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Portland Rally Speech

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H. W. H.

PORTLAND, OREGON
SEPTEMBER 5, 1984

Thank you for that warm reception. Let me ask you:
Are we going to win? Are we going to send Ronald
Reagan back to his ranch? I think so too.

This is one of the most exciting crowds I've seen.
I am thrilled to be here. But this campaign is doing more
than generate excitement. We're trying to open a ^{serious} ~~critical~~
debate, ~~on the most important choices Americans face in~~
~~this election year.~~ ^{insert a} And the single most important
issue -- the one that brings me to Portland today -- is
the issue of war and peace.

Everyone wants peace. There's no argument there.
But to keep the peace a President must work against war.
And the question is, are we doing everything we can to
strengthen our country, protect our safety, and reduce
the risk of war?

I think the answer to that basic question is no.

Right now, the preparedness of our forces is in
appalling shape. We should be spending less on strategic

weapons and more on conventional forces, especially training, maintenance, and spare parts.

Right now, military procurement is in shambles. This President never saw a weapon he didn't like. At a time of two hundred billion dollar deficits, we need a President who chooses carefully and spends wisely.

We also need one who gets his money's worth. ^{Under Reagan,} ~~Today,~~
 the Pentagon ^{HAS PAID} ~~is paying~~ \$1100 for plastic stool caps that cost 22 cents. ^{It was bought a simple 13 cent nut for two thousand dollars.} At this rate, if Ronald Reagan went up to the corner hardware store on a Saturday afternoon, he'd come back with a tool box costing half a million dollars. And then he'd go home and blame his financial problems on the cost of food and housing.

insert:

Right now, at least thirteen wars and civil wars are being waged around the world. In Kampuchea, Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, the Western Sahara, Chad and elsewhere, a total of two million people are fighting and dying as we meet here today. Central America has become an isthmus of instability. Lebanon is a land of distrust, discord, and more violence than since the Crusades. Iran and Iraq are killing a whole generation of youngsters.

Teddy Roosevelt made peace between Russia and Japan, and Jimmy Carter made peace between Israel and Egypt. But Ronald Reagan has done nothing to stop these conflicts. He's not had a single diplomatic success in three and a half years. I want a President who pays attention to the world around him, who defuses tensions, and who brings belligerents to the bargaining table. And that's what we'll get in Fritz Mondale.

Why should we take an active role in resolving conflicts? For two reasons. First, out of plain human decency. ^{my Governor} As Mario Cuomo said, peace is better than war because life is better than death. Second, because at any moment one of those thirteen conflicts could drag the United States into conflict as well.

We're not uninvolved just because we're at peace. In every one of the thirteen conflicts now raging, at least one of the Superpowers is sending money, weapons, or both. This Administration ^{has increased its} is spending ~~four times as~~ ^{five or six times as fast} much on military aid as it spends ^{on development} on aid to help people ~~feed and clothe and employ each other.~~

That is a disgrace. I would like to see us feeding

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the hungry, not ^{just} arming the warriors. I want us to stop spending so much on the worldwide arms race, and start spending more on the human race.

Today, we are deeply involved in world conflict, but not in the effort to stop it. If we really wanted to help prevent wars, the first thing we would do is understand the conditions that breed them.

The Soviet government is a repressive, cynical regime. It tries to exploit and take advantage of conflicts. But the Russians are not the only force at work in these conflicts, nor are they always the original cause. The people of El Salvador and of Lebanon - just like the people of Vietnam, a decade ago -- have their own history, their own culture, their own beliefs, and their own problems. And the best way to keep the Soviets from exploiting regional conflicts is not just by opposing Soviet expansionism, but ^{also} by understanding and ^{helping to} solving people's problems.

Sadly, we're not doing that today. In Central America, we are militarizing a conflict which might be resolved by peaceful negotiation. And we are Americanizing a conflict which is primarily local. Fritz Mondale and I

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will work with the Contadora nations for a negotiated settlement to the war in El Salvador. We'll condition assistance to that country on progress toward social justice. And we'll stop ^{the covert aid to} ~~supporting~~ the Contras in Nicaragua.

The purpose of ^{that} /support has not been defined, cannot be justified, and should not be continued. And Fritz Mondale and I will end it.

Nor was our mission in Beirut ever adequately explained. Our leaders made a mistake, and over 250 young men paid for it with their lives. It was horrible when those men died: ^{but} / it was an outrage that they died for no reason.

I've been asked whether I would let my son John go to war. And my answer is this: My son would serve, and would be proud to serve, in order to defend this country. But like every other mother in America, I did not raise my son to die ~~far away~~ in an undeclared war, ^{for} / an uncertain cause, against an unnamed enemy.

A President must know where to use force and when, but he must also know where it should not be used. Let's send in the diplomats before the Marines. Let's try negotiation before confrontation. Let's understand the world before we arm it.

Hot spots are threats to peace -- and so are two other global time-bombs.

First, our longterm security will be denied so long as freedom is denied to people in other countries.

Today, black South Africans ^{are} ^{ing} demand their rights -- ^{and yesterday 29 of them died for their rights} -- but this Administration doesn't hear them. Three quarters of the world's population lives in poverty -- but this Administration doesn't see them. People in other lands want the same human rights you and I enjoy -- but this Administration doesn't feel for them.

This indifference to the plight of others is short-sighted, and it is wrong. As President Kennedy once said, "Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable."

Fritz Mondale and I will promote that peaceful revolution by backing human rights. ~~We'll feed hungry~~ ^{people.} And we'll tell the South African government that if they want longterm, friendly relations with the United States, then at last apartheid must end.

Finally, both peace and safety are threatened by the arms race. Over the last twenty years, both the Soviet Union and the United States have added thousands of new weapons to our arsenals. And both sides are less safe, not more safe, than twenty years ago.

This expensive, lethal madness must end. If Mr. Reagan won't stop exchanging insults with the Soviets, and start exchanging serious negotiating proposals, then it's time to exchange this President for one who will.

That President will be Fritz Mondale. In 1969, Fritz Mondale opposed the development of multiple warhead missiles. He lost the fight, but he was right. Today the world is more dangerous because of MIRVS.

In the 1970s, he worked to strengthen the ban against testing nuclear weapons. He fought proliferation. He pushed SALT TWO. He was the first presidential candidate to endorse the nuclear freeze. And he's leading the fight against extending the arms race to space.

Walter Mondale is a leader for a saner world. When he sits down with the Soviets, they will know that they're up against a man who enjoys the full support of the allies ^A of ~~our~~ Americans -- because of his commitment to arms control.

They'll sit opposite an adversary who has mastered the complexities of nuclear weapons. They'll have to

deal with a man who understands the world and knows what he's doing. They'll face a president who has both the capacity and the commitment to negotiate serious arms control.

With that kind of President in the White House, we'll ~~have a chance of reducing~~^e the risk of nuclear war, ~~at best.~~^o That's the best reason to vote for Fritz Mondale.

In all these ways, Fritz Mondale will strengthen our country. And that's the goal that unites all Americans. We are a great and powerful country. If we help others less fortunate, we can be even greater.

We have a strong, imposing defense. If we make the right military choices, our defense can be even stronger.

We are ~~less vulnerable~~^{more secure} than almost any other nation on earth. If we understand other people and help cool hotspots, we can be even safer.

We are a good and decent people -- the best country on earth. If we take the lead and freeze the arms race, we will do a service to ourselves and humanity without parallel.

I ask you to join with Fritz Mondale and me in that quest for a safer world. The time to build it is not later. It's now.

The time to freeze the arms race is not later. It's now.

And the time for Fritz Mondale is not later. It's now.