

STOCKMAN

First quarter numbers are below expectation. Unemployment hasn't budged. Interest rates, same. I think we should re-examine some of the revenue enhancers on the table, sir.

REAGAN

Is that what they're calling tax increases these days? And if that's really what you think, what the hell are you doing in my Administration?

A frozen beat.

REAGAN (CONT'D)

A nation trying to tax itself into prosperity is like a man standing n a bucket trying to lift himself up by the handle. Winston Churchill said that.

(winks at Stockman)

Gentlemen, here is my economic policy: When taxes are low, people have more money. When they have more money, they buy more things and services. The people who make those things and provide their services hire more people, who now work and pay their taxes too. And as for a fair rate for all of us? The Good Lord says ten percent. Why should Uncle Sam get more than Him?

154

INT. SITUATION ROOM - LATER THAT DAY

154

Secretary of Defense CASPAR WEINBERGER, Casey, ADMIRAL JOHN POINDEXTER, and Bill Clark (now NSA Advisor) join Reagan and Baker with the heads of the Army, Air Force, Navy. Satellite Photos on the Big Screen.

Sc. 1 Start

WEINBERGER

Soviets are conducting full exercises in the Indian Ocean. Looks normal. German border is quiet, but we're getting new pictures off the bird.

REAGAN

What is that right there? That line?

POINDEXTER

That's the Berlin Wall, sir.

REAGAN

One side freedom, one side slavery.

The slide changes to a 1000X satellite photo. Flatbed rail cars loaded with missiles, a Soviet Star on each.

WEINBERGER

Looks like some new SS-20's they're moving around by rail.

REAGAN

How many they got, John?

POINDEXTER

I'm sorry, sir?

REAGAN

Nuclear weapons. How many?

POINDEXTER

About 35 thousand.

REAGAN

And us?

POINDEXTER

Twenty five, and change.

Sc. 1 End

REAGAN

Sixty thousand bombs that could each destroy a city. One mistake, one misunderstanding, and none of this matters. None of it. And the only thing that keeps that from happening is a policy called MAD, Mutual Assured Destruction.

(a beat)

M.A.D. is right. It's insane.

Silence. He's just spoken what everybody in this room knows, but would never say publicly.

REAGAN (CONT'D)

Containment, Detente, Treaty after treaty. But it's same old same-old with these guys. No more. There's only one way to stand up to a bully.

A beat. Nervous glances around the room.

REAGAN (CONT'D)

We're gonna wipe these things from the face of the earth. This Cold War is going to end on our watch...

(points to the Berlin Wall on the satellite photo)

...and that wall is coming down.

SOVIET COMM OFFICER
Do we have confirmation?

ANDROPOV
Is this a strike or not???

IN THE BACK - Gorbachev and Viktor watch quietly.
Helplessly. Fearful. ANDROPOV - Glances at a SAFE, with
a set of KEYS waiting on top. We can guess what's inside.

186 INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM

186

The President's Military Aide stands near Reagan, holding
the "Football", the briefcase with the nuclear codes.

The Situation Room is a Mirror Image of the Soviet one.
Angry, arguing. Reagan's whole team is here-- Clark,
Meese, Baker, Shultz, Poindexter, Weinberger, the Joint
Chiefs. NORAD on the horn.

Sc. 2 Start

NORAD (O.S.)
They're heating up six sites.

POINDEXTER
They think we're launching.

REAGAN
Get me on the phone to the Kremlin.

COMM OFFICER
Trying, sir. No response.

POINDEXTER
They think we're launching.

GENERAL
Prepare to go to DEFCON ONE.

REAGAN
Wait a moment. We don't have confirmation
on that...

Sc. 2 End

GENERAL
Mister President. If this is real, there
won't be time for confirmation.

REAGAN - Glances at the Football Guy. Baker hands him a
PROPOSED RESPONSE White Paper from the Joint Chiefs.
Words like "Casualty Estimate", "Collateral Damage"
"Executive Evacuation" leap off the page.

INTERCUT WITH - angry PROTESTS outside the Soviet
Embassy. Wall to Wall Media Coverage, including an up
close profile of the Georgia congressman on board the
downed airliner. "Soviets claim Black Box Destroyed."