



NEAL TRAVIS' NEW YORK

Mag: U.S. blew \$2 trillion

ADVANCE copies of a leading financial magazine are this morning landing on the desks of President Clinton, congressional heads and bureaucrats at the CIA and the Defense and State departments.

But the editors of *Worth* don't seriously expect to get any response from the people inside the Beltway to their February cover story by Walter Russell Mead.

Because that story — coming at the height of the budget-deficit battle — claims Washington wasted close to \$2 trillion fighting a Cold War it had already won.

Mead quotes Anatoly Gribkov, retired four-star Soviet general and former chief of staff of the Warsaw Pact, to the effect that the U.S.S.R.'s leaders conceded Cold War defeat in 1981.

But the American political and military establishment either didn't realize or didn't want to acknowledge the fact, and went on spending as if the Cold War was about to heat up.

"If Gribkov is to be believed," writes Mead, "the U.S. foreign-policy establishment committed the biggest financial blunder in the history of the globe."

"Forget the savings-and-loan bailout and the waste in Medicare and Medicaid — these are dwarfed by the \$1.84 trillion U.S. taxpayers spent to beat a foe ready to throw in the towel."

"If the effects of years of unnecessary military spending could somehow be subtracted, our federal budget today [for fiscal 1995] would show an \$11 billion surplus, as opposed to a deficit of almost \$164 billion."

Geraldo: Let me at O.J.

THAT video O.J. Simpson is peddling, in which he claims he didn't kill Nicole Brown Simpson and Ron Goldman, is "a pack of lies," according to Geraldo Rivera.

The talk-show host

A Pat on the back