The End of the Cold War: Reykjavik
Overview: The summit at Reykjavik was a turning point in the Cold War. The leaders of both the USA and USSR were finally able to meet and to come to terms with the fact that both had perhaps underestimated the other and that there really was a chance towards real nuclear disarmament. While both leaders were disappointed by the lack of an agreement at the end of the meeting, Reykjavik would set the stage for further negotiations that would eliminate an entire class of nuclear weaponry (Intermediate Range Nuclear Missiles) and real reductions in the other strategic nuclear weapons.

Suggested Classroom Activities: Consider having the students look at the goals for the Summit from the many points of view that were present. Many individuals, agencies, foreign leaders, and both President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev had ideas on what they were hoping to see come out of the Summit. In this section there is a Student Handout that asks students to identify the goals expressed in each of the included documents. It also asks students to analyze whether the Summit was a success or a failure and why.

Notes on Items:

**Primary Source A:** This document contains elements from a Memorandum to President Reagan on a trip by Ambassadors Nitze and Rowney to several foreign leaders to discuss the proposal put forth by General Secretary Gorbachev to reduce Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF). Not all of the attachments are included, only the letter from Ambassador Nitze and the letter from Prime Minister Thatcher.

**Primary Source B:** This document is a Memorandum to the President from Secretary of State George Shultz, giving his thoughts on upcoming Summit.

**Primary Source C:** A letter from President Reagan to General Secretary Gorbachev outlining his views and hopes for the upcoming negotiations.

**Primary Source D:** An unofficial translation and original version of a letter from General Secretary Gorbachev to President Reagan (sent via Eduard Shevardnadze the Minister of Foreign Affairs for the USSR), giving his views and goals for future negotiations.

Terms/Abbreviations/Acronyms:

- **ABM Treaty:** Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty
- **CSBM:** Confidence and Security Building Measures
- **L/SRINF:** Long/Short Range Intermediate Forces
- **MBFR:** Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions
- **SDI:** Strategic Defense Initiative (Star Wars)
- **START:** STRategic Arms Reduction Talks

On the Cover: President Reagan greets Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev at Hofdi House during the Reykjavik Summit. Iceland. 10/11/86.
MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: JOHN M. POINDEXTER

SUBJECT: Allied Views on a Response to Gorbachev

As you recall, Ambassadors Nitze and Rowny (along with Ron Lehman and Bob Linhard) were sent last week to consult with our NATO and Asian allies, respectively, on the approach you propose to take in responding to the overall arms control plan put forward by General Secretary Gorbachev last month. I provided you with a preliminary staff summary of the reports coming in from the consultation teams last weekend in California. At Tabs A and B are letters from your two emissaries formally reporting on their trips. They represent a more seasoned assessment of the allied reaction from their perspectives.

Additionally, we have begun to receive replies to your most recent letter on this subject sent to allied leaders. You may find the personal replies of Prime Minister Thatcher (Tab C), Prime Minister Nakasone (Tab D) and Prime Minister Lubbers (Tab E) of particular interest. Each, for very different reasons, has reacted to our proposed INF approach. Mrs. Thatcher expressed a personal preference for the November INF position, citing fears of decoupling associated with zero LRINF in Europe. She is adamantly about any further commitment to British independent forces. Prime Minister Nakasone has strong reservations with leaving LRINF only in Asia and Prime Minister Lubbers, who gave indications that the Dutch opposed a zero-INF solution in discussions with Paul Nitze, will now accept such a proposal in INF.

We are revisiting the INF approach, taking into consideration these results and will be providing you with a recommended course of action by week's end.

Attachments:
Tab A Letter from Ambassador Paul Nitze dated 2/14/86
Tab B Letter from Ambassador Edward Rowny dated 2/14/86
Tab C Letter from Prime Minister Thatcher dated 2/11/86
Tab D Letter from Prime Minister Nakasone dated 2/10/86
Tab E Letter from Prime Minister Lubbers dated 2/17/86

Prepared by:
Bob Linhard
Bill Wright
February 14, 1986

Dear Mr. President,

Pursuant to your instructions, Ron Lehman and I consulted with the senior government leadership in London, Paris, Bonn, Rome, The Hague and Brussels. We also held consultations with the North Atlantic Council at the end of our bilateral discussions in capitals. This is our report on those consultations.

Our European allies are most appreciative of your emphasis on the consultative process and showed general support for your anticipated response to General Secretary Gorbachev's January program. They understand the necessity of your trying to work with Mr. Gorbachev to find common ground in arms control on which we can base an agreement which would be in the interest of both East and West. They are, however, fully aware that Mr. Gorbachev's proposal was packaged and delivered to maximize its political and propaganda impact. They are supportive of the "positive tone" of your proposed response to Mr. Gorbachev, but largely because they believe such a tone is necessary to counter the public effect of the Gorbachev proposal. In sum, they are, in general, with you in your response to the Soviets.

There was no significant disagreement with our appraisal that the Gorbachev proposal is astute, designed for its political impact, designed to drive wedges in the Alliance, and requires a careful response. Almost all favored a response that would be positive in tone but cautious as to specifics. They approved the idea of focusing on bilateral first steps, and the idea of emphasizing the preconditions to a nuclear-free world. None suggested changing our START or our basic Defense/Space position.

There are problems, however. A number of issues surfaced which should be considered as suggestions for modifications to your anticipated response to Mr. Gorbachev or to our public handling of that response. With the exception of the question of skepticism about the realism or even desirability of a nuclear-free world.
there was some questioning of a response which included in its first steps a zero/zero outcome on INF in Europe. The believe the trauma of deploying U.S. LRINF in Europe is over and the idea of withdrawing these missiles so soon is not warranted. Some opponents of zero/zero INF in Europe argued that withdrawing U.S. INF forces could "decouple" the U.S. from Europe, a situation which they claim the 1979 dual-track decision was aimed to redress.

The Germans are supportive of both the goal of total elimination and zero/zero INF in Europe. Because of their unique geographic position, they are also sensitive to the shorter-range missile issue. Hence, they are appreciative that your proposed response would address this issue, whereas Mr. Gorbachev did not. Those we talked to objected, however, to reserving explicitly the right to convert excess Pershing II missiles to the shorter-range Pershing IB; they believe that such conversion would be politically impossible. They took this position knowing full well that such conversion would be the only way we could even partially offset Soviet capabilities in SRINF in the absence of new Pershing IBs.

A potentially divisive issue within NATO concerns the British and French independent nuclear deterrent. Britain and France are adamant that these forces not be the subject of negotiations until their stated preconditions have been met. There are, however, different views on this among the Allies. For example,

There was general support for SDI as a research program which potentially could strengthen the deterrent; there was disagreement, however, with linking it to the objective of a nuclear-free world. Some thought we should develop a dialogue to clarify ABM Treaty restraints in a way that would make evident that SDI research is not limited. Some also suggested an extension of time with regard to withdrawal.

There was a virtual consensus that you should press Mr. Gorbachev strongly for a total ban on chemical weapons and on an acceptable outcome on a package of CSBMs from the Stockholm Conference. The Allies are also anxious for movement in MBFR. They are mindful, however, that an agreement from the Vienna forum cannot in itself redress the conventional force imbalance in Europe.
From the Archives: Crossing Borders

Primary Source A

Dear Ron,

When George Shultz was here in December he suggested that I might let you have some thoughts on the handling of arms control issues at your next meeting with Mr. Gorbachev. At this early stage, I should like to put to you some general reflections. Nearer the time of the meeting I might - if you thought it useful - put forward some more specific ideas.

The starting point has to be how we assess Gorbachev's intentions. We have both had lengthy meetings with him. He is clearly a more astute operator than his predecessors, far more aware of the scope for playing on public opinion in the West. But under the veneer is the same brand of dedicated Soviet Communist that we have known in the past, relentless in pursuing Soviet interests and prepared to take his time over this. His main, indeed overriding, purpose will be to stop you from developing the SDI, both because he thinks it will give the United States a unilateral advantage and because he would much prefer to avoid the strain on the Soviet economy which having to match it or counter it will impose (though he will accept this if necessary). He will also try to use the issue to split the Alliance.

My judgment is that Gorbachev does not want a return to the pre-Geneva situation of no negotiation with the United States because he realises that this would actually reduce the Soviet Union's ability to exploit Western opinion. Equally knowing at first hand the strength of your commitment to pursuing SDI research, recently reaffirmed in your State of
the Union message, he cannot be optimistic that agreement on
terms acceptable to the Soviet Union is attainable in the
short term. Unless he can see some prospect of an equitable
deal, he may therefore come to your next Summit without any
serious expectation of reaching definitive agreements on the
main arms control issues, though he may be ready for a
separate or interim agreement on INF. Rather he may calculate
that the process of talking serves him better than any
agreement likely to be on offer.

In that event, Gorbachev's purpose would be to spin out
negotiations in the hope of being able to rely on a steadily
mounting volume of pressure from Western public opinion to
remove the "blockage" represented by the SDI, to give time for
possible budget pressures to make your choices more difficult,
and possibly to try to play the issue into the next United
States Presidential elections. In other words he may conclude
that his best hope of limiting or restricting SDI lies in
sitting you out.

We also need to consider the wider context within which
your negotiations will be taking place. When you launched the
SDI, you set out the noble vision of a world without nuclear
weapons. Gorbachev - and I think this is a good indicator of
his shrewdness - has latched on to this and produced his
spurious timetable of simple steps for achieving the goal by
the end of the century. We both realise that for the most
part his proposals are propaganda, although no less dangerous
for that. In the real world, it's not going to happen like
that.

Where it seems to me that Gorbachev's proposals are
particularly dangerous is in the creation of unrealistic
public expectations. The search for a world without nuclear
weapons holds far more problems for the West than for the
Soviet Union. Such a world would be a very risky place indeed
unless there were concurrent steps to reduce the massive
imbalance in the Soviet Union's favour in conventional forces.
In particular, Western Europe would be very much more vulnerable. There are the risks of further nuclear proliferation in the next few years, and we have to recognise that, while nuclear weapons themselves might in theory be abolished, the knowledge of how to make them never will be. But the risk lies above all in undermining public support for our agreed strategy of deterrence and flexible response. This remains the key to our security now and for a considerable period ahead; and in the face of the dangerous simplifications of Gorbachev’s propaganda we need to reaffirm our determination to seek enhanced stability at lower levels of forces, conventional as well as nuclear.

Against this background, the crucial choice which you have to make is how to deal with Soviet insistence that there can be no serious progress towards reductions in strategic nuclear weapons unless you abandon the SDI. You and I are agreed that SDI must be pursued. But there remains the need to meet genuine Soviet anxieties as well as Soviet propaganda and to show that we continue to seek a stable international environment.

One option is to decline steadfastly to add to current United States statements on the SDI, its relationship with the ABM Treaty and your intentions for future developments beyond those which you have already made and which were incorporated in the Camp David Four Points. You would continue to offer the Soviet Union a dialogue on moving from reliance on offensive nuclear weapons to greater dependence on strategic defence. You would no doubt keep open your offer to share the technology with the Soviet Union, though personally I fear that it will be very hard to bring the Soviet Union to give this offer much weight. The risk of this approach is that it would be relatively easy for the Soviet Union to cast the United States in the role of obstructing progress towards reductions in offensive nuclear weapons. This in turn would lead to steadily mounting pressures, in Europe at least, upon the United States to modify its position.
Another option is one which I mentioned in the note which I left with you in New York at the end of October last year. In effect you would offer the Soviet Union a greater sense of reassurance about the likely shape, scope and timescale of possible development of the SDI. You would propose a framework which would allow reductions in offensive weapons to take place over a measured period against a forecast of future defensive developments. Because of the inherent difficulty of predicting what those defensive developments will be, the constraints on them would be expressed in terms of what the United States and the Soviet Union would not do by a certain date rather than by what it would do. As I suggested at the time it could be achieved by a mixture of strengthening and further refining the ABM Treaty, extending the period of notice required for unilateral withdrawal from it and a commitment not to enter particular phases of defensive programmes before certain specified dates.

I continue to believe that this second option offers the most promising prospect. It emphatically does not make the SDI as such negotiable. It would not restrict research which we both know to be essential and on which constraints anyway cannot be verified. There would be no Soviet veto. But the Russians would have reassurance against a sudden and unforeseen "break-out" in this area. This option should enable you to press for major cuts in offensive nuclear weapons and thus to find out for sure whether, despite all the obvious propaganda in Gorbachev's latest proposals, there is any real willingness in Moscow to make progress on arms control. That is what we need to find out in order to exploit his proposals in our interests. That is how we can counter the probable wish on his part to spin out the negotiations in Geneva for some years. I also believe that a position on these lines would command wide public understanding in the West. I should very much like to know whether you see merit in it.
There are a number of other points relevant to your meeting with Gorbachev which I shall mention only briefly at this stage.

One is the importance of exposing and challenging the more dangerous elements in the recent Gorbachev proposals. I am particularly concerned about the proposed restrictions which would affect the United Kingdom and France: a freeze on third country nuclear systems and a ban on transfer of strategic and medium range missiles. These would be seriously damaging to our national and to Alliance security and must be rejected. I was very glad to hear from Paul Nitze that you had identified these points as major objections to the Gorbachev proposals. But I also have considerable misgivings about giving him any encouragement now to believe that our forces could later be brought into the process on any but the conditions we have specified ourselves. I trust that you will be able in your reply to avoid raising his expectations on that score.

A second point is the need to persuade Gorbachev to negotiate seriously in other arms control fields. As you know I am particularly concerned about chemical weapons where it seems to me that the Alliance is at the great disadvantage of having no credible response to a chemical attack other than nuclear retaliation. I hope that we can work closely together to overcome remaining differences on verification in the draft Treaty tabled by George Bush in 1984, so that we can have a strong and united Alliance negotiating position. The recent Western initiative also opens the prospect of making some progress on MBFR.

Thirdly there is the question of Treaty compliance. As you know I regarded your decision last June to continue to adhere to SALT restraints as an important act of statesmanship. I hope that you will feel able to maintain that position which earned the United States enormous respect. Continued
restraint will also be important in building public support for the US negotiating position in Geneva.

It was good of you to send Paul Nitze to brief me on your latest thinking. While I fully support the general approach of your proposed reply to Gorbachev’s proposals, I have – as Paul Nitze will have told you – anxieties about your ideas on INF. The zero-zero option is of course consistent with our previous public statements but it still presents problems of consistency with the decision to deploy Pershing II and Cruise missiles as an essential part of the Alliance’s spectrum of nuclear deterrence. My own preference would still be for the sort of interim agreement which you proposed last November. Geoffrey Howe will let George Shultz have a more detailed note amplifying this and other points and I hope that our experts can stay closely in touch on this as well as on the wider issues.

Warm regards,

[Signature]

The President of the United States of America.

[UK SECRET]
President Reagan walking with Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher at Camp David. 11/6/86.
I take the liberty of sending you these views because my schedule keeps me here at the UN and unable to meet with you this week when you are shaping your decisions about Reykjavik.

We should take a positive, self-confident and commanding approach to this meeting. The American people are all for it so we should not seem to be playing it down or disparaging its chances for solid progress. Similarly, we need not take a narrow-minded approach to low-key social events or courtesies to the Soviets when we are there.

We should not try to separate form from content or appearance from substance. As far as Reykjavik goes, they will be intertwined. To take charge of this event and manage it visibly and effectively, we need to:

-- engage in serious and visible preparations that show we have a unified U.S. team as well as close allied consultation and support;

-- aim to produce substantive progress (but no agreements per se) at Reykjavik that will enhance the chances for a successful summit in the U.S. We will work across the full agenda, but the reality is that our work will not be seen as effective without some progress on two big issues: arms control and human rights. Gorbachev must go home with a clear sense that Moscow's continuing insensitivity to the humanitarian dimension of the relationship will assume greater significance as prospects open up in areas of mutual concern;

-- and after Reykjavik shape a program of public statements and consultations that indicate Reykjavik was useful, but without telegraphing our detailed plans for a substantive success at Summit II in the U.S.
I. Preparations

We should identify our key players now, and include the full range of players from every involved agency. We will be working with this large group all through the week ahead and making it known publicly that the entire team is involved. As for Reykjavik itself, either of two options will work: either take the entire group, on the understanding that the heart of the event will be one-on-one meetings and that only I, perhaps joined by John and Don, will attend other meetings with you— or leave all but the immediate substantive staff in Washington. The reality of the hotel situation in Iceland may make the decision for us, compelling us to travel with the smallest group possible (my list is attached).

As for the allies, I suggest that I or, alternatively, a team headed by Paul Nitze, meet the NATO Foreign Ministers in Brussels early Friday and report to you in Reykjavik mid-day Friday.

II. Substantive Progress

Arms control will be key not because that is what the Soviets want, but because we have brought them to the point where they are largely talking from our script. This doesn’t mean we will find Gorbachev easy to handle in Reykjavik, but it means we are justified in aspiring to accomplish something useful there.

We have a strong new START position on the table in Geneva. Your July proposal on defense and space is the most detailed initiative in the field the Soviets say is most significant. We are nearly down to the short strokes on INF. There have been experts meetings over the summer on nuclear and space issues, nuclear testing, chemical weapons, and risk reduction. I have just conducted a comprehensive review of all these with Shevardnadze. There is no issue on which we are not well prepared.

I think we can realistically try to accomplish the following in Reykjavik:

--- Get the focus for priority attention back on START, where we seek a ceiling on ballistic missile warheads and subceilings which can form the heart of a strategic arms reduction agreement;
-- Give Gorbachev a direct and authoritative description of your July proposal on strategic defenses, and of how it responds to the concerns he expressed in Geneva;

-- Settle most of the remaining issues on INF;

-- Convince Gorbachev of the wisdom of our step-by-step approach to nuclear testing, in which we would first work out the verification provisions necessary to ratify the Threshold Test Ban Treaty, and then negotiate further restrictions on the number of nuclear tests in parallel with further reductions in nuclear forces.

We should also be prepared for a Gorbachev blast at your May 27 decision -- and a probe on development of a mutual interim restraint decision, in part owing to his desire to avoid being embarrassed by our exceeding SALT II limits shortly before or after his U.S. visit.

If the discussions go well, you could propose a package of basic elements for agreements on START, INF and defense and space which our Geneva delegations could begin to put in shape immediately after Reykjavik. Formal agreement on such a package could be the centerpiece of a Gorbachev visit to the United States, permitting delegations in Geneva to work on Treaty texts for signature at a 1987 Moscow summit.

III. After Reykjavik

Assuming we will impose a press blackout during the meetings, the media pressure will be intense as we emerge. If we achieve something in the arms control field at Reykjavik, we will need to hew to a forceful and confident line with close coordination on the question of how much substance to reveal. We will need to mention general areas where the potential for substantive progress was enhanced, but without permitting the impression that Reykjavik itself was a Summit or raising false expectations for Summit II in the U.S. The theme should be that we are fully prepared for real progress and that Reykjavik contributed considerably to the potential of Summit II.

Following the two days' sessions with Gorbachev, I would stop again in Brussels on my way back to Washington on Monday the 13th. Assuming you will make a public statement or hold a press conference in Reykjavik, and return to Washington on
Sunday evening, John and Don might offer to do some Congressional briefings early Monday. As Monday is Yom Kippur, you might want to hold off calling in the Congressional leadership until Tuesday. I would, of course, be ready to be sent by you to the Hill as soon as possible after my return late Monday.

The way to bring this kind of a result out of Reykjavik is to pull together a unified team under your leadership. I will gladly serve as your straw boss in this effort. Over the past year we have advanced positions with great skill and confidence. As the results of our negotiations in the field and your strong stance at home, the Soviets have come to us in many areas.

The policies you set in motion six years ago have put us in the strong position we are in today. Your handling of the events of the past month have demonstrated anew we are prepared to be tough when principles are involved, but are capable of creative negotiations in pursuit of long term goals. We are now entering the crucial phase in the effort to achieve real reductions in nuclear forces -- an historic achievement in itself, and a major step toward your vision of a safer world for the future.
President Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev meet at Hofdi House with Jack Matlock and Dmitry Zarechnak during the Reykjavik Summit. Iceland. 10/11/86.
President Reagan in a staff briefing with Ken Adelman, George Shultz, Donald Regan, Robert Linhard, Paul Nitze, and John Poindexter in Hofdi House during the Reykjavik Summit in Iceland. 10/12/86.
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 22, 1986

Dear Mr. General Secretary:

The elimination of nuclear weapons has been an American goal for decades, from our proposals at the dawn of the nuclear age to my vision of a nuclear-free world made possible through the reliance of our countries on defense rather than on the threat of nuclear retaliation. In a 1983 speech to the Japanese Diet and on many subsequent occasions, I have advocated the abolition of nuclear weapons. I have done so because I believe this is an objective which reflects the deep yearning of people everywhere, and which provides a vision to guide our efforts in the years ahead. It was for similar reasons that I have sought to develop concepts and frameworks to guide the efforts of our governments in other aspects of our relations -- whether solving the regional tensions that have damaged our relations over the years, or expanding the people-to-people contacts that can enrich both our societies.

It is in this spirit that I have studied with great care your letter of January 14, your January 15 statement to the Soviet people, and your subsequent statements on the prospects for progress in arms control. I believe they represent a significant and positive step forward.

I am encouraged that you have suggested steps leading toward a world free from nuclear weapons, even though my view regarding the steps necessary differs from yours in certain respects. However, having agreed on the objective and on the need for taking concrete steps to reach that goal, it should be easier to resolve differences in our viewpoints as to what those steps should be. Our initial moves are of course the essential ones to start this process and therefore I believe we should focus our negotiating efforts on them.

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BY. [Redacted], NARA, DATE 10/14/00
Of course, if we are to move toward a world in which the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons will be possible, there must be far greater trust and confidence between our two countries than exists at present. We cannot simply wave away the suspicion and misunderstandings which have developed over the past four decades between our two countries. The process of reducing and eventually eliminating nuclear weapons can by itself nurture greater confidence and trust. But there will be many in my country, and I believe in yours, who will question the wisdom of eliminating nuclear weapons -- which both sides see as the ultimate guarantor of their security -- if they see the other's conduct as threatening. This leads me to three general observations.

First, it will be vitally necessary as we move down this path to ensure the most stringent verification, with measures far more comprehensive and exacting than in any previous agreement. I welcome your recognition of this in your expressed willingness to make use of on-site inspection and to adopt other measures that may be necessary. For our part, we will be proposing verification procedures tailored to the specific weaponry limits which are contemplated. Our negotiators will, of course, work out the details of the measures, but I believe we both will have to pay close attention to this aspect and see to it that our respective governments develop and implement the necessary arrangements. At the same time, it will be essential to resolve outstanding compliance concerns and ensure that all obligations our governments have undertaken are faithfully observed.

My second point is that any sustained effort to resolve our basic security concerns must go hand-in-hand with concrete steps to move ahead in other areas of our relationship -- non-nuclear military issues, regional problems, human rights, and bilateral ties. The buildup of both nuclear and conventional armaments has taken place in recent decades to address perceived threats to security, including conflicts in other regions of the world. Progress on reducing arms should be accompanied by a corresponding effort to deal with these perceptions. The process of eliminating nuclear arms is liable to prove fragile indeed unless we can deal with our competition in a peaceful and responsible way.
I welcome the statement in your January 15 message to the Soviet people, which calls for settlement of regional conflicts as soon as possible. I would urge you again to consider seriously the proposal I made at the United Nations in October for a comprehensive and flexible framework that would permit our two countries to work together, in conjunction with the peoples involved, to solve regional conflicts that have damaged East-West relations over the years and have brought great suffering to the areas affected. We should make every effort to ensure that in the dialogue on regional issues to which we agreed at Geneva, including discussions by our foreign ministers and the meetings of our senior regional experts, our governments take a fresh look at ways to reduce tensions between us over regional matters. I continue to believe that regional conflicts can and should be resolved peacefully, in ways that allow free choice without outside interference.

Finally, as you know, the United States and its allies must rely today on nuclear weapons to deter conventional as well as nuclear conflict. This is due in large part to the significant imbalance that currently exists between the conventional forces of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. As a result, it would be necessary, as we reduce nuclear weapons toward zero, that we concurrently engage in a process of strengthening the stability of the overall East-West security balance, with particular emphasis on redressing existing conventional imbalances, strengthening confidence-building measures and accomplishing a verifiable, global ban on chemical weapons. In addition, our cooperative efforts to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime would become even more important.

As for the specifics of your proposal, we certainly agree on the goal of eliminating nuclear weapons as soon as we have achieved the conditions for a world which makes that goal feasible. We also agree on the need to get on with the first steps towards creating those conditions now. The pace of progress towards any target date would have to depend on our ability to arrive at mutually acceptable guarantees to ensure that the security of the United States, the Soviet Union and our respective friends and allies is in no sense diminished along the way.
I also agree that the first steps in moving toward this goal involve deep reductions in the existing arsenals of the United States and the Soviet Union. Also, like you, we can envision subsequent steps which could involve the United Kingdom, France and the People's Republic of China, so that all can move to zero nuclear weapons in a balanced and stable manner. Finally, I also share the view that our efforts should now focus on the first steps which the U.S. and USSR can take bilaterally to begin the process.

I can also agree with several of your ideas on how this program would proceed. There are other details, however, that would require modification before I could accept them.

For example, as our two nations reduce our nuclear weapons toward zero, it is imperative that we maintain equal limits on those weapons at each stage along the way. To this end, the United States last November proposed a detailed plan for reduction of U.S. and Soviet strategic offensive forces. I am disappointed that the Soviet Union has not yet responded to this proposal, which builds on your ideas presented to me last fall by Foreign Minister Shevardnadze. As we discussed in Geneva, we agree on the principle of deep reductions, but we cannot agree that certain categories of weapons systems on the U.S. side would be included while like weapons on the Soviet side would be excluded.

Similarly, we must insist that limits be based on system capabilities, not expressed intentions. You made this point very eloquently to me in Geneva. In regard to longer-range INF missiles, this means that we cannot exclude systems from limits merely because of their deployment location, since those systems are capable of moving or being transported in a matter of days between different geographic areas.

I have, however, studied closely, your INF proposal of January 15, 1986, and believe that our negotiators at Geneva should be able to arrive at an equitable, verifiable and mutually acceptable INF agreement. In this regard, I have asked our negotiators during this round to propose a
concrete plan for the elimination of LRINF missiles, not only in Europe but also in Asia, before the end of 1989.

In the defense and space area, your proposal was ambiguous with regard to strategic defense research. I continue to believe that limits on research could be counterproductive and, in any case, could not be verified; therefore, they must not be included in an agreement. Beyond research, as I suggested in Geneva, if there were no nuclear missiles, then there might also be no need for defenses against them. But I am convinced that some non-nuclear defenses could make a vital contribution to security and stability. In any event, our negotiators in Geneva should thoroughly examine how we could make a transition to a world involving the increasing contribution of such defenses.

With respect to nuclear testing, I believe that, so long as we rely on nuclear weapons as an element of deterrence, we must continue to test in order to ensure their continued safety, security and reliability. However, as I wrote to you in December, I see no reason why we should not consider the matter of nuclear testing as we move forward on other arms control subjects. I suggested we establish a bilateral dialogue aimed at constructive steps in this field. I remain hopeful you will take up this offer.

Finally, although your proposal seems to recognize that the crucial first step is substantial bilateral U.S. and Soviet nuclear reductions, it also attaches certain conditions regarding the forces of the United Kingdom and France. As you know, the United States can make no commitments for other nuclear powers, nor can we agree to bilateral U.S.-Soviet arrangements which would suggest otherwise. The negotiations of limitations on third country nuclear systems is solely the responsibility and prerogative of the governments concerned.

The leaders of Britain, France and China have made known their views on this and on the progress necessary in U.S.-Soviet nuclear reductions and in other arms control areas which would establish the
conditions for them to consider how their security interests would be served by participation in future negotiations. Thus, the important task now before us is to make the necessary progress. When we have done so -- as I noted earlier -- I can envision a process involving the other nuclear powers, so that we all can move to zero nuclear weapons in a balanced and stable manner.

With these considerations in mind, and building upon your proposal, I propose that we agree upon the elements which we hold in common, as outlined above, and that we accelerate work on the first bilateral steps. Implementing details must be worked out by our negotiators in Geneva, Vienna and Stockholm, but our guiding objective should be to reach meaningful, verifiable and balanced arms control measures, each of which can stand on its merits at every stage of the larger process.

In summary, I would propose that the process toward our agreed goal of eliminating nuclear weapons include the following elements:

Initial Steps. I believe that these steps should involve reduction in and limits on nuclear, conventional, and chemical weapons as follows:

1. The U.S. and the USSR would reduce the number of warheads on their strategic ballistic missiles to 4500 and the number of ALCMs on their heavy bombers to 1500 resulting in no more than a total number of 6000 such warheads on strategic nuclear delivery vehicles. These reductions would be carried out in such a way as to enhance stability.

2. In the INF area, by 1987 both the United States and the Soviet Union would limit their LRINF missile deployments in Europe to no more than 140 launchers each, with the Soviet Union making concurrent, proportionate reductions in Asia. Within the following year, both sides would further reduce the numbers of LRINF launchers remaining in Europe and Asia by an additional 50%. Finally, both sides would move to the total elimination of this category of weapons by the end of 1989.
3. Research programs on strategic defenses would be conducted in accord with treaty obligations.

4. The U.S. and the USSR would establish an effective MBFR verification regime and carry out initial reductions in manpower levels along the lines of the recent Western proposal at the MBFR negotiations; they would then begin a process of moving on to a balance of non-nuclear capabilities in Europe.

5. Concrete and meaningful confidence-building measures designed to make the European military environment more open, predictable, and stable would be initiated.

6. An effective, comprehensive worldwide ban on the development, production, possession, and transfer of chemical weapons would be instituted, with strict verification measures including international on-site inspection.

Subsequent steps. Subsequent steps could involve other nuclear powers and would aim at further reductions and increasingly strict limits, ultimately leading to the elimination of all nuclear weapons. We would embark on this process as soon as the steps encompassed in the first stage are completed. The goal would be to complete the process as soon as the conditions for a non-nuclear world had been achieved.

Obligations assumed in all steps and areas would be verified by national technical means, by on-site inspection as needed, and by such additional measures as might prove necessary.

I hope that this concept provides a mutually acceptable route to a goal that all the world shares. I look forward to your response and to working with you in the coming months in advancing this most important effort.

Let me conclude by agreeing with you that we should work constructively before your visit to the United States to prepare concrete agreements on the full range of issues we discussed at Geneva. Neither of us has illusions about the major problems which remain between our two countries,
but I want to assure you that I am determined to work with you energetically in finding practical solutions to those problems. I agree with you that we should use our correspondence as a most important channel of communication in preparing for your visit.

Nancy and I would like to extend to you, Mrs. Gorbacheva and your family our best wishes. It is our hope that this year will bring significant progress toward our mutual goal of building a better relationship between our two countries, and a safer world.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

His Excellency
Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev
General Secretary of the Central Committee
of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union
The Kremlin
Moscow
Dear Mr. President,

I chose to send this letter with E. A. Shevardnadze, who is leaving for the United States to attend the session of the United Nations General Assembly. He is also planning, as has been agreed, to visit Washington and to discuss thoroughly the questions of interest to both sides.

After we received your letter of July 25, 1986, which has been given careful consideration, certain developments and incidents of a negative nature have taken place. This is yet another indication of how sensitive relations between the USSR and the United States are and how important it is for the top leaders of the two countries to keep them constantly within view and exert a stabilizing influence whenever the amplitude of their fluctuations becomes threatening.

Among such incidents — of the kind that have happened before and that, presumably, no one can be guaranteed against in the future is the case of Zakharov and Daniloff. It requires a calm examination, investigation, and a search for mutually acceptable solutions. However, the US side has unduly dramatized that incident. A massive hostile

HIS EXCELLENCY
RONALD W. REAGAN,
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Washington, D.C.
campaign has been launched against our country, which has been taken up at the higher levels of the United States administration and Congress. It is as if a pretext was deliberately sought to aggravate Soviet-American relations and to increase tension.

A question then arises: what about the atmosphere so needed for the normal course of negotiations and certainly for preparing and holding the summit meeting?

Since the Geneva meeting, the Soviet Union has been doing a great deal to ensure that the atmosphere is favorable and that negotiations make possible practical preparations for our new meeting.

On the major issues of limiting and reducing arms - nuclear, chemical and conventional - we have undertaken intensive efforts in a search for concrete solutions aimed at radically reducing the level of military confrontation in a context of equivalent security.

However, Mr. President, in the spirit of candidness which is coming to characterize our dialogue, I have to tell you that the overall character of US actions in international affairs, the position on which its representatives insist at negotiations and consultations and the content of your letter, all give rise to grave and disturbing thoughts. One has to conclude that in effect no start has been made in implementing the agreements we reached in Geneva on improving Soviet-American relations, accelerating the negotiations on nuclear and space arms, and renouncing attempts to secure military superiority. Both in letters and publicly we have made known our views as to the causes of such development, and for my part I do not want to repeat here our assessment of the situation.
First of all, a conclusion comes to mind: is the U.S. leadership at all prepared and really willing to seek agreements which would lead to the termination of the arms race and to genuine disarmament? It is a fact, after all, that despite vigorous efforts by the Soviet side we have still not moved an inch closer to an agreement on arms reduction.

Having studied your letter and the proposals contained therein, I began to think where they would lead in terms of seeking solutions.

First. You are proposing that we should agree that the ABM Treaty continue to exist for another 5 to 7 years, while activities to destroy it would go ahead. Thus, instead of making headway, there would be something that complicates even what has been achieved.

We have proposed that any work on anti-missile systems be confined to laboratories. In response, we witness attempts to justify the development of space weapons and their testing at test sites, and declarations, made in advance, of the intention to start in five to seven years deploying large-scale ABM systems and thus to nullify the Treaty. It is, of course, fully understood that we will not agree to that. We see here a bypass route to securing military superiority.

I trust, Mr. President, you recall our discussion of this subject in Geneva. At that time I said that should the United States rush with weapons into space, we would not help it. We would do our utmost to devalue such efforts and make them futile. You may rest assured that we have every means to achieve this and, should the need arise, we shall use those means.
We favor the strengthening of the ABM Treaty regime. This is precisely the reason for our position that work should be confined to laboratories and that the Treaty should be strictly observed for a period of up to 15 years. Should this be the case, it would be possible — and this is our proposal — to agree on significant reduction in strategic offensive arms. We are prepared to do this without delay, and it would thereby be demonstrated in practice that neither side seeks military superiority.

Second. As far as medium-range missiles are concerned the Soviet Union has proposed an optimum solution — complete elimination of U.S. and Soviet missiles in Europe. We have also agreed to an interim option — and that, without taking into account the modernization of British and French nuclear systems.

Following our well-known steps towards accommodation, the issue of verification would seem no longer to be an obstacle. Yet, the U.S. side has now "discovered" another obstacle, namely, Soviet medium-range missiles in Asia. Nevertheless, I believe that here, as well, a mutually acceptable formula can be found and I am ready to propose one, provided there is certainty that a willingness to resolve the issue of medium-range missiles in Europe does exist.

Third. The attitude of the United States to the moratorium on nuclear testing is a matter of deep disappointment — and not only in the Soviet Union. The United States administration is making every effort to avoid this key problem, to subsume it in talk of other issues.
You are aware of my views in this regard: the attitude of a country to the cessation of nuclear testing is the touchstone of its policy in the field of disarmament and international security - and, indeed, in safeguarding peace in general.

Arguments to the effect that nuclear testing is needed to ensure reliability of nuclear arsenals are untenable. Today there are other methods to ensure this, without nuclear explosions. After all, the United States does not test devices with yields in excess of 150-200 kilotons, although 70 per cent of the U.S. nuclear arsenal - and in our case the percentage is not smaller - consists of weapons with yields exceeding that threshold.

Modern science combined with a political willingness to agree to any adequate verification measures, including on-site inspections, ensure effective verification of the absence of nuclear explosions. So here too there is room for mutually acceptable solutions.

I have addressed specifically three questions which, in my opinion are of greatest importance. They are the ones to which positive solutions are expected from the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. They are a matter of concern to the whole world, they are being discussed everywhere. Naturally, we are in favor of productive discussions of other major issues as well, such as reductions of armed forces and conventional armaments, a chemical weapons ban, regional problems, and humanitarian questions. Here too, common approaches and cooperation should be sought. Yet, the three questions mentioned above remain the key ones.
But in almost a year since Geneva there has been no movement on these issues. Upon reflection and after having given thought to your last letter I have come to the conclusion that the negotiations need a major impetus; otherwise they would continue to mark time while creating only the appearance of preparations for our meeting on American soil.

They will lead nowhere unless you and I intervene personally. I am convinced that we shall be able to find solutions, and I am prepared to discuss with you in a substantive way all possible approaches to them and identify such steps as would make it possible - after prompt follow-up by appropriate government agencies - to make my visit to the United States a really productive and fruitful one. This is exactly what the entire world is expecting from a second meeting between the leaders of the Soviet Union and the United States.

That is why an idea has come to my mind to suggest to you, Mr. President, that, in the very near future and setting aside all other matters, we have a quick one-on-one meeting, let us say in Iceland or in London, may be just for one day, to engage in a strictly confidential, private and frank discussion (possibly with only our foreign ministers present). The discussion - which would not be a detailed one, for its purpose and significance would be to demonstrate political will - would result in instructions to our respective agencies to draft agreements on two or three very specific questions, which you and I could sign during my visit to the United States.

I look forward to your early reply.

Respectfully,

M. GORBACHEV

September 15, 1986
Уважаемый господин Президент,

Я предпочел написать это письмо с Э.А. Шеварднацем, который выезжает в США для участия в сессии Генеральной Ассамблеи ООН. Он также имеет в виду, как было условлено, посетить Вашингтон и основательно побеседовать по интересующим обе Стороны вопросам.

После получения Вашего послания от 25 июля 1986 г., которое было внимательно рассмотрено, произошли некоторые события и инициативы негативного плана. Это лишнее свидетельство того, сколько чувствительны отношения между СССР и США и как важно высшему руководству двух стран постоянно держать их в поле зрения, оказывать стабилизирующее воздействие всякий раз, когда амплитуда их колебаний приобретает угрожающий характер.

К подобным случаям – а они бывали ранее, и, видимо, от них никто не застрахован вперед – относится дело Захарова и Даниловича. Оно требует спокойного разбирательства, расследования и поиска взаимоприемлемых решений. Однако Американская Сторона незаслуженно драматизировала этот инцидент. Против нашей страны была развернута массированная кампания враждебности, которая поднята на уровень руководства администрарции и конгресса США. Будто специально искали предлог, чтобы ухудшить советско-американские отношения, усилить напряженность.

Вот и возникает вопрос: а как же быть с атмосферой, столь необходимой для нормального хода переговоров и, конечно, для подготовки и проведения встречи на высшем уровне? 

Советский Союз за период после Женевы много делает, чтобы атмосфера эта была благоприятной и чтобы переговоры обеспечили практическую подготовку к нашей с Вами новой встрече.

По основным вопросам ограничения и сокращения вооружений – ядерных, химических, обычных – нашим предшественникам в поисках конкретных развязок с целью кардинального понижения уровня военного противостояния в условиях равнозначной безопасности.

Однако – в духе той откровенности, которая начала складываться в нашем с Вами диалоге, господин Президент, – должен Вам сказать, что общий характер действий США в международных делах, позиции, которые их представители отстаивают на переговорах и консультациях, то, что совершается в Вашем послании, – наводят на очень серьезные, грезовые мысли.

Его Превосходительству
Рональду Р.Рейгану,
Президенту Соединенных Штатов Америки
г. Вашингтон
Приходится констатировать, что по существу так и не началась реализация договоренностей, достигнутых нами в Женеве, об улучшении советско-американских отношений, ускорении переговоров по ядерным и космическим вооружениям, об отказе от стремления к военному превосходству. Мнения о причинах такого хода дела излагались нами в переписке и публично, и я, со своей стороны, не хочу здесь повторять нашу оценку ситуации.

Напрашивается, прежде всего, вывод: а готово ли вообще и хочет ли на деле американское руководство искать соглашений, которые вели бы к прекращению гонки вооружений, к реальному разоружению. Ведь это факт, что до сих пор мы ни на дайм не приблизились, несмотря на энергичные усилия Советской Стороны, к договоренностям о сокращении вооружений.

Исчезло Ваше письмо, изложенное в нем предложения, я запустился, куда же они ведут с точки зрения поиска развязок.

Первое. Вы предлагаете нам согласиться с тем, чтобы Договор по ПРО просуществовал еще 5-7 лет. Тем временем осуществлялись бы работы, которые бы его разрушили. Получается не продвижение вперед, а осложнение даже того, что было раньше.

Мы предложили, чтобы любые работы в области противоракетных систем ограничивались пределами лабораторий. А нам в ответ опрашивают разработку космического оружия и его испытания на полигонах, заранее прогнозируя намерение через 5-7 лет начать развертывание широкомасштабных систем ПРО и тем самым перечеркнуть Договор. При этом прекрасно понимают, что мы на это не согласимся. Мы видим здесь обходный канал к получению военного превосходства.

Господин Президент, полагаю, помнит наш разговор в Женеве на эту тему. Я тогда сказал, что если США будут рваться с оружием в космос, то мы помогать им не будем. Сделаем все, чтобы обеспечить такие усилия, сорвать их. Могу заверить – у нас для этого есть все возможности, которыми, если придётся, мы воспользуемся.

Мы за укрепление режима Договора по ПРО. Именно это соображение лежит в основе нашей позиции о невозможности работы за стенами лабораторий и неукоснительном соблюдении Договора по ПРО в течение до 15 лет. В таком случае можно было бы – и мы это предлагаем – договориться о значительных сокращениях стратегических наступательных вооружений. Мы готовы без задержек пойти на это и тем самым на практике бы было показано, что ни одна из Сторон не стремится к военному превосходству.

Второе. По ракетам средней дальности Советский Союз предложил оптимальное решение – полную ликвидацию американских и советских ракет в Европе. Мы согласились и на промежуточную договоренность, причем без учета модернизации ядерных средств Англии и Франции.
Вопрос о контроле — после наших известных шагов навстречу — также, казалось бы, перестал быть препятствием. Однако Американская Сторона теперь "обнаружила" другое препятствие — советские ракеты средней дальности в Азии. Тем не менее считаю, что здесь можно найти взаимоприемлемую формулу, и готов ее предложить, если будет уверенность, что действительно есть желание решить проблему ракет средней дальности в Европе.

Третье. Глубокое разочарование, и не только в Советском Союзе, вызывает отношение Соединенных Штатов к мораторию на ядерные испытания. Администрация США всячески стараетсяобойти эту ключевую проблему, перевести ее в плоскость рассуждений о других вопросах.

Вы знаете, мою точку зрения на этот счет: отношение той или иной страны к прекращению ядерных испытаний — это пробный камень политики в области разоружения и международной безопасности, да и вообще в деле сохранения мира.

Доводы, будто ядерные испытания нужны для обеспечения надежности ядерного арсенала — не основательны. Для этого сейчас существуют другие методы, без ядерных взрывов. Ведь не проводят же США испытания мощностью свыше 150-200 килотонн, хотя 70 процентов американского ядерного арсенала, да и у нас не меньше, составляют заряды, превышающие по мощности этот порог.

Современная наука в сочетании с политической готовностью пойти на любые адекватные меры проверки, вплоть до инспекции на местах, обеспечивает эффективный контроль за отсутствием ядерных взрывов. Так что и здесь есть поле для взаимоприемлемых решений.

Я особо остановился на трех вопросах, которые представляются мне главными. Именно по ним ждут от СССР и США положительных решений. Они беспокоят весь мир, их обсуждают повсюду. Разумеется, мы за результативное обсуждение и других крупных вопросов — таких, как сокращение вооруженных сил и обычных вооружений, запрещение химического оружия, региональные проблемы, гуманитарные вопросы. Надо и здесь искать общий подход, добиваться взаимодействия. И все же ключевыми остаются те три вопроса, о которых сказано выше.

Но по ним никакого движения за почти год после Женевы нет. Размышляя над этим и обдумывая Ваше последнее письмо, я пришел к убеждению, что переговоры нуждаются в очень серьезном импульсе, иначе они будут и в апрель топтаться на месте, создавая лишь видимость подготовки к нашей с Вами встрече на земле Америки.
Они ни к чему не приведут, если мы с вами не вмешаемся лично. Убежден, что мы сможем найти развязки, готов обстоятельно обсудить с Вами все возможные подходы к ним, наметить такие шаги, которые позволили бы – после быстрой проработки на уровне соответствующих ведомств – сделать мой визит в США действительно продуктивным, результативным. Ведь именно этого ждут во всем мире от второй встречи руководителей США и СССР.

Вот почему мне пришла мысль предложить Вам, господин Президент, в самое ближайшее время, отложив все дела, встретиться один на один, накоротке – например, в Исландии или в Лондоне, – может быть, всего на один день, для совершенно конфиденциального, закрытого, откровенного разговора /возможно, только в присутствии наших министров иностранных дел/. Результатом этого разговора – мы не стали бы углубляться в детали, его смысл и значение в демонстрации политической воли – были бы указания нашим соответствующим ведомствам подготовить по совершенно конкретным двум–трём вопросам проекты соглашений, которые мы бы могли с Вами подписать во время моего визита в Соединенные Штаты.

Надеюсь на Ваш скорый ответ.

С уважением

М.ГОРБАЧЕВ

15 сентября 1986 года
Questions on Primary Source A

List three (3) points that Ambassador Nitze identifies as important issues to our allies.

1. 

2. 

3. 

What is Prime Minister Thatcher’s view of General Secretary Gorbachev?

Was her assessment of General Secretary Gorbachev correct? Why or why not?

What were at least three things that Prime Minister Thatcher hoped to see resolved in future negotiations?

1. 

2. 

3. 

Questions on Primary Source B

What are at least four (4) points from Secretary of State Shultz regarding how President Reagan should conduct negotiations and what the goals should be?

1. 

2. 

3. 

4.
Questions on Primary Source C
What are the five (5) most important goals to President Reagan for the upcoming negotiations?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Questions on Primary Source D
What are the five (5) most important goals to General Secretary Gorbachev for the upcoming negotiations?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

General Questions
Why might it be important for a leader to consider the input from advisors, allies, and adversaries when trying to negotiate a deal?

In your opinion, were the negotiations successful? Why or why not?
President Reagan says goodbye to Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev after the last meeting at Hofdi House, Reykjavik, Iceland. 10/12/86.
STUDENT LEADERSHIP PROGRAM
A five day program to develop leadership skills such as: communication, optimism, and informed decision making. Students build these skills as they create a plan of action to bring real change to their community and the world.

REAGAN LEADERSHIP SUMMIT
An annual leadership conference where students from across the nation share their hard earned leadership knowledge and experience.

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