises Philippines' Peaceful Change Of Leaders

President Reagan last night hailed the peaceful transfer of power in the Philippines as a "triumph of democracy" and said that "despite a flawed election, the Filipino people were understood."

Reagan opened his nationally televised address on defense by describing this week's events in the Philippines as a "stirring demonstration of what men and women committed to democratic ideals can achieve." It was his first public comment on the Philippines since his controversial remark Feb. 10 that there was "fraud on both sides" in the recent election.

(David Hoffman, Washington Post, A29)

Conservatives On Hill Salute Delicate Moves

Conservative members of Congress yesterday hailed the Reagan Administration's handling of the crisis in the Philippines and said it showed the United States practiced what it preached. The moral, conservatives say, is that the United States should not support foreign governments, even if they were stridently anti-communist, if those governments do not have the popular support of the people.

(Rita McWilliams, Washington Times, A1)

U.S. ENVOY RETURNS TO MANILA

MANILA -- Philip Habib returned to Manila today for talks with government and other officials on possible help for the new administration of Corazon Aquino, an American embassy spokesman said. "He is here on behalf of President Reagan to show U.S. support for the Aquino government and to offer any assistance we can," the spokesman said.

(Reuter)

WHITE HOUSE WON'T LINK SUMMIT AND ARMS TALKS

The White House yesterday rejected linkage of a summit meeting in the United States to progress in the Geneva arms talks, as Soviet leader Gorbachev seemed to hint in a major speech Tuesday in Moscow.

Spokesman Larry Speakes said "we can have a productive meeting without progress in Geneva. But at the same time we wish to make progress at Geneva and can do so if the Soviets would like it."

(Walter Pincus, Washington Post, A10)

ARMS TALKS PESSIMISM CASTING DOUBT OVER SUMMIT PLANNED LATER THIS YEAR

GENEVA, Switzerland -- The current round of arms talks is ending in an atmosphere of pessimism so deep that it casts doubt over the projected summit meeting this year between President Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev.

Soviet sources here indicated that Mr. Gorbachev's expressed lack of interest Tuesday in a second summit was more than a ploy. The current pessimism contrasts sharply with the optimistic opening of this round of talks, which followed the euphoria of November's summit.

(Andrew Borowiec, Washington Times, A6)

HOUSE DEFIES REAGAN, URGES NUCLEAR TEST BAN

The House, defying President Reagan, last night passed a resolution calling for negotiations with the Soviet Union on a comprehensive ban on nuclear weapons testing. The resolution has no binding effect on the White House but was a political defeat for Mr. Reagan. The resolution passed 268-148, with 49 Republicans supporting it.

(Washington Times, A3)

HOUSE CALLS ON REAGAN TO NEGOTIATE GLOBAL NUCLEAR TEST BAN

The House has called on the Reagan Administration to negotiate with the Soviet Union for a global ban on all nuclear weapons tests. The vote followed more than four hours of debate in the Democratic-controlled body, which overcame a lobbying effort by the Reagan Administration. President Reagan made several telephone calls to congressmen urging them to oppose the resolution, according to House members.

(Tim Ahern, AP)

U.S. READIES MISSILE SALE TO SAUDIS

In an effort to get an Arab arms sale through Congress, the Reagan Administration is preparing to seek approval to sell Saudi Arabia a package of missiles worth more than \$300 million, according to Administration and congressional officials.

The package may be sent to the Capitol within the week, some sources said. But others have suggested that the White House may not give final approval to the proposed package at this time because of concerns that it would repeat the political fight that forced the Administration last month to postpone a \$1.5 billion arms sale to Jordan indefinitely.

(Charles Babcock, Washington Post, A14)

\$25 MILLION IN AID RELEASED TO HAITI

The Reagan Administration, citing the new Haitian government's moves towards democracy and improvements in human rights, yesterday released \$25.5 million in aid that had been withheld because of right's abuses during the final weeks of Jean-Claude Duvalier's rule. The State Department announced that Secretary Shultz had determined that the improved rights situation in Haiti since Duvalier's departure permitted freeing the funds.

(Washington Post, A19)

REAGAN BEGINS PUSH FOR \$100 MILLION FOR NICARAGUAN REBELS

President Reagan has begun lobbying for congressional approval of \$100 million in military and other U.S. aid for the American-backed rebels fighting the Soviet-supported government of Nicaragua.

But Reagan was warned Wednesday during meetings with legislators that there is strong opposition to the plan. At the same time, 18 senators asked him to withhold his plan until a group of Latin American nations puts together a regional summit meeting.

(Tim Ahern, AP)

18 Senators Want Contra Aid Plan Withdrawn

Critics and defenders of the Reagan Administration's request for aid to Nicaraguan rebels began staking out battle positions yesterday, led by a bipartisan group of 18 senators who asked that the package be withdrawn. "This would be a particularly bad time for the United States to increase the level of conflict in Central America," said the Senators, 16 Democrats and 2 Republicans. They asked that the request wait until President Reagan holds further discussion with Latin American leaders engaged in regional peace negotiations.

(Joanne Omang & Walter Pincus, Washington Post, A31)

Reagan Resists Pleas To Delay Contra Issue

President Reagan yesterday pushed his request to provide Nicaragua's anti-Sandinista rebels with \$100 million in aid, despite congressional pleas to delay the proposal.

A bipartisan group of 18 senators, led by Sens. Paul Simon, Illinois Democrat, and Mark Hatfield, Oregon Republican, urged the President to pull back his request for aid to the estimated 20,000 rebels fighting the Marxist Sandinista regime.

(Jeremiah O'Leary & James Morrison, Washington Times, A2)

REPORT SAYS CONTRAS MUST WIN POPULAR SUPPORT

The U.S.-backed Nicaraguan rebel army must take "firm steps" to win popular support from the Nicaraguan people or face military defeat, according to a study prepared by two American rebel supporters.

The eight-page report, "From a Proxy Force to a National Liberation Movement," agrees with the Reagan Administration that the Contra rebels need renewed U.S. military aid if they are to challenge the Soviet-supplied Nicaraguan army.
(Robert Parry, AP)

NICARAGUA VOWS NOT TO GIVE IN TO U.S. PRESSURE

MANAGUA -- Defense Minister Humberto Ortega has responded to President Reagan's proposal to boost support for anti-Sandinista rebels. At a military ceremony yesterday, Ortega pledged Nicaragua's left-wing government would never bow to U.S. pressure and would continue fighting until the U.S.-backed rebels and even a U.S. invasion were beaten.

"As long as there is no negotiated solution...as long as Reagan continues turning his back on Latin America...what is left for us but to carry on fortifying defense and the military organization of the people?" Ortega said.
(Matthew Campbell, Reuter)

U.S. AIDE SAYS A STRONG YEN COULD TRIGGER TRADE ACTION

A senior U.S. official said tonight that a yen valued at about 195 to the dollar, as a leading Japanese businessman has suggested, would be likely to prod Congress to pass protectionist trade legislation.

Clayton Yeutter made the comment when Japanese businessmen told him during a Tokyo-Washington television dialogue that a zone around 195 yen against the dollar would be acceptable. (Robert Trautman, Reuter)

-end of A-Section-

NETWORK NEWS SUMMARY

(Wednesday Evening, February 26, 1986)

PHILIPPINES/MARCOS

CBS's Dan Rather: A frail-looking Ferdinand Marcos arrived today in Honolulu. The fallen Philippine dictator needed a helping shoulder to leave the plane. The island-state is maybe the last stop in his journey into exile. (ALL NETS LEAD)

CBS's Bill Redeker reports that Marcos was welcomed to Honolulu by his old friend, Democrat Governor George Ariyoshi. Accompanied by his wife, Imelda, family and other supporters, the ousted ruler may accept his old friend's invitation to live here. Although the governor welcomes Marcos, many in the state's large Filipino community do not. Should he settle down in Hawaii, the former president could live comfortably in a fashionable neighborhood above Honolulu. The Marcos family reportedly owns two homes here, worth about \$2 million.

(TV Coverage: Various Marcos properties worth millions.)
Marcos denies owning much of this property, but the new Aquino administration is taking inventory, trying to reclaim what many believe was stolen. And there is a move on Capitol Hill to try and freeze Marcos' assets, until it can be determined whether American aid money was diverted to his personal use. No one is saying whether or even how long the former president will stay here. But by fleeing the problems of his own country, he may be unable to escape some new ones in this country.

CBS's Bob Simon reports that members of Aquino's new cabinet became instant celebrities. There was a new confidence here. The stock market closed higher today, and the business community went on the march, cheered by the knowledge that Marcos won't be around anymore to milk their profits. Meanwhile, measures were being taken to prevent any more wealth from leaving the land. Police found 13 crates of brand-new money inside a van heading for the port. And at the airport, it was the baggage of departing passengers that was being searched. (ALL NETS LEAD)

ABC's Peter Jennings: In the Philippines today the new Aquino government is taking its very first steps.

ABC's Ted Koppel reports from the Philippines: Hour by hour, the influence of Marcos is beginning to be purged here, and hour by hour Marcos moved further away from his homeland.

ABC's Al Dale reports from Hawaii: The former president and his party of some 90 people arrived at Hickam Air Force Base from Guam after a seven hour flight aboard a U.S. Air Force C-141 Starlifter. He had to be helped down the steps, followed by his wife Imelda, family members and military officers loyal to him.

Dale continues:

Marcos was greeted by Hawaii's governor and the commander of the base before being led to a motorcade, which would take them to visiting dignitaries quarters on the base.

(TV Coverage of Marcos arrival.)

How long he will stay here is not known, the State Department making it clear it is not pushing him to disclose his long-range plans. Outside the main gate, some 200 Marcos supporters gathered to welcome him. There is speculation that the immediate family may go to stay with close associates, who live in a fashionable hillside district in Honolulu, as early as tomorrow. But Marcos' arrival does not please everyone. The mayor of Honolulu says no local tax money will be spent to protect him. There is some concern that if he stays, political turmoil could result from within the sizeable Filipino community on these islands. But supporters of Corazon Aquino say they will not create a problem, in the spirit of her policy of reconciliation.

Koppel: It was for Aquino her first full day in office, and she wasted no time fulfilling two of her most important and once-controversial campaign pledges.

ABC's Jim Laurie: In one of her first moves as president, Aquino made preparations tonight for a political amnesty. She called on Gen. Ramos to draw up documents freeing political prisoners jailed by Marcos. Throughout the night, a military task force met. Just after midnight, Aquino government TV reported:

(Aquino: "They are hoping to release about 50 percent of all political detainees later today.")

Following up another Aquino campaign pledge, Ramos reshuffled the entire military command, purging all of Marcos' old generals. In her first news conference as president, Aquino named her 17-member cabinet -- a mix of longtime opposition leaders and one-time Marcos supporters. Despite all the moves, Aquino called on Filipinos to give her more time. But if people were impatient, there was no sign today as thousands continued to celebrate, many still on the grounds of the presidential palace. Whatever problems she may now face, she has begun to move. And she still enjoys a reservoir of enthusiastic support.

Koppel: At her news conference, Aquino said she will not seek the extradition of Marcos, but there will be an investigation of those military men accused of murdering and torturing civilians. Such an investigation is likely to create huge tensions for some of the very military commanders who brought Aquino to power. I raised that issue with her top aide, Mr. Arroyo.

(Arroyo: "When the history of the Philippines is known, perhaps we will beat the record of Argentina in magnitude of the kind of torture this country has suffered through the Marcos government.")

Arroyo also said there will be a new board of inquiry to look into the assassination of Benigno Aquino.

ABC's Mark Litke reports on the Philippine problems President Aquino now has to deal with: a largely undisciplined, unprofessional armed force; private armies armed by Marcos still employed by powerful pro-Marcos warlords; the communist insurgency; a poor economy.

NBC's Tom Brokaw: Ferdinand Marcos, who was transformed in a matter of a few hours from one of the most powerful leaders in the Pacific to an exile on the run is getting a feel tonight for what it's like to be a man without a country. He arrived at Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii looking like an ailing tourist. He has secret service protection, but Marcos is not entirely welcome in that island-state.

NBC's George Lewis in Honolulu: Marcos did not look well as he arrived: he had to be assisted by a military aid as he limped down the airplane ramp. He was greeted by an old friend, Hawaii Governor George Ariyoshi, the only elected official who showed up. There was unusually tight security for Marcos and his entourage of 88. During an earlier stopover in Guam, there had been telephone death threats against the deposed president. A small group of Marcos supporters tried to get on the base, but were kept outside. Tonight, Marcos, his wife, Imelda, other family members and associates will be the guests of the U.S. military. This, while federal and local officials work out security arrangements. Marcos has a couple of rich friends here who own hillside mansions, it's believed the former president will stay in one of them. Whether Marcos should be permitted to stay here is the subject of a good deal of controversy. There are deep divisions among Hawaii's politicians and among members of this state's Filipino community. (NBC-lead)

NBC's Steve Mallory from Manila: The Philippines without Marcos, day one: (crowd cheering) the people rejoice. The newly elected president, Corazon Aquino and Vice President, Salvadore Laurel made an impromptu public appearance and then got down to business, setting the tone for the nation's future.

(Aquino: "It's now time to heal the wounds, to forget the past so we can speed up the reconciliation and recovery of the nation.")

The economic stagnation, high unemployment, widespread poverty are the prime target areas. Mfs. Aquino announced her cabinet of men and women with the experience to deal with these problems, and who also have the respect of the people. The faith in the new leadership began showing as the nation returned to normal. The relatively peaceful four-day revolution was over.

MARCOS GIFTS

Brokaw: President Reagan and his wife Nancy received some \$25,000 in gifts from the Marcos'. Among them, a six foot tree and an American eagle both made of mother of pearl. Most of these gifts have been turned over to the federal archives. But the Reagans kept for their personal use a vibrating chair and an ottoman. Vice President Bush received a motorized massage chair from Marcos. A vice presidential spokesman said that's now being stored in a closet. But at the White House, a spokesman said the Reagans are still using their chair.

(NBC-3)

DUVALIER

NBC's Anne Garrels: Both Marcos and Duvalier were U.S. friends who misused their power, and in both cases the U.S. asked them to step down to avoid bloodshed. But in Marcos' case, he was only asking for safe haven.

(Bernard Kalb: "The United States has offered a welcome to him, etc., and that's where I'm going to leave it.")

(Rep. Stephen Solarz: "I think it was a price worth paying and I think that commitment should be respected.")

Marcos also came here because the Philippines has no extradition treaty with the United States. President Aquino has since said she has no intention of trying to bring him back. But Marcos may have trouble keeping the vast wealth he is believed to have illegally transferred to the United States. Mrs. Aquino does want that back. Congressman Solarz is introducing legislation to help her.

(Solarz: "I hope that it will be possible for the Philippine government to repatriate these resources to their own country where they are desperately needed.") (NBC-2)

PRESIDENT'S SPEECH

Brokaw: The security of the United States is a major topic at the White House tonight, where President Reagan will address the American people in a nationally televised speech. The President will push his plan for increased military spending.

NBC's Chris Wallace: The President's goal tonight is nothing less than to begin turning around national opinion on defense spending. Officials here admit that's a tall order -- even for the Great Communicator.

(TV Coverage: President in Cabinet Room.)

The President gave a sneak preview of his basic theme in a speech today: that with the U.S. facing serious threats, and negotiating with the Soviets, this is no time to halt the defense build-up.

(President: "Strength is the most persuasive argument we have to convince our adversaries to give up their hostile intentions, to negotiate seriously, and to stop bullying other nations.")

Over the last five years, defense spending has increased more than 50 percent after inflation. What has Mr. Reagan worried is that last year, Congress cut the Pentagon budget, for the first time in 15 years. And his proposal this year for a real increase of eight percent is also in trouble. In the Democratic response tonight, Rep. Wright will say that the President can't keep giving the Pentagon a blank check with the nation so deeply in debt. At the White House today, even Republicans were negative.

(Rep. Michel: "What the President initially asked for is going to be pared down to some degree, and that's what the debate is all ultimately going to be about -- how much.")

White House polling shows the public now thinks the defense budget is big enough. And it's turned off by stories of Pentagon waste. And, after last year's summit, they feel the threat against the U.S. has diminished. A former Reagan Defense official says the Pentagon can get by on less -- if the money is spent more wisely.

-more-

Wallace continues:

(Lawrence Korb: "The issue is to make the most out of the dollars that are available. I wish they were more, but the best we can hope for ... is to keep the budget level.")

Some advisers didn't want the President to make this speech, seeing it as a losing battle. But Mr. Reagan and top national security officials were determined -- to fight for his defense budget.

(NBC-8; CBS-3; ABC-6)

ARMS CONTROL/GORBACHEV

Rather: President Reagan's aides were busy today, trying to put the most positive possible spin on Soviet leader Gorbachev's threat to put off the next summit meeting unless there's arms control progress first. White House spokesman Larry Speakes said, "That kind of linkage simply won't work," and, said the two superpower chiefs, "can have a productive meeting with or without arms control progress." (CBS-8)

Donaldson: The White House has taken issue with Soviet leader

Gorbachev's suggestion that unless some agreements are reached on arms control there would be nothing to talk about at a second superpower summit meeting. "That kind of linkage simply won't work," said a spokesman, who insisted the two leaders will have plenty to talk about, agreements or not. (ABC-5)

SOVIET PARTY CONGRESS

Rather: In Moscow, today's first foreign guest speaker: Soviet client, Cuba's Fidel Castro, putting his mouth where his money is, denouncing "U.S. imperialism," as he put it. (CBS-9)

ABC's Walter Rogers reports that guests at the party conference, like Castro, thought it prudent to flatter the Russian hosts.

(Castro, through translator: "The brilliant report by Mikhail Gorbachev, the heroic deeds of the Soviet people, show nothing could ever check their indomitable march.")

Castro's condemnation of American imperialism earned him a standing ovation in Moscow and the approval of his principal patron.

(TV Coverage: Gorbachev shown clapping.)

Poland's Jaruzelski was also grateful for Moscow's support, especially after the economic dislocation of the Solidarity days. But members of the Politburo, taking their cue from Gorbachev yesterday, did indulge in self-criticism. (ABC-7)

SOVIET SYSTEM

ABC's George Will and Radio Moscow's Vladimir Posner debate:

Will: After nearly 70 years of the revolution, you're still burning up significant resources jamming foreign broadcasts, which indicates that the state fundamentally distrusts its own citizens.

(ABC Debate -- continued)

Posner: We do not distrust our own citizens. Just recently, as a matter of fact, we broadcast a program in which Americans and Soviets debated very hot issues, as they're considered in your country....If you look at the Soviet citizen, I would wager that he's more informed about the world and about your country than your citizen is about ours....He knows that you live better than we do. He knows that you have a higher standard of living. He knows your problems much more than your citizen knows ours.

CHALLENGER COMMISSION FINDINGS

Rather: NASA officials were grilled closely today by the shuttle disaster investigating team. By day's end, it was clear the investigators didn't like a lot of what they heard.

CBS's Eric Engberg reports that NASA spent a day on the carpet, its officials explaining why Challenger was launched, despite engineering objections that a key part might fail in the cold weather. One by one, the commission members pointed to lapses in the chain of command, which had kept senior officials in the dark about the potential for disaster.

(Chairman Rogers: "I think all of us feel there's been a breakdown of sorts in the process.")

Commission members appeared increasingly disturbed that commission members who approved the launch didn't know that opposition to the launch was almost unanimous among Thiokol engineers most concerned about cold weather. (CBS-5)

ABC's Lynn Sherr reports NASA officials denied they put pressure on Morton Thiokol engineers to reverse their original recommendation that Challenger not fly. The presidential commissioners seemed particularly incredulous that the controversy over the launch decision had not been relayed to key NASA officials. Today acting NASA Administrator William Graham acknowledged to congressmen he is taking action to improve the decision-making process. (ABC-2)

NBC's Robert Hager: Today, NASA's Lawrence Mulloy: "I cannot conceive how they or think that NASA could pressure them into making an unsafe decision." The commission was skeptical of that and shocked at the fact that no word of the hours of debate over safety of the O-rings at low temperatures ever reached top officials. Mulloy's boss, Stanley Reindhartz was the one who could have passed on the concerns higher up.

(Reindhartz: "I felt that the Thiokol and Marshall people had fully examined that concern and it had been satisfactorily dispositioned based on the evidence.") (NBC-5)

CHANCELLOR COMMENTARY ON NASA

There's a story they tell in Detroit about the auto company boss who told his subordinates, "gentlemen, this company is not in the business of making cars; it's in the business of making money." So the company made cheap cars which didn't sell, and it lost money. It had lost its way. That old yarn comes to mind when we think about NASA and the space shuttle disaster. NASA has changed from an organization dealing in science and exploration into an organization dealing in transportation. NASA began as a great adventure, but in the last couple of years it's seemed to turn into a business. The U.S. government wanted the shuttle to do most of the military, commercial, and scientific work in space and to compete with the Europeans. The pressure was on. The new generation of executives at this company called NASA sought to succeed, to meet those goals. And somewhere, the dangers of manned flight got submerged by the pressures to be a successful business. There may have been human errors that led to the disaster, but part of the blame is institutional: NASA tried to go too far, too fast.

EGYPTIAN MUTINY

Rather: It is being called the worst crisis Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has faced. A mutiny by thousands of security police, that started in and around Cairo yesterday, and spread to other Egyptian cities. A mutiny that turned into a rampage of violence. Officials say tonight "scores of people were killed, and hundreds wounded." Mubarak responded with force. Tanks and armored trucks traveled the roads near the Great Pyramid, where the rebellion began. Hundreds of foreign tourists were evacuated, safely. Mubarak today blamed the violence on a "deviationist minority" of his security forces. At last word, Cairo was reported quiet -- for now.
(ABC-4, CBS-2)

NBC's Martin Fletcher: Egyptian security police left a path of destruction after they rampaged through part of Cairo, near the pyramids. The Egyptians usually control riots with the very police that today did the rioting. So, the army was called in. It apparently began when a rumor swept police barracks that draftees would have to serve an extra year. This was denied. President Mubarak called an emergency cabinet meeting, then went on national TV. This is the most violent challenge to Mubarak since he came to power four years ago. But the real cause, as seen here, is rising prices and a crumbling economy.
(NBC-7)

SUPREME COURT/RENT CONTROLS

Rather: The U.S. Supreme Court ruled eight-to-one today that cities may impose rent controls; the Justices rejected landlord claims that rent controls amount to a price-fixing conspiracy.
(CBS-6)

CALIFORNIA SENATE RACE

Rather: A judge in Los Angeles today cited insufficient evidence, and dismissed a grand jury indictment against California Republican Congressman Bobbi Fiedler, and her top aide, who is also now her fiance. (CBS-7)

Editor's Note: CBS News aired the fourth segment of their six-part series on the nation's "farm crisis." Dan Rather mentioned that the U.S.D.A. reported Wednesday that U.S. farm exports declined more than 300 percent last year. (CBS-12)

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EDITORIALS/COLUMNISTS

PHILIPPINES

President Aquino -- "The Reagan Administration can take some satisfaction in having so far achieved its purpose of aiding a peaceful transfer of power. And it has done this in a correct way, not by emphasizing change for change itself but by stressing that the U.S. role is primarily to support democracy.... The U.S., having played its role in destroying the old order, now will have to see what it can do to help the new one succeed. That will be more difficult on the whole. But we hope that all those American politicians and journalists who have played a part in this change will keep in mind that what they said they wanted was more democracy. In a special sense, that's what they got. Now it is time to support it."
(Wall Street Journal, 2/26)

Liberation Day In Manila -- "In a sense, Mr. Marcos' last few days as president were his finest. For he, too, refused entreaties from his chief of staff Gen. Fabian C. Ver, who wanted to let the tanks roll over the masses. The president who had seemed to have lost touch with reality eventually faced reality and resigned.... In the coming months and perhaps years, what President Aquino will need most from us is some assistance and a lot of patience. She may not be as accepting of U.S. direction as Mr. Marcos was, but we need not fear the leader of a nation that has earned the designation of freedom fighter.
(Hartford Courant, 2/26)

President Aquino -- "Washington had long seemed too quick to embrace Mr. Marcos and gloss over his regime's imperfections, which eventually became too glaring to be ignored. The Reagan administration, however, began its preparations early. When opposition leader Benigno Aquino was assassinated, the State Department's Michael H. Armacost quickly visited Aquino's mother, attended the funeral, and otherwise indicated that Washington was not about to ignore the potential of a moderate, post-Marcos direction. The mission of Sen. Paul Laxalt to Marcos on behalf of President Reagan further affirmed serious White House interest in reform within the Philippines, as well as ensuring an eventual orderly succession. Congress supported the administration's thrust, with insistence on a presidential election, monitoring the outcome's fairness, and backing up of the President's offer of safe exile for Marcos if bloodshed were avoided."
(Christian Science Monitor, 2/26)

Change In The Philippines -- "The question now arises as to where the Marcoses and their entourage will go. The United States must take responsibility for its actions and its alliances over time; it must honor its word and respect its obligations. This country worked with Ferdinand Marcos, for better and, God knows, for worse over two decades. It gave and it took and it allowed him to develop a certain level of expectation as to how we would behave if he were in danger. It is up to the United States to take him in if he should wish to come. To do so would not mean that we love him. It would mean only that this country recognizes everyone's best interests -- including that of Mrs. Aquino."
(Washington Post, 2/26)

EDITORIALS/COLUMNISTS (continued)

Lesson Of The Philippines: It's The Timing That Counts -- "In the mythology of our times, Ferdinand Marcos now occupies a place alongside Somoza, 'Baby Doc' Duvalier and Batista. He is portrayed as a personalistic dictator who enjoyed no popular support, who was maintained in power entirely by the U.S., whose sole achievements were to rob and oppress his people, and who was finally driven from power when they rebelled and, through the force of moral example, compelled the U.S. to dispense with him.... In the Philippines, after early blunders, U.S. policy has guided a peaceful transition to a broad-based democratic regime. The real lesson of the Philippines is that dictators should be eased out when they are likely to be replaced by democrats -- not by worse dictators."

(New York Post, 2/26)

The Fall Of A Dictator -- "...the Reagan Administration could justifiably join in the celebration and share in the congratulation. Ferdinand Marcos' departure and Corazon Aquino's ascent to power probably could not have occurred with such relative ease without the support and assistance of U.S. officials, including President Reagan. They make it clear to Mr. Marcos that he had little choice but to leave.... President Reagan said last month that this country would consider increasing its aid to the Philippines if the election was honest and the winner undertook fundamental reforms. In the end, honesty has prevailed. Mrs. Aquino and her supporters have vowed to make the changes that Mr. Marcos resisted. If they follow through, Washington will have to keep its end of the bargain and provide the support they will need to put their country on a steady course."

(Chicago Tribune, 2/26)

This Time The U.S. Did It Right -- "Let it be said that in this important instance, the government of the United States, with bipartisan cooperation among key members of Congress and the administration, and support of the uniformed military and the intelligence agencies, delivered a unified message of support for the Filipino people which helped move a reluctant and recalcitrant Marcos toward his inevitable exit.... It is no easy thing for a great power to divorce itself from and then rid itself of a client-government leader who has outlived his usefulness and overreached his power. The United States has done that with Marcos -- and a good thing, too."

(David Broder, Washington Post, 2/26)

Finally -- "The United States, bound by historic, cultural and strategic ties to the Philippines, can be said to have acted responsibly if not always thoughtfully through the crisis. After President Reagan's press conference blunder that seemed to suggest tolerance of the rigged election results, policy lines became clear and proper. Marcos was given to understand that he had lost American support and that his safe departure and exile could be guaranteed only if he did not try to fight to hold on. Now Washington is hailing the reestablishment of democratic rule in the Philippines. It is up to Filipinos to make that democracy work. And it is up to the United States, whose long record of support for Marcos many in the Philippines won't soon forget, to do everything possible to abet that effort."

(Los Angeles Times, 2/26)

NETWORK COMMENTARY FOLLOWING PRESIDENT'S SPEECH

ABC's David Brinkley (following the speech and the Democratic response):
The Democratic Party's response to the President's speech, delivered by Rep. Jim Wright of Texas, the Majority Leader in the House.... And now, Sam Donaldson at the White House has been listening to the President's speech. Sam, why did he deliver this speech at this time?

Sam Donaldson: Well, David, we're right at the point where Congress is going to get down seriously to the battle of the budget. The next two or three months will be critical and Mr. Reagan wanted to bring his message to the American people because he's going to have a tough time selling this defense budget this year. He's had some success, as we all know, in the past. Last year, however, Congress held him to about a zero growth. And because of the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings law, in this current fiscal year, the defense budget has actually been cut, as Mr. Reagan suggested, by about \$5 or \$6 billion. So here's what the President has to do. You just heard Jim Wright lay out the case for the Democrats; Mr. Reagan has to say to the country, "We've got to cut more domestic programs. Not the programs for the poor, we've already done that, we've got to cut the middle class programs: veterans, home mortgage money, school lunches for the children of the middle class, all Medicare, all those programs. They've got to come way down. But at the same time, we've got to raise the defense budget by 8%." Well, that's a tough selling job for anyone. I won't underestimate Ronald Reagan. He is the super-salesman of the century. But he's really got his work cut out with this one.

Brinkley: Brit Hume and Charles Gibson watch over the Senate and the House every day. I have a question for both of you. Mr. Reagan wants a whole lot of money for the military at a time when the country is running deeply in the red, and Congress talks about this every day by the hour. Will he get it?

ABC's Charles Gibson: Well, David, I don't think so. The short answer to your question, I guess, is no. And that's really not me speaking. That is both Republican and Democratic member of the House who say that the constituency for the kind of defense increases that the President is talking about simply isn't there any more. The constituency is gone. As one Republican said today, you know that was fine in the early days of the Reagan Administration. And indeed, defense spending annually is up about 40% over the time that Ronald Reagan has been in office. But now, as he said, as the way he characterized it, Americans are more than willing. And the interest in those kinds of defense increases aren't there any more. That's a Republican speaking. And the point, of course, is that in this year of Gramm-Rudman law and the severe budget stringency that will be necessary, these increases in defense, if they were to come, would come, as Sam mentioned, at the cost of education and mortgage programs, etcetera....As one Democrat member said today, the President can go on television as often as he wants and ask for it, but the votes aren't there any more for the kind of increases that he's talking about....Now that, of course, is the view in the Democratic House, but the Republican Senate that Brit covers, he'll probably do a little better over there.

NETWORK COVERAGE FOLLOWING SPEECH (continued)

ABC's Brit Hume: Even over in the Republican Senate, nobody is even talking about increases along the lines the President has asked for. The feeling is that he'll get something quite a bit less than what amounts to 8% that he wants. But something. We're going to get an early test of how the President's going to do in the Senate on some of these defense-related issues because the President has asked for \$100 million in aid to the contra rebels fighting the government in Nicaragua. \$70 million of that is for military aid. Last year the President got no military aid for the contras, and his opposition up here thinks he shouldn't get any this year. Indeed, 18 senators sent him a letter this week urging him not to even ask for it. All but one of those senators, I should tell you, was a Democrat. However, the President has some things going for him in this fight and it is going to be waged over the last three weeks or months. We'll know in about a month something about how President Reagan is going to do. The things he has going for him are these: Baby Doc Duvalier, whom you mentioned earlier, and Mr. Marcos are gone in the Philippines and in Haiti with a little push from the Reagan Administration in both cases, which at least gives the President a chance to say that he is for the downfall of dictators in both right-wing and left-wing governments. In addition, the President has only asked for the aid to be re-programmed, not asked for new money, so he has helped his case there. The feeling is that he'll get some of what he wants but not all of it. Finally, I'd just like to close by mentioning something that Mark Hatfield said about contra aid today. He said, "For every contra we supply with a new gun, countless elderly Americans will go without meals." It gives you an idea how when money is tight you get down to gut issues up here pretty fast.

Brinkley: Thank you both. It sounds, from what you tell us, that Mr. Reagan wasted his time making his speech tonight.

ABC later broadcasts interviews with Soviet spokesman Vladimir Posner in Moscow.

CBS's Dan Rather: The President came out and spoke strongly, both in speaking to the Russians abroad, and to the U.S. Congress at home, on the need, as he sees it, to keep up U.S. defense spending, even at a time when other federal budget items, including social programs, are being cut deeply. The President accused Congress of "undercutting U.S. arms control negotiators by banning U.S. anti-satellite tests," and he said congressional cutting of defense spending would be "backsliding of the most irresponsible kind." But the President barely glanced over one of the most controversial defense spending items, his request for \$100 million, most of it for resumed military aid for the Contra rebels fighting the Sandinistas.

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NBC did not provide commentary.

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News Summary

OFFICE OF THE PRESS SECRETARY

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1986 -- 6 a.m. EST EDITION

TODAY'S HEADLINES

NATIONAL NEWS

Reagan Says Defense Cuts Would Be "Reckless" -- President Reagan, seeking to sustain defense spending increases that Congress wants to arrest, asserted last night that proposals to cut military spending are "reckless, dangerous, and wrong" and would impair American security and threaten the prospects for a nuclear arms reduction agreement with the Soviets. (Multiple Sources)

White House Blasts Rumor On Shuttle -- White House spokesman Larry Speakes yesterday heatedly denied what he described as a vicious and false rumor that the White House pressured NASA to launch the ill-fated Challenger space shuttle on Jan. 28 to coincide with the President's State of the Union speech. (Washington Times)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Reagan Resists Pleas To Delay Contra Issue -- President Reagan yesterday pushed his request to provide Nicaragua's anti-Sandinista rebels with \$100 million in aid, despite congressional pleas to delay the proposal. (Washington Post, Washington Times, AP)

NETWORK NEWS (Wednesday Evening)

MARCOS -- A frail-looking Ferdinand Marcos arrived today in Honolulu.

SPEECH -- The President's goal tonight is nothing less than to begin turning around national opinion on defense spending.

ARMS CONTROL -- The White House has taken issue with Gorbachev's suggestion that unless some agreements are reached on arms control there would be nothing to talk about at a second summit.

PEACE AND NATIONAL SECURITY

"Peace does not exist of its own will. It depends on us -- on our courage to build it and guard it and pass it on to future generations...."

(President Reagan's
Address to the Nation, 2/26)

NATIONAL NEWS

REAGAN URGES SUPPORT FOR DEFENSE GOALS

President Reagan appealed to the American people last night to support his request for increased military spending, saying that cuts in the defense budget would jeopardize arms control negotiations with the Soviet Union and "may put peace itself at risk."

In a nationally televised address from the Oval Office, Reagan argued that it would be "reckless, dangerous and wrong" to reduce the U.S. military budget in the face of the "enormous weapons investment" of the Soviets.

Administration advisers said they hoped Reagan's speech would help to change public perceptions that the United States is spending too much for defense, but congressional leaders of both parties predicted during the day that Congress would make reductions in the Administration's budget requests.

(Lou Cannon, Washington Post, A1)

Reagan's TV Talk Attempts To Save Military Build-Up

Alarmed by opinion surveys indicating a sharp drop in public support for his trillion-dollar military build-up, President Reagan launched a drive Wednesday night to save his arms programs from threatened cuts this year in Congress.

(Knight-Ridder story, Denver Post)

Reagan Says Defense Cuts Would Be "Reckless"

President Reagan, seeking to sustain defense spending increases that Congress wants to arrest, asserted last night that proposals to cut military spending are "reckless, dangerous, and wrong" and would impair American security and threaten the prospects for a nuclear arms reduction agreement with the Soviets.

(Boston Globe)

Reagan Asks Nation To Save Arms Build-Up

Alarmed by opinion surveys indicating a sharp drop in public support for his trillion-dollar military build-up, President Reagan launched a drive Wednesday night to save his arms programs from threatened cuts this year in Congress.

(Des Moines Register)

Reagan: Defense Cuts Reckless

President Reagan Wednesday declared that it would be "reckless, dangerous and wrong" for Congress to reduce his \$320 billion military budget request, saying cuts "could fatally compromise our negotiating position with the Soviets."

(AP wires)

Reagan: Cuts In Defense "Dangerous"

Looking to shore up national support for his defense budget, President Reagan warned Congressional foes Wednesday night that it would be "reckless, dangerous and wrong" to cut military spending. Linking his request for \$311.6 billion in new defense spending to arms reduction talks with the Soviet Union, Reagan said, "Any slackening now would invite the very dangers that America must avoid and could fatally compromise our negotiating position."

Atlanta Constitution

Reagan Tries To Save Defense Build-Up Plan

In a bluntly-worded address from the Oval Office, President Reagan declared that the contemplated cutbacks in his \$311 billion military spending request for fiscal year 1987 would be "reckless, dangerous, and wrong," and represent "backsliding of the most irresponsible kind."

(Arizona Republic)

Reagan Asks Public To Prod Congress To Sustain Escalated Defense Spending

President Reagan appealed to the American people Wednesday night to help him overcome growing Congressional resistance to higher defense spending and sustain the defense build-up that he called "the most persuasive argument we have to convince our adversaries to negotiate seriously."

(Los Angeles Times story, Kansas City Times)

Some Reagan Defense Points Miss Mark

President Reagan drew on a number of familiar anecdotes and arguments last night to bolster his plea for increased spending on arms. The record shows some of them to be in dispute or incorrect. Many of Reagan's statements last night are beyond dispute. But other statements appear more open to question.

(Fred Hiatt & George Wilson, News Analysis, Washington Post, A11)

On Offensive, Reagan Decries Defense Cuts

Cutting the defense budget now would be "reckless, dangerous and wrong," President Reagan said last night in an unusual televised speech aimed at gaining an early advantage in what is certain to be a bloody spending battle on Capitol Hill.

Mr. Reagan said there are "two simple reasons" not to cut defense spending, despite budgetary pressures. "One, it's not cheap," he said. "Two, it's not safe."

(Mary Belcher, Washington Times, A1)

Reagan/Defense

In contrast to President Reagan's gloomy assessment Wednesday of the U.S.-Soviet military balance, the Defense Department has painted a rosier picture of U.S. gains in the superpower arms race.

Although Reagan at one point acknowledged that "we have begun to close some of these gaps" between U.S. and Soviet military power, he said at another, "as a consequence of their (Moscow's) enormous weapons investment, major military imbalances still exist between our two countries."

Yet Secretary Weinberger, in his annual report to Congress presented earlier this month, said the Administration's \$1.2 trillion investment in the military over the last five years has brought about sufficient parity between the superpowers to deter a Soviet attack against the United States and its allies.

(Richard Gross, News Analysis, UPI)

Congress Prepares To Cut Back Defense Despite Televised Reagan Bid For More

Despite President Reagan's televised plea for support of an increased defense budget, Congress is preparing to make cuts that would have wide-ranging effects on the military posture of the United States and the non-communist world.

The Presidential budget message came as the Pentagon has escalated its warning that the world military balance -- while essentially stable -- is in danger of tilting once more against the United States unless the Reagan defense buildup continues.

(Walter Andrews, News Analysis, Washington Times, A5)

Reagan Defends Military Spending Plan

President Reagan, drumming up public support for his \$311 billion defense budget, says any attempt to cut military spending is "reckless, dangerous and wrong" and will put America's security in jeopardy.

Reagan said the nation has made considerable progress in its military buildup in the past five years, which totaled \$1.2 trillion in Pentagon spending. But, he added, the "hard, cold reality of our defense deficit" demands nothing less than the amount he is seeking for fiscal year 1987.

(Helen Thomas, UPI)

Reagan Asks For Increased Military Spending But Doesn't Say Who'll Pay

President Reagan says the nation would pay a terrible price for cutting back the 12 percent increase he wants in the defense budget. But his latest appeal avoided discussing another part of the equation: who will pay the bill?

"If we listen to those who would abandon our defense program, we will not only jeopardize negotiations with the Soviet Union -- we may put peace itself at risk," Reagan told the nation Wednesday night in a televised speech from the Oval Office.

(Donald Rothberg, AP)

President/Defense Spending

In going on the warpath Wednesday to save his \$311.6 billion military budget, President Reagan scarcely mentioned his immediate enemy: The deficit. This year, public and congressional determination to cut the deficit seems to be his chief obstacle.

But his 23-minute pitch to rescue next year's defense spending plan from all-but-certain cuts pulled together all the arguments he has made the past five years to justify the military buildup.

(William Ringle, News Analysis, Gannett)

CBO SAYS REAGAN BUDGET MISSES TARGET

President Reagan's budget falls \$15.7 billion short of the \$144 billion Gramm-Rudman-Hollings deficit-reduction target for fiscal 1987, largely because defense spending was underestimated, the Congressional Budget Office said yesterday.

The nonpartisan CBO concluded that Reagan underestimated deficits by \$151 billion over the next five years, enough to miss the fiscal 1991 target of a balanced budget by \$40 billion.

(Helen Dewar, Washington Post, A4)

WHITE HOUSE BLASTS RUMOR ON SHUTTLE

White House spokesman Larry Speakes yesterday heatedly denied what he described as a vicious and false rumor that the White House pressured NASA to launch the ill-fated Challenger space shuttle on Jan. 28 to coincide with the President's State of the Union speech.

"Some source over there said Donald Regan had called NASA and said 'Get that thing up'", Speakes said. "Absolutely not. It's the most vicious and distorted rumor I've ever heard. I'll bet you a dollar not a soul here has gotten that from an official source. You got it from your press colleagues."
(Washington Times, A8)

DEAVER FIRM SAID TO OVER-REPORT AMOUNT OF SOUTH KOREAN CONTRACTS

Former top Reagan Administration White House aide Michael Deaver over-reported by \$950,000 contracts his public affairs company has with the South Korean government, the Korean Embassy here said. Embassy officials said Korea had only one \$475,000 contract with the Deaver firm, not three.

Yesterday, Deaver made it official, eliminating claims to two of the contracts, which the company said had been filed during a period of confusion over which organization would be the conduit for funds for a single contract.
(Stuart Auerbach, Washington Post, A7)

BENNETT DEFENDS PLANNED SCHOOL AID CHANGE

Secretary William Bennett testified yesterday before a House committee on the Reagan Administration's proposal to convert federal school aid for low-income children into a voucher plan, describing the measure as a way to expand opportunities for students who are "captive to a poor education."
(Lawrence Feinberg, Washington Post, A21)

House Foes Call Bennett Voucher Plan "Fraud"

Hostile members of the House Education and Labor Committee told Secretary Bennett yesterday that the Reagan Administration's voucher proposal for disadvantaged schoolchildren is a "fraud" and a "swindle." Rep. Charles Hayes (D-Ill) asked if the Administration regards disadvantaged students as "expendable."

(Carol Innerst, Washington Times, A5)

GOVT. WOULD LOSE \$250 MILLION IN CONRAIL SALE TO NORFOLK SOUTHERN

The government would take a \$250 million loss over the period 1987-1991 by selling Conrail to Norfolk Southern Corp., according to the Congressional Budget Office's analysis of President Reagan's 1987 budget plan.

The analysis, released Wednesday by the nonpartisan CBO, said the government would get \$1.25 billion from Norfolk Southern for Conrail, the federally owned freight rail carrier serving shippers in the northeast and midwest.
(George Lobsenz, UPI)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

MARCOS' U.S. SUPPORT ENDED SUNDAY NIGHT

The Reagan Administration sent messages to President Marcos that time had run out for his regime through three separate private channels last Sunday evening, nearly 12 hours before this viewpoint was made public in an early morning White House announcement, U.S. and Philippine sources said yesterday.

The messages to the Philippine president flowed from a crucial National Security Council meeting Sunday afternoon at which Philip Habib reported bluntly to President Reagan that "the Marcos era had ended," sources said. (Don Oberdorfer & David Hoffman, Washington Post, A1)

A Fatigued Marcos Arrives In Hawaii

HONOLULU -- A frail former president Marcos arrived here today aboard a U.S. Air Force transport plane to begin a new life in exile. The man who had governed the Philippines with a strong hand for two decades appeared to be ill and in a deep state of fatigue.

American pressure had played an important role in leading Marcos to his decision to avoid a bloody battle with his opponents, and now the former leader was accepting an offer of sanctuary from President Reagan.

(Daniel Southerland, Washington Post, A1)

Marcos Arrives In Hawaii, Assured His U.S. Loot Safe

Deposed Filipino President Marcos, his final destination still uncertain, arrived in Hawaii yesterday and was met by a Reagan Administration promise that it would not seize his vast U.S. holdings.

The White House, however, would not say whether it would resist any future effort by the new president of the Philippines, Corazon Aquino, to claim the Marcos assets -- estimated by congressional sources at more than \$350 million.

(Jeremiah O'Leary, Washington Times, A7)

Reagan Praises Philippines' Peaceful Change Of Leaders

President Reagan last night hailed the peaceful transfer of power in the Philippines as a "triumph of democracy" and said that "despite a flawed election, the Filipino people were understood."

Reagan opened his nationally televised address on defense by describing this week's events in the Philippines as a "stirring demonstration of what men and women committed to democratic ideals can achieve." It was his first public comment on the Philippines since his controversial remark Feb. 10 that there was "fraud on both sides" in the recent election.

(David Hoffman, Washington Post, A29)

Conservatives On Hill Salute Delicate Moves

Conservative members of Congress yesterday hailed the Reagan Administration's handling of the crisis in the Philippines and said it showed the United States practiced what it preached. The moral, conservatives say, is that the United States should not support foreign governments, even if they were stridently anti-communist, if those governments do not have the popular support of the people.

(Rita McWilliams, Washington Times, A1)

U.S. ENVOY RETURNS TO MANILA

MANILA -- Philip Habib returned to Manila today for talks with government and other officials on possible help for the new administration of Corazon Aquino, an American embassy spokesman said. "He is here on behalf of President Reagan to show U.S. support for the Aquino government and to offer any assistance we can," the spokesman said.

(Reuters)

WHITE HOUSE WON'T LINK SUMMIT AND ARMS TALKS

The White House yesterday rejected linkage of a summit meeting in the United States to progress in the Geneva arms talks, as Soviet leader Gorbachev seemed to hint in a major speech Tuesday in Moscow.

Spokesman Larry Speakes said "we can have a productive meeting without progress in Geneva. But at the same time we wish to make progress at Geneva and can do so if the Soviets would like it."

(Walter Pincus, Washington Post, A10)

ARMS TALKS PESSIMISM CASTING DOUBT OVER SUMMIT PLANNED LATER THIS YEAR

GENEVA, Switzerland -- The current round of arms talks is ending in an atmosphere of pessimism so deep that it casts doubt over the projected summit meeting this year between President Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev.

Soviet sources here indicated that Mr. Gorbachev's expressed lack of interest Tuesday in a second summit was more than a ploy. The current pessimism contrasts sharply with the optimistic opening of this round of talks, which followed the euphoria of November's summit.

(Andrew Borowiec, Washington Times, A6)

HOUSE DEFIES REAGAN, URGES NUCLEAR TEST BAN

The House, defying President Reagan, last night passed a resolution calling for negotiations with the Soviet Union on a comprehensive ban on nuclear weapons testing. The resolution has no binding effect on the White House but was a political defeat for Mr. Reagan. The resolution passed 268-148, with 49 Republicans supporting it.

(Washington Times, A3)

HOUSE CALLS ON REAGAN TO NEGOTIATE GLOBAL NUCLEAR TEST BAN

The House has called on the Reagan Administration to negotiate with the Soviet Union for a global ban on all nuclear weapons tests. The vote followed more than four hours of debate in the Democratic-controlled body, which overcame a lobbying effort by the Reagan Administration. President Reagan made several telephone calls to congressmen urging them to oppose the resolution, according to House members.

(Tim Ahern, AP)

U.S. READIES MISSILE SALE TO SAUDIS

In an effort to get an Arab arms sale through Congress, the Reagan Administration is preparing to seek approval to sell Saudi Arabia a package of missiles worth more than \$300 million, according to Administration and congressional officials.

The package may be sent to the Capitol within the week, some sources said. But others have suggested that the White House may not give final approval to the proposed package at this time because of concerns that it would repeat the political fight that forced the Administration last month to postpone a \$1.5 billion arms sale to Jordan indefinitely.

(Charles Babcock, Washington Post, A14)

\$25 MILLION IN AID RELEASED TO HAITI

The Reagan Administration, citing the new Haitian government's moves towards democracy and improvements in human rights, yesterday released \$25.5 million in aid that had been withheld because of rights abuses during the final weeks of Jean-Claude Duvalier's rule. The State Department announced that Secretary Shultz had determined that the improved rights situation in Haiti since Duvalier's departure permitted freeing the funds.

(Washington Post, A19)

REAGAN BEGINS PUSH FOR \$100 MILLION FOR NICARAGUAN REBELS

President Reagan has begun lobbying for congressional approval of \$100 million in military and other U.S. aid for the American-backed rebels fighting the Soviet-supported government of Nicaragua.

But Reagan was warned Wednesday during meetings with legislators that there is strong opposition to the plan. At the same time, 18 senators asked him to withhold his plan until a group of Latin American nations puts together a regional summit meeting.

(Tim Ahern, AP)

18 Senators Want Contra Aid Plan Withdrawn

Critics and defenders of the Reagan Administration's request for aid to Nicaraguan rebels began staking out battle positions yesterday, led by a bipartisan group of 18 senators who asked that the package be withdrawn. "This would be a particularly bad time for the United States to increase the level of conflict in Central America," said the Senators, 16 Democrats and 2 Republicans. They asked that the request wait until President Reagan holds further discussion with Latin American leaders engaged in regional peace negotiations.

(Joanne Omang & Walter Pincus, Washington Post, A31)

Reagan Resists Pleas To Delay Contra Issue

President Reagan yesterday pushed his request to provide Nicaragua's anti-Sandinista rebels with \$100 million in aid, despite congressional pleas to delay the proposal.

A bipartisan group of 18 senators, led by Sens. Paul Simon, Illinois Democrat, and Mark Hatfield, Oregon Republican, urged the President to pull back his request for aid to the estimated 20,000 rebels fighting the Marxist Sandinista regime.

(Jeremiah O'Leary & James Morrison, Washington Times, A2)

REPORT SAYS CONTRAS MUST WIN POPULAR SUPPORT

The U.S.-backed Nicaraguan rebel army must take "firm steps" to win popular support from the Nicaraguan people or face military defeat, according to a study prepared by two American rebel supporters.

The eight-page report, "From a Proxy Force to a National Liberation Movement," agrees with the Reagan Administration that the Contra rebels need renewed U.S. military aid if they are to challenge the Soviet-supplied Nicaraguan army.
(Robert Parry, AP)

NICARAGUA VOWS NOT TO GIVE IN TO U.S. PRESSURE

MANAGUA -- Defense Minister Humberto Ortega has responded to President Reagan's proposal to boost support for anti-Sandinista rebels. At a military ceremony yesterday, Ortega pledged Nicaragua's left-wing government would never bow to U.S. pressure and would continue fighting until the U.S.-backed rebels and even a U.S. invasion were beaten.

"As long as there is no negotiated solution...as long as Reagan continues turning his back on Latin America...what is left for us but to carry on fortifying defense and the military organization of the people?" Ortega said.
(Matthew Campbell, Reuter)

U.S. AIDE SAYS A STRONG YEN COULD TRIGGER TRADE ACTION

A senior U.S. official said tonight that a yen valued at about 195 to the dollar, as a leading Japanese businessman has suggested, would be likely to prod Congress to pass protectionist trade legislation.

Clayton Yeutter made the comment when Japanese businessmen told him during a Tokyo-Washington television dialogue that a zone around 195 yen against the dollar would be acceptable.
(Robert Trautman, Reuter)

-end of A-Section-

NETWORK NEWS SUMMARY

(Wednesday Evening, February 26, 1986)

PHILIPPINES/MARCOS

CBS's Dan Rather: A frail-looking Ferdinand Marcos arrived today in Honolulu. The fallen Philippine dictator needed a helping shoulder to leave the plane. The island-state is maybe the last stop in his journey into exile. (ALL NETS LEAD)

CBS's Bill Redeker reports that Marcos was welcomed to Honolulu by his old friend, Democrat Governor George Ariyoshi. Accompanied by his wife, Imelda, family and other supporters, the ousted ruler may accept his old friend's invitation to live here. Although the governor welcomes Marcos, many in the state's large Filipino community do not. Should he settle down in Hawaii, the former president could live comfortably in a fashionable neighborhood above Honolulu. The Marcos family reportedly owns two homes here, worth about \$2 million.

(TV Coverage: Various Marcos properties worth millions.) Marcos denies owning much of this property, but the new Aquino administration is taking inventory, trying to reclaim what many believe was stolen. And there is a move on Capitol Hill to try and freeze Marcos' assets, until it can be determined whether American aid money was diverted to his personal use. No one is saying whether or even how long the former president will stay here. But by fleeing the problems of his own country, he may be unable to escape some new ones in this country.

CBS's Bob Simon reports that members of Aquino's new cabinet became instant celebrities. There was a new confidence here. The stock market closed higher today, and the business community went on the march, cheered by the knowledge that Marcos won't be around anymore to milk their profits. Meanwhile, measures were being taken to prevent any more wealth from leaving the land. Police found 13 crates of brand-new money inside a van heading for the port. And at the airport, it was the baggage of departing passengers that was being searched. (ALL NETS LEAD)

ABC's Peter Jennings: In the Philippines today the new Aquino government is taking its very first steps.

ABC's Ted Koppel reports from the Philippines: Hour by hour, the influence of Marcos is beginning to be purged here, and hour by hour Marcos moved further away from his homeland.

ABC's Al Dale reports from Hawaii: The former president and his party of some 90 people arrived at Hickam Air Force Base from Guam after a seven hour flight aboard a U.S. Air Force C-141 Starlifter. He had to be helped down the steps, followed by his wife Imelda, family members and military officers loyal to him.

Dale continues:

Marcos was greeted by Hawaii's governor and the commander of the base before being led to a motorcade, which would take them to visiting dignitaries quarters on the base.

(TV Coverage of Marcos arrival.)

How long he will stay here is not known, the State Department making it clear it is not pushing him to disclose his long-range plans. Outside the main gate, some 200 Marcos supporters gathered to welcome him. There is speculation that the immediate family may go to stay with close associates, who live in a fashionable hillside district in Honolulu, as early as tomorrow. But Marcos' arrival does not please everyone. The mayor of Honolulu says no local tax money will be spent to protect him. There is some concern that if he stays, political turmoil could result from within the sizeable Filipino community on these islands. But supporters of Corazon Aquino say they will not create a problem, in the spirit of her policy of reconciliation.

Koppel: It was for Aquino her first full day in office, and she wasted no time fulfilling two of her most important and once-controversial campaign pledges.

ABC's Jim Laurie: In one of her first moves as president, Aquino made preparations tonight for a political amnesty. She called on Gen. Ramos to draw up documents freeing political prisoners jailed by Marcos. Throughout the night, a military task force met. Just after midnight, Aquino government TV reported:

(Aquino: "They are hoping to release about 50 percent of all political detainees later today.")

Following up another Aquino campaign pledge, Ramos reshuffled the entire military command, purging all of Marcos' old generals. In her first news conference as president, Aquino named her 17-member cabinet -- a mix of longtime opposition leaders and one-time Marcos supporters. Despite all the moves, Aquino called on Filipinos to give her more time. But if people were impatient, there was no sign today as thousands continued to celebrate, many still on the grounds of the presidential palace. Whatever problems she may now face, she has begun to move. And she still enjoys a reservoir of enthusiastic support.

Koppel: At her news conference, Aquino said she will not seek the extradition of Marcos, but there will be an investigation of those military men accused of murdering and torturing civilians. Such an investigation is likely to create huge tensions for some of the very military commanders who brought Aquino to power. I raised that issue with her top aide, Mr. Arroyo.

(Arroyo: "When the history of the Philippines is known, perhaps we will beat the record of Argentina in magnitude of the kind of torture this country has suffered through the Marcos government.")

Arroyo also said there will be a new board of inquiry to look into the assassination of Benigno Aquino.

ABC's Mark Litke reports on the Philippine problems President Aquino now has to deal with: a largely undisciplined, unprofessional armed force; private armies armed by Marcos still employed by powerful pro-Marcos warlords; the communist insurgency; a poor economy.

NBC's Tom Brokaw: Ferdinand Marcos, who was transformed in a matter of a few hours from one of the most powerful leaders in the Pacific to an exile on the run is getting a feel tonight for what it's like to be a man without a country. He arrived at Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii looking like an ailing tourist. He has secret service protection, but Marcos is not entirely welcome in that island-state.

NBC's George Lewis in Honolulu: Marcos did not look well as he arrived: he had to be assisted by a military aid as he limped down the airplane ramp. He was greeted by an old friend, Hawaii Governor George Ariyoshi, the only elected official who showed up. There was unusually tight security for Marcos and his entourage of 88. During an earlier stopover in Guam, there had been telephone death threats against the deposed president. A small group of Marcos supporters tried to get on the base, but were kept outside. Tonight, Marcos, his wife, Imelda, other family members and associates will be the guests of the U.S. military. This, while federal and local officials work out security arrangements. Marcos has a couple of rich friends here who own hillside mansions, it's believed the former president will stay in one of them. Whether Marcos should be permitted to stay here is the subject of a good deal of controversy. There are deep divisions among Hawaii's politicians and among members of this state's Filipino community. (NBC-lead)

NBC's Steve Mallory from Manila: The Philippines without Marcos, day one: (crowd cheering) the people rejoice. The newly elected president, Corazon Aquino and Vice President, Salvadore Laurel made an impromptu public appearance and then got down to business, setting the tone for the nation's future.

(Aquino: "It's now time to heal the wounds, to forget the past so we can speed up the reconciliation and recovery of the nation.")

The economic stagnation, high unemployment, widespread poverty are the prime target areas. Mrs. Aquino announced her cabinet of men and women with the experience to deal with these problems, and who also have the respect of the people. The faith in the new leadership began showing as the nation returned to normal. The relatively peaceful four-day revolution was over.

MARCOS GIFTS

Brokaw: President Reagan and his wife Nancy received some \$25,000 in gifts from the Marcos'. Among them, a six foot tree and an American eagle both made of mother of pearl. Most of these gifts have been turned over to the federal archives. But the Reagans kept for their personal use a vibrating chair and an ottoman. Vice President Bush received a motorized massage chair from Marcos. A vice presidential spokesman said that's now being stored in a closet. But at the White House, a spokesman said the Reagans are still using their chair.

(NBC-3)

DUVALIER

NBC's Anne Garrels: Both Marcos and Duvalier were U.S. friends who misused their power, and in both cases the U.S. asked them to step down to avoid bloodshed. But in Marcos' case, he was only asking for safe haven.

(Bernard Kalb: "The United States has offered a welcome to him, etc., and that's where I'm going to leave it.")

(Rep. Stephen Solarz: "I think it was a price worth paying and I think that commitment should be respected.")

Marcos also came here because the Philippines has no extradition treaty with the United States. President Aquino has since said she has no intention of trying to bring him back. But Marcos may have trouble keeping the vast wealth he is believed to have illegally transferred to the United States. Mrs. Aquino does want that back. Congressman Solarz is introducing legislation to help her.

(Solarz: "I hope that it will be possible for the Philippine government to repatriate these resources to their own country where they are desperately needed.") (NBC-2)

PRESIDENT'S SPEECH

Brokaw: The security of the United States is a major topic at the White House tonight, where President Reagan will address the American people in a nationally televised speech. The President will push his plan for increased military spending.

NBC's Chris Wallace: The President's goal tonight is nothing less than to begin turning around national opinion on defense spending. Officials here admit that's a tall order -- even for the Great Communicator.

(TV Coverage: President in Cabinet Room.)

The President gave a sneak preview of his basic theme in a speech today: that with the U.S. facing serious threats, and negotiating with the Soviets, this is no time to halt the defense build-up.

(President: "Strength is the most persuasive argument we have to convince our adversaries to give up their hostile intentions, to negotiate seriously, and to stop bullying other nations.")

Over the last five years, defense spending has increased more than 50 percent after inflation. What has Mr. Reagan worried is that last year, Congress cut the Pentagon budget, for the first time in 15 years. And his proposal this year for a real increase of eight percent is also in trouble. In the Democratic response tonight, Rep. Wright will say that the President can't keep giving the Pentagon a blank check with the nation so deeply in debt. At the White House today, even Republicans were negative.

(Rep. Michel: "What the President initially asked for is going to be pared down to some degree, and that's what the debate is all ultimately going to be about -- how much.")

White House polling shows the public now thinks the defense budget is big enough. And it's turned off by stories of Pentagon waste. And, after last year's summit, they feel the threat against the U.S. has diminished. A former Reagan Defense official says the Pentagon can get by on less -- if the money is spent more wisely.

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Wallace continues:

(Lawrence Korb: "The issue is to make the most out of the dollars that are available. I wish they were more, but the best we can hope for ... is to keep the budget level.")

Some advisers didn't want the President to make this speech, seeing it as a losing battle. But Mr. Reagan and top national security officials were determined -- to fight for his defense budget.

(NBC-8; CBS-3; ABC-6)

ARMS CONTROL/GORBACHEV

Rather: President Reagan's aides were busy today, trying to put the most positive possible spin on Soviet leader Gorbachev's threat to put off the next summit meeting unless there's arms control progress first. White House spokesman Larry Speakes said, "That kind of linkage simply won't work," and, said the two superpower chiefs, "can have a productive meeting with or without arms control progress." (CBS-8)

Donaldson: The White House has taken issue with Soviet leader

Gorbachev's suggestion that unless some agreements are reached on arms control there would be nothing to talk about at a second superpower summit meeting. "That kind of linkage simply won't work," said a spokesman, who insisted the two leaders will have plenty to talk about, agreements or not. (ABC-5)

SOVIET PARTY CONGRESS

Rather: In Moscow, today's first foreign guest speaker: Soviet client, Cuba's Fidel Castro, putting his mouth where his money is, denouncing "U.S. imperialism," as he put it. (CBS-9)

ABC's Walter Rogers reports that guests at the party conference, like Castro, thought it prudent to flatter the Russian hosts.

(Castro, through translator: "The brilliant report by Mikhail Gorbachev, the heroic deeds of the Soviet people, show nothing could ever check their indomitable march.")

Castro's condemnation of American imperialism earned him a standing ovation in Moscow and the approval of his principal patron.

(TV Coverage: Gorbachev shown clapping.)

Poland's Jaruzelski was also grateful for Moscow's support, especially after the economic dislocation of the Solidarity days. But members of the Politburo, taking their cue from Gorbachev yesterday, did indulge in self-criticism. (ABC-7)

SOVIET SYSTEM

ABC's George Will and Radio Moscow's Vladimir Posner debate:

Will: After nearly 70 years of the revolution, you're still burning up significant resources jamming foreign broadcasts, which indicates that the state fundamentally distrusts its own citizens.

(ABC Debate -- continued)

Posner: We do not distrust our own citizens. Just recently, as a matter of fact, we broadcast a program in which Americans and Soviets debated very hot issues, as they're considered in your country....If you look at the Soviet citizen, I would wager that he's more informed about the world and about your country than your citizen is about ours....He knows that you live better than we do. He knows that you have a higher standard of living. He knows your problems much more than your citizen knows ours.

CHALLENGER COMMISSION FINDINGS

Rather: NASA officials were grilled closely today by the shuttle disaster investigating team. By day's end, it was clear the investigators didn't like a lot of what they heard.

CBS's Eric Engberg reports that NASA spent a day on the carpet, its officials explaining why Challenger was launched, despite engineering objections that a key part might fail in the cold weather. One by one, the commission members pointed to lapses in the chain of command, which had kept senior officials in the dark about the potential for disaster.

(Chairman Rogers: "I think all of us feel there's been a breakdown of sorts in the process.")

Commission members appeared increasingly disturbed that commission members who approved the launch didn't know that opposition to the launch was almost unanimous among Thiokol engineers most concerned about cold weather. (CBS-5)

ABC's Lynn Sherr reports NASA officials denied they put pressure on Morton Thiokol engineers to reverse their original recommendation that Challenger not fly. The presidential commissioners seemed particularly incredulous that the controversy over the launch decision had not been relayed to key NASA officials. Today acting NASA Administrator William Graham acknowledged to congressmen he is taking action to improve the decision-making process. (ABC-2)

NBC's Robert Hager: Today, NASA's Lawrence Mulloy: "I cannot conceive how they or think that NASA could pressure them into making an unsafe decision." The commission was skeptical of that and shocked at the fact that no word of the hours of debate over safety of the O-rings at low temperatures ever reached top officials. Mulloy's boss, Stanley Reindhartz was the one who could have passed on the concerns higher up.

(Reindhartz: "I felt that the Thiokol and Marshall people had fully examined that concern and it had been satisfactorily dispositioned based on the evidence.") (NBC-5)

CHANCELLOR COMMENTARY ON NASA

There's a story they tell in Detroit about the auto company boss who told his subordinates, "gentlemen, this company is not in the business of making cars; it's in the business of making money." So the company made cheap cars which didn't sell, and it lost money. It had lost its way. That old yarn comes to mind when we think about NASA and the space shuttle disaster. NASA has changed from an organization dealing in science and exploration into an organization dealing in transportation. NASA began as a great adventure, but in the last couple of years it's seemed to turn into a business. The U.S. government wanted the shuttle to do most of the military, commercial, and scientific work in space and to compete with the Europeans. The pressure was on. The new generation of executives at this company called NASA sought to succeed, to meet those goals. And somewhere, the dangers of manned flight got submerged by the pressures to be a successful business. There may have been human errors that led to the disaster, but part of the blame is institutional: NASA tried to go too far, too fast.

EGYPTIAN MUTINY

Rather: It is being called the worst crisis Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has faced. A mutiny by thousands of security police, that started in and around Cairo yesterday, and spread to other Egyptian cities. A mutiny that turned into a rampage of violence. Officials say tonight "scores of people were killed, and hundreds wounded." Mubarak responded with force. Tanks and armored trucks traveled the roads near the Great Pyramid, where the rebellion began. Hundreds of foreign tourists were evacuated, safely. Mubarak today blamed the violence on a "deviationist minority" of his security forces. At last word, Cairo was reported quiet -- for now.
(ABC-4, CBS-2)

NBC's Martin Fletcher: Egyptian security police left a path of destruction after they rampaged through part of Cairo, near the pyramids. The Egyptians usually control riots with the very police that today did the rioting. So, the army was called in. It apparently began when a rumor swept police barracks that draftees would have to serve an extra year. This was denied. President Mubarak called an emergency cabinet meeting, then went on national TV. This is the most violent challenge to Mubarak since he came to power four years ago. But the real cause, as seen here, is rising prices and a crumbling economy.
(NBC-7)

SUPREME COURT/RENT CONTROLS

Rather: The U.S. Supreme Court ruled eight-to-one today that cities may impose rent controls; the Justices rejected landlord claims that rent controls amount to a price-fixing conspiracy.
(CBS-6)

CALIFORNIA SENATE RACE

Rather: A judge in Los Angeles today cited insufficient evidence, and dismissed a grand jury indictment against California Republican Congressman Bobbi Fiedler, and her top aide, who is also now her fiancée. (CBS-7)

Editor's Note: CBS News aired the fourth segment of their six-part series on the nation's "farm crisis." Dan Rather mentioned that the U.S.D.A. reported Wednesday that U.S. farm exports declined more than 300 percent last year. (CBS-12)

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EDITORIALS/COLUMNISTS

PHILIPPINES

President Aquino -- "The Reagan Administration can take some satisfaction in having so far achieved its purpose of aiding a peaceful transfer of power. And it has done this in a correct way, not by emphasizing change for change itself but by stressing that the U.S. role is primarily to support democracy.... The U.S., having played its role in destroying the old order, now will have to see what it can do to help the new one succeed. That will be more difficult on the whole. But we hope that all those American politicians and journalists who have played a part in this change will keep in mind that what they said they wanted was more democracy. In a special sense, that's what they got. Now it is time to support it."

(Wall Street Journal, 2/26)

Liberation Day In Manila -- "In a sense, Mr. Marcos' last few days as president were his finest. For he, too, refused entreaties from his chief of staff Gen. Fabian C. Ver, who wanted to let the tanks roll over the masses. The president who had seemed to have lost touch with reality eventually faced reality and resigned.... In the coming months and perhaps years, what President Aquino will need most from us is some assistance and a lot of patience. She may not be as accepting of U.S. direction as Mr. Marcos was, but we need not fear the leader of a nation that has earned the designation of freedom fighter.

(Hartford Courant, 2/26)

President Aquino -- "Washington had long seemed too quick to embrace Mr. Marcos and gloss over his regime's imperfections, which eventually became too glaring to be ignored. The Reagan administration, however, began its preparations early. When opposition leader Benigno Aquino was assassinated, the State Department's Michael H. Armacost quickly visited Aquino's mother, attended the funeral, and otherwise indicated that Washington was not about to ignore the potential of a moderate, post-Marcos direction. The mission of Sen. Paul Laxalt to Marcos on behalf of President Reagan further affirmed serious White House interest in reform within the Philippines, as well as ensuring an eventual orderly succession. Congress supported the administration's thrust, with insistence on a presidential election, monitoring the outcome's fairness, and backing up of the President's offer of safe exile for Marcos if bloodshed were avoided."

(Christian Science Monitor, 2/26)

Change In The Philippines -- "The question now arises as to where the Marcoses and their entourage will go. The United States must take responsibility for its actions and its alliances over time; it must honor its word and respect its obligations. This country worked with Ferdinand Marcos, for better and, God knows, for worse over two decades. It gave and it took and it allowed him to develop a certain level of expectation as to how we would behave if he were in danger. It is up to the United States to take him in if he should wish to come. To do so would not mean that we love him. It would mean only that this country recognizes everyone's best interests -- including that of Mrs. Aquino."

(Washington Post, 2/26)

EDITORIALS/COLUMNISTS (continued)

Lesson Of The Philippines: It's The Timing That Counts -- "In the mythology of our times, Ferdinand Marcos now occupies a place alongside Somoza, 'Baby Doc' Duvalier and Batista. He is portrayed as a personalistic dictator who enjoyed no popular support, who was maintained in power entirely by the U.S., whose sole achievements were to rob and oppress his people, and who was finally driven from power when they rebelled and, through the force of moral example, compelled the U.S. to dispense with him.... In the Philippines, after early blunders, U.S. policy has guided a peaceful transition to a broad-based democratic regime. The real lesson of the Philippines is that dictators should be eased out when they are likely to be replaced by democrats -- not by worse dictators."

(New York Post, 2/26)

The Fall Of A Dictator -- "...the Reagan Administration could justifiably join in the celebration and share in the congratulation. Ferdinand Marcos' departure and Corazon Aquino's ascent to power probably could not have occurred with such relative ease without the support and assistance of U.S. officials, including President Reagan. They make it clear to Mr. Marcos that he had little choice but to leave.... President Reagan said last month that this country would consider increasing its aid to the Philippines if the election was honest and the winner undertook fundamental reforms. In the end, honesty has prevailed. Mrs. Aquino and her supporters have vowed to make the changes that Mr. Marcos resisted. If they follow through, Washington will have to keep its end of the bargain and provide the support they will need to put their country on a steady course."

(Chicago Tribune, 2/26)

This Time The U.S. Did It Right -- "Let it be said that in this important instance, the government of the United States, with bipartisan cooperation among key members of Congress and the administration, and support of the uniformed military and the intelligence agencies, delivered a unified message of support for the Filipino people which helped move a reluctant and recalcitrant Marcos toward his inevitable exit.... It is no easy thing for a great power to divorce itself from and then rid itself of a client-government leader who has outlived his usefulness and overreached his power. The United States has done that with Marcos -- and a good thing, too."

(David Broder, Washington Post, 2/26)

Finally -- "The United States, bound by historic, cultural and strategic ties to the Philippines, can be said to have acted responsibly if not always thoughtfully through the crisis. After President Reagan's press conference blunder that seemed to suggest tolerance of the rigged election results, policy lines became clear and proper. Marcos was given to understand that he had lost American support and that his safe departure and exile could be guaranteed only if he did not try to fight to hold on. Now Washington is hailing the reestablishment of democratic rule in the Philippines. It is up to Filipinos to make that democracy work. And it is up to the United States, whose long record of support for Marcos many in the Philippines won't soon forget, to do everything possible to abet that effort."

(Los Angeles Times, 2/26)

NETWORK COMMENTARY FOLLOWING PRESIDENT'S SPEECH

ABC's David Brinkley (following the speech and the Democratic response): The Democratic Party's response to the President's speech, delivered by Rep. Jim Wright of Texas, the Majority Leader in the House.... And now, Sam Donaldson at the White House has been listening to the President's speech. Sam, why did he deliver this speech at this time?

Sam Donaldson: Well, David, we're right at the point where Congress is going to get down seriously to the battle of the budget. The next two or three months will be critical and Mr. Reagan wanted to bring his message to the American people because he's going to have a tough time selling this defense budget this year. He's had some success, as we all know, in the past. Last year, however, Congress held him to about a zero growth. And because of the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings law, in this current fiscal year, the defense budget has actually been cut, as Mr. Reagan suggested, by about \$5 or \$6 billion. So here's what the President has to do. You just heard Jim Wright lay out the case for the Democrats; Mr. Reagan has to say to the country, "We've got to cut more domestic programs. Not the programs for the poor, we've already done that, we've got to cut the middle class programs: veterans, home mortgage money, school lunches for the children of the middle class, all Medicare, all those programs. They've got to come way down. But at the same time, we've got to raise the defense budget by 8%." Well, that's a tough selling job for anyone. I won't underestimate Ronald Reagan. He is the super-salesman of the century. But he's really got his work cut out with this one.

Brinkley: Brit Hume and Charles Gibson watch over the Senate and the House every day. I have a question for both of you. Mr. Reagan wants a whole lot of money for the military at a time when the country is running deeply in the red, and Congress talks about this every day by the hour. Will he get it?

ABC's Charles Gibson: Well, David, I don't think so. The short answer to your question, I guess, is no. And that's really not me speaking. That is both Republican and Democratic member of the House who say that the constituency for the kind of defense increases that the President is talking about simply isn't there any more. The constituency is gone. As one Republican said today, you know that was fine in the early days of the Reagan Administration. And indeed, defense spending annually is up about 40% over the time that Ronald Reagan has been in office. But now, as he said, as the way he characterized it, Americans are more than willing. And the interest in those kinds of defense increases aren't there any more. That's a Republican speaking. And the point, of course, is that in this year of Gramm-Rudman law and the severe budget stringency that will be necessary, these increases in defense, if they were to come, would come, as Sam mentioned, at the cost of education and mortgage programs, etcetera....As one Democrat member said today, the President can go on television as often as he wants and ask for it, but the votes aren't there any more for the kind of increases that he's talking about....Now that, of course, is the view in the Democratic House, but the Republican Senate that Brit covers, he'll probably do a little better over there.

NETWORK COVERAGE FOLLOWING SPEECH (continued)

ABC's Brit Hume: Even over in the Republican Senate, nobody is even talking about increases along the lines the President has asked for. The feeling is that he'll get something quite a bit less than what amounts to 8% that he wants. But something. We're going to get an early test of how the President's going to do in the Senate on some of these defense-related issues because the President has asked for \$100 million in aid to the contra rebels fighting the government in Nicaragua. \$70 million of that is for military aid. Last year the President got no military aid for the contras, and his opposition up here thinks he shouldn't get any this year. Indeed, 18 senators sent him a letter this week urging him not to even ask for it. All but one of those senators, I should tell you, was a Democrat. However, the President has some things going for him in this fight and it is going to be waged over the last three weeks or months. We'll know in about a month something about how President Reagan is going to do. The things he has going for him are these: Baby Doc Duvalier, whom you mentioned earlier, and Mr. Marcos are gone in the Philippines and in Haiti with a little push from the Reagan Administration in both cases, which at least gives the President a chance to say that he is for the downfall of dictators in both right-wing and left-wing governments. In addition, the President has only asked for the aid to be re-programmed, not asked for new money, so he has helped his case there. The feeling is that he'll get some of what he wants but not all of it. Finally, I'd just like to close by mentioning something that Mark Hatfield said about contra aid today. He said, "For every contra we supply with a new gun, countless elderly Americans will go without meals." It gives you an idea how when money is tight you get down to gut issues up here pretty fast.

Brinkley: Thank you both. It sounds, from what you tell us, that Mr. Reagan wasted his time making his speech tonight.

ABC later broadcasts interviews with Soviet spokesman Vladimir Posner in Moscow.

CBS's Dan Rather: The President came out and spoke strongly, both in speaking to the Russians abroad, and to the U.S. Congress at home, on the need, as he sees it, to keep up U.S. defense spending, even at a time when other federal budget items, including social programs, are being cut deeply. The President accused Congress of "undercutting U.S. arms control negotiators by banning U.S. anti-satellite tests," and he said congressional cutting of defense spending would be "backsliding of the most irresponsible kind." But the President barely glanced over one of the most controversial defense spending items, his request for \$100 million, most of it for resumed military aid for the Contra rebels fighting the Sandinistas.

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NBC did not provide commentary.

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