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NIC #8757-83
6 December 1983

Att. NIC 8535-83

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

FROM : Major General Edward B. Atkeson, USA
National Intelligence Officer for General Purpose Forces

SUBJECT : Speech to Students of the US Army Command and General Staff College [redacted]

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1. On 13 December 1983 you are scheduled to visit the US Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas to receive briefings and to speak to selected students and faculty. The College understands that you will speak and answer questions at the SECRET [redacted] level. [redacted]

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2. In accordance with your guidance of 1 December 1983, I have redrafted the proposed text of your speech to emphasize particularly those military topics which are planned for inclusion in your 1984 Worldwide briefing for Congress. The audience will be especially interested in your remarks on Soviet general purpose forces, so I have moved those paragraphs forward. Discussion of Soviet strategic forces and Third World threats follow. [redacted]

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3. I will be with you to deal with any technical military questions which may arise. Some may have to be answered in general terms to stay within the classification of the session. A trip package for your background use is being prepared separately. [redacted]

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Edward B. Atkeson
Edward B. Atkeson

Attachment:
Proposed Speech

[redacted]

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[redacted]

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EXEC
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6 December 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

FROM : MG Atkeson
NIO/GPF

SUBJECT : Speech to Students of the US Army Command and General
Staff College [redacted]

25X1

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It is a great pleasure to be invited here to speak at this venerable institution. When one thinks of Fort Leavenworth one thinks of the very heart of the Army. Throughout this troublesome century Fort Leavenworth has come to mean a quest for excellence in the American profession of arms. You, the students of the Command and General Staff College, are following in the steps of almost a hundred years of forebearers--some of great fame, others less well known, but all, like you, dedicated to their calling and to the defense of our great nation. I congratulate you on your selection to attend this famous institution and encourage you, while you are here, to give it all you've got. The American people have entrusted you with this opportunity for your professional development, and they merit the very best military commanders and staff officers to lead their forces in the field when great issues must regrettably be settled by force.

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Never get the idea that the American people do not care what you are doing here. They care very deeply. We have a long tradition of citizen soldiers in this country, and while we may have an all-professional force for the moment, we must in the final analysis depend upon the strengths of all of the people. They well know that it is you who will be leading their sons and fathers and brothers on the battlefield if our efforts for peace are unsuccessful. They have provided you this opportunity to learn, and they are counting heavily upon your success. Never forget that as you tackle your tactical lessons.

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I wish that I could report to you that our chances for success in our quest for peace were assured. Unfortunately, I cannot. The world is a high crime district, and there are many sharing the globe with us who wish us and our democratic institutions various types of ill. We cannot close the doors of the Command and General Staff College, confident that your skills will not be needed in the years ahead.

Looking around we see how the Soviets have grown in strength and how far they have extended their power and influence beyond their national boundaries and those of their Warsaw Pact vassals.

Most important, I believe, from your point of view, is the very substantial progress they have made in upgrading their general purpose forces. I know you are most interested in the ground contingents, but they have been pressing ahead in the air and at sea, as well. Certainly this audience understands the synergism derived by the coordinated actions of various military components, and how advancement in one area reinforces the effectiveness of others. The Soviets are not newcomers to interservice coordination. Their air, land and sea components exercise together regularly, and constantly seek to achieve a singleness of purpose in their operations.

First I want to mention the impressive strides the Soviets have made this past year in their armor and artillery programs. They have three new tanks in the field in the forward area today that were not there a year ago. Two of them probably have a missile firing capability. This could provide them with a capability for engaging helicopters as well as more distant ground

25X1 targets. We are not quite sure of the proper designations of all of these vehicles--one or two may be modifications of the familiar T-64 and T-72's--but certainly one is the T-80. We expect these new tanks will be replacing older models in the Group fo Soviet Forces Germany, and probably other groups as well, throughout the new year.

25X1 In the area of fire support, it appears that the Soviets are moving to replace all of their older divisional artillery in the forward area with self-propelled pieces. In addition, they are tripling the artillery in the motorized rifle regiments by raising the organic batteries to battalion size. At the same time they are replacing their FROG rocket units with SS-21 missiles and their Scuds with SS-23's, greatly increasing their range and accuracy in each case. All of these developments are in addition to substantial force enhancements occurring at front and higher levels and those affecting their INF stature. One quickly gets the impression of rapid expansion and enhancement on many levels. Not the least indicative of their aggressive ground force development program is their continual activation of new maneuver divisions. This has been running at a rate of four or five a year for the last two years.

However, let me add one word of caution here lest you get the wrong impression. Most Soviet divisions are at a low state of readiness by our standards. They consider less than half of their divisions "ready"--that is, with at least 75% of the required manning. Many of their "not ready" divisions may be down to only 5 or 10 percent of their authorized strength on hand. They count on being able to mobilize their reserves quickly and muster them into these low readiness units. They even have a number of division sets

25X1 of equipment with virtually no men at all. These mobilization bases are somewhat like our POMCUS sets in storage in Germany. [redacted]

[redacted] 25X1
[redacted] We do not believe that their 25X1
Operational Maneuver Group idea has yet reached full maturity. It seems more likely that they are still experimenting with it, and further evolutions may be yet to come. [redacted] 25X1

In the air we see the continued forward deployment of FENCER long range ground attack fighter bombers and emphasis on converting more air defense units to the ground attack function. We also see [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] 25X1
[redacted] 25X1
[redacted] the appearance of new aircraft designs to enhance their lift capabilities. [redacted] 25X1

At sea the Soviets are pressing ahead with a vigorous submarine program. Six new classes of faster, deeper-diving boats have appeared in the last 14 months alone. [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] we see almost continuous Soviet 25X1
utilization of overseas facilities in Cuba, in Africa, in the Middle East and in Southeast Asia. Over recent years they have greatly expanded their reach to brush all of the continents of the world. [redacted] 25X1

We now see Soviet power in Vietnam along China's southern border and astride the sea lanes which bring Japan's oil from the Persian Gulf; of particular concern has been the deployment in recent weeks of Soviet Badger

25X1 bombers, reconnaissance, and tanker aircraft to Cam Ranh Bay. With at least 10 aircraft already deployed, this contingent continues to grow each week.

We see Soviet power:

-- In Afghanistan, 500 miles closer to the warm water ports of the Indian Ocean and to the Strait of Hormuz through which comes the oil essential to Western Europe and Japan;

-- On the Horn of Africa overlooking the passageway of Suez which connects the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean;

-- In southern Africa, rich in minerals, which the industrial nations must have;

25X1 -- And in the Caribbean and Central America on the very doorstep of the United States.

25X1 We can be gratified to see in Grenada a nation once again free to determine its own destiny. For the first time the west has restored to a colony of the Soviet empire the freedom which had been stolen from it.

I don't have to remind this audience that today, we are as a nation challenged on many levels. The most potentially devastating threat comes from the nuclear missiles which are aimed at us. In the strategic arena, as with their theater forces, the Soviets are making improvements in almost every aspect of their force. This year they have been flight testing:

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-- Two new ICBMs;

-- Two new SLBMs;

-- Two types of long range land-attack cruise missiles;

-- A new heavy bomber and a cruise missile carrier.

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On the defensive side they have moved ahead in improving the Moscow ABM defenses, developing a new low altitude defense network and they have vigorously pursued their R&D program for ASW. They are now in a good position to deploy ABM defenses nationwide. Such deployments would, of course, violate the ABM Treaty--and would afford them a significant strategic advantage.

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To face these threats effectively we have to deal with the Soviet Union not as we would like it but as it is. We live on the same planet, we have to go on sharing it. We must therefore stand ready to talk to the Soviet leadership. But we must resolve not to hand an advantage to the other side, to do nothing that would either risk the credibility of the Western Alliance or unsettle the military balance on which peace itself depends.

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We must recognize, too, that the Soviets will exploit arms control talks and agreements to slow down improvements in Western military capabilities while they continue to build up and modernize their own forces. Thus far they have succeeded in this objective. They have negotiated ceilings which permit their continued military buildup or they have avoided restrictions on new

25X1 weapons they intend to build. The Soviet Union has been unwilling to forego any of its major military programs in order to induce us to drop our own programs.

25X1 Nevertheless, we should persist in arms negotiations in order to contain this competition. We must continue to hope that at some point there will be a change in Soviet perceptions and behavior.

25X1 During the mid to late 1970s, the Soviets unfurled a new strategy on a new front--the Third World. And their strategy has been, unfortunately, rather successful.

25X1 The most effective technique employed in this strategy has been the use of proxies. The Soviets use Cubans, East Germans, Libyans and Vietnamese in peace as well as war in both political and military roles. East Germans in Africa, Cubans in Latin America, Vietnamese in Asia have a certain legitimacy and freedom from imperialist taint that Soviet troops would not enjoy. Different proxies have specialized functions. Of the more than 40,000 Cubans in Africa, 80 percent are soldiers on active duty. Vietnam, with the fourth largest army in the world, keeps China and Thailand worried as it solidifies its position in Kampuchea. Most of the thousands of East German experts in Africa or Latin America are active in administration, education, industry, health, and, above all, the security forces which protect the regimes from the people.

Libya, Cuba, South Yemen, East Germany, and Bulgaria operate camps for training terrorists and insurgents who are then sent around the world. The

25X1 Libyans have helped promote Soviet foreign policy goals through their invasion of Chad and through their assistance to rebels in the Philippines, Morocco and Central America. Let us also not forget their coups, plots and assassination attempts against the leaders of pro-Western countries, nor their financial help to so-called "liberation" groups and terrorist organizations in the Middle East and at least ten countries in Latin America.

Grenada provides a vivid illustration of how the Soviets practice creeping imperialism by proxy. In addition to the Cubans on the island, there were on the island Soviets, North Koreans, Libyans, East Germans and Bulgarians working together to establish a military base in the Eastern Caribbean. This should come as no surprise. It is a microcosm of Nicaragua. For more than two years Managua has been an international city with Cubans, Soviets, East Germans, Vietnamese, North Koreans, Bulgarians, Libyans and PLO elements working together to fasten a totalitarian grip on Nicaragua, to make Nicaragua militarily dominant over its neighbors and to project revolutionary violence into El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica and Guatemala.

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With the exception of the Allende government in Chile, committed pro-Soviet governments have never come to power through peaceful means but always through violence, coups and civil wars. The Soviets recognize that in most Third World countries power rests with the military. They have focused, therefore, on either winning over the officer corps or helping to overthrow and replace them with others more likely to do their bidding. Having for decades denounced the "merchants of death," the Soviets have become the world's leading supplier of arms. Over recent years, their arms shipments to

the Third World have been four times greater than their economic assistance. This has made Third World arms recipients dependent on the Soviets for thousands of advisors, for spare parts, and for continued logistical support.

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Yet the Soviet Union is a crippled giant. It is crippled in having only a military dimension. It has not been able to deliver economic, political or cultural benefits at home or abroad. Without exception, the economic record of the countries which have come under Soviet influence has ranged from poor to very poor. Economic progress has been far greater in the free areas of East and Southeast Asia, in Central America until disruption by Soviet and Cuban-backed insurgency, in the Ivory Coast and other non-socialist countries in Africa.

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Military support can establish a relationship between a superpower and a small country. But in the long run it is economic, financial, scientific, technical and cultural exchanges which attract, deliver benefits, and maintain close relationships with Third World countries. The Soviet Union cannot compete in these areas. This forces the Soviets to rely on subversion and disruption of stable political and economic relationships to weaken Western relationships and create a condition of chaos in which their surrogates and internal allies can seize power.

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In this strategy of disruption, the areas most heavily targeted are clearly the Middle East and Central America. By fanning the flame of conflict between Arab and Israeli, Sunni and Shia, radical and moderate Arab, by playing both sides against the middle in the Iran-Iraq war, and by nailing

down a military position in Syria and Afghanistan, the Soviets hope to keep the Middle East in turmoil and the oil resources on which the Western world depends under constant threat. The other sensitive target is the Caribbean and Central America. Soviet power is already solidly established in Cuba and Nicaragua. This threatens the Panama Canal and the sea lanes of the Caribbean. Insurgencies and revolutionary violence have been unleashed to topple governments in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala.

The US needs a realistic counter-strategy. Many components of that strategy are familiar, but they must be approached and linked in new ways. The measures needed to address the Soviet challenge in the Third World have the additional appeal that they also represent a sensible American approach to the Third World whether or not the USSR is involved.

1. We have too often neglected our friends and neutrals in Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and Asia until they became a problem or were threatened by developments hostile to our interests. These countries now buy 40% of our exports; that alone is reason enough to pay greater attention to their problems before our attention is commanded by coups, insurgencies or instability. The priority of less developed countries in our overall foreign policy needs to be raised and sustained.

2. We must be prepared to demand firmly but tactfully and privately that our friends observe certain standards of behavior with regard to basic human rights. It is required by our own principles and essential to political support in the US. Moreover, we have to be willing to talk straight to those we would help about issues they must address to block foreign exploitation of

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25X1 their problems--issues such as land reform, corruption and the like. We need to show how the Soviets have exploited such vulnerabilities elsewhere to make clear that we aren't preaching out of cultural arrogance but are making recommendations based on experience.

25X1 3. We need to be ready to help our friends defend themselves. We can train them in counterinsurgency tactics and upgrade their communications, mobility, police and intelligence capabilities. We need changes in our foreign-military-sales laws to permit the US to provide arms for self-defense more quickly. We also need to change our military procurement policies so as to have stocks of certain basic kinds of weapons more readily available.

25X1 4. We must find a way to mobilize and use our greatest asset in the Third World--private business. Few in the Third World wish to adopt the Soviet economic system. Neither we nor the Soviets can offer unlimited or even large-scale economic assistance to the less developed countries. Investment is the key to economic success in the Third World and we, our NATO allies and Japan need to develop a common strategy to promote investment and support it with know how in the Third World. The Soviets are helpless to compete with private capital in these countries.

There is also a political weapon we can deploy around the world which is more powerful than the Soviets' military arsenal and subversive bag of tricks. All the people of the world on both sides of the Iron Curtain are united in an abhorrence of dictatorship in all its forms, most particularly totalitarianism and the terrible inhumanities it has caused in our time--the great purge, Auschwitz and Dachau, the Gulag, and Cambodia. They have

certainly noted it was not the democracies that invaded Afghanistan or suppressed Polish Solidarity or used chemical and toxic warfare in Afghanistan and Southeast Asia.

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Around the world today, the democratic revolution is gathering new strength, in Asia, in Africa, in our own hemisphere. In Latin America, 18 of 34 countries have freely-elected governments and six are working toward democratization, altogether representing 70% of the people of that continent. In the United Nations, eight of the 10 developing nations which have joined that body in the past five years are democracies. We must foster the infrastructure of democracy, the system of a free press, unions, political parties, universities, which allows a people to choose its own way to develop its own culture, to reconcile its own differences through peaceful means.

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Finally, if we are to win the struggle for the world's freedom and liberty, we need to reestablish what Sir John Plumb described so eloquently as the true dominion of history. It is in the study of our history and our values that we can establish the essential historical confidence in our society that will sustain us in our trials. It is your challenge, as our future military leaders, to bring a proper sense of our destiny to our affairs. That can only come through a knowledge of our past and a feeling for the heritage which is ours to preserve and pass on. I can imagine no setting and no atmosphere more conducive to kindling and developing that learning and that sentiment than the one in which you now serve and in the tradition of your challenge.

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25X1 President Kennedy some twenty years ago observed that we were involved in a long twilight struggle. It will not be easy. To your great credit you have chosen a profession which will keep you close to the center of the action-- whatever that action may be. While we have great hopes for peace, you know as well as I the perils we face as a nation.

25X1 I congratulate you for the outstanding service you have already rendered to your country. But I am optimistic that your best is yet to come. When you leave this institution the eyes of the nation will be upon you as you assume your new key positions in the leadership of our Armed Forces. You follow in a great tradition of American soldiers.