

THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

August 29, 1983

83 AUG 29 P11:12

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
FROM: George P. Shultz *GP*
SUBJECT: Andropov's Proposal to Destroy Missiles

WHITE HOUSE
SITUATION ROOM

In an August 27 Pravda "interview," Andropov offered to destroy all missiles to be reduced under the Soviet proposal to limit SS-20s "in Europe" (probably referring to those missiles deployed west of their proposed 80-degree line) to the level they attribute to British and French missiles. He has now sent you a letter (Tab 1), formally conveying that offer.

In the letter, Andropov portrays this move as "a serious step" toward a mutually acceptable agreement and states that the USSR expects a comparable reciprocal step from the US that would make such an agreement possible. He states that Moscow believes that agreement is still "possible and achievable," and that the Soviet Delegation will have instructions to "exert additional efforts" toward agreement in the next round.

Under their previous position, the Soviets maintained that the primary method of reduction would be destruction, although a certain percentage of systems could be withdrawn from Europe. We have pressed the Soviets in Geneva for some time as to whether or not any SS-20s to be reduced under their proposal would be destroyed, or merely relocated to the eastern USSR. Thus, the Soviet move is, at a minimum, a welcome clarification of their position. It is, however, also significant in that the Soviets have offered, for the first time, to destroy a number of new systems (i.e., 80-100 SS-20s). Of course, the basic problems in the Soviet position -- inclusion of British and French forces, a ban on any US INF missile deployments, and no limits on new SS-20 deployments in the Far East -- remain.

The Soviet move is of course primarily directed toward European public opinion. It would not directly affect the options now before you with regard to possible new elements in our own INF position (i.e., inclusion of aircraft, regional subceilings, a proportional reduction of Pershing II). However, we can expect the Soviet move to find some resonance here and in Europe; it will likely generate additional pressures -- both from publics and from some of the Allies -- for movement on our part when the INF negotiations resume on September 6.

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BY *smf* NARA, DATE 10/22/99

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We will be in a better position to develop your response to Andropov's letter as a result of decisions to be taken on our INF position. In your letter we would then be able to outline the substance of any new elements of our position. My meeting with Gromyko in Madrid on September 8 would provide an opportunity to convey your response. These steps, properly presented to the Western public, will allow us to maintain the initiative and sustain Allied support for our deployments.

The NATO Special Consultative Group meeting scheduled for September 2 offers an opportunity to inform the Allies of Andropov's letter. Andropov may be sending similar letters to Allied leaders; if so, we can use this SCG to coordinate our replies.

Attachment: As stated

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ORIGINAL

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 28, 1983

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: WILLIAM P. CLARK *WPC*
SUBJECT: Letter from Yuri Andropov

OR

This afternoon the Soviet Embassy delivered to the State Department the attached letter (Tab A) to you from Andropov. A preliminary analysis of the letter indicates it is consistent with the public statement he made yesterday to Pravda (Tab B). It does not appear to be related to any other correspondence.

My staff is working on a detailed analysis of this most recent Soviet proposal which I will send to you tomorrow.

Attachments

- Tab A - Letter from Andropov of August 27, 1983
- Tab B - Andropov's Statement to Pravda

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Declassify on OADR

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BY *smf*

10/22/97

~~SECRET~~

YURI ANDROPOV'S ANSWERS
TO QUESTIONS OF THE NEWSPAPER "PRAVDA"

Follow answers by Yuri Andropov, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, to the questions by the newspaper "Pravda".

QUESTION: As another round of Soviet-U.S. negotiations on the limitation of nuclear arms in Europe is about to begin, we would like to inquire whether it is true, as is being alleged in the West, that at the previous round of the negotiations the U.S. side put forward some flexible proposals which allow to hope for progress.

ANSWER: No, it is not. There has as yet been no progress at the negotiations and, regrettably, there can be no hope for it if the United States' position remains as it is now.

The entire "flexibility" of the U.S. position boils down to the following.

Previously the United States proposed that the USSR should reduce to zero, i.e. destroy, all its medium-range missiles - and not only in the European but also in the Eastern part of our country (which is completely irrelevant to the subject-matter of the Geneva negotiations), whereas nothing at all would be destroyed on the NATO side - not a single missile or a single aircraft - or, figuratively speaking, their reductions would be nothing but zero. That was the essence of the U.S. "zero option": zero missiles for the USSR and zero reductions for NATO.

And now the United States deigns to agree that the USSR retain a certain number of its medium-range missiles, but in this case as well the United States, while not reducing a single medium-range nuclear systems, would even gain the "right" to deploy in Europe - in addition to the British and French missiles already present here - as many new American missiles as the number of Soviet missiles that would remain. In other words, not only would we have reduced unilaterally our arsenal of medium-range nuclear systems, but we would also have to give our blessing to the deployment of new American missiles targeted against us and our allies.

Calling this flexibility can only be a mockery of common sense.

If one were to speak of flexibility in the real, constructive sense of the word, it is the Soviet Union - and not in the least the United States - that has been displaying it for the entire duration of the negotiations.

It was the Soviet Union that proposed a genuine, and not a false, zero solution for Europe: to destroy both medium-range and tactical nuclear systems in their entirety. The United States, however, does not even want to discuss the idea.

Since the West is not ready for such a radical solution, while we remain prepared for it, we have proposed another variant, which, though less radical, is also far-reaching: to forgo deployment in Europe of any new medium-range systems, whereas the existing ones would be reduced by approximately two-thirds, with the USSR and NATO each retaining for the time being 300 such systems.

In view of the assertions made in the West to the effect that such a solution would be unfair since the USSR could, within the allowed number of 300 systems, allegedly retain more missiles than the number existing on the side of NATO, we declared our readiness to retain after the reductions in Europe precisely as many medium-range missiles as Britain and France possess. Accordingly, both sides would also retain an equal number of medium-range nuclear delivery aircraft.

Then certain people mounted a new "hobby-horse" by claiming that even with an equal number of missiles on both sides the Soviet Union would allegedly have an advantage in the aggregate number of warheads on its SS-20 missiles. But they could not ride that "hobby-horse" for a long time either, for the Soviet Union expressed its consent to reach agreement on equality both as regards the delivery vehicles (missiles and airplanes) and as regards the weapons on them.

As a result, the Soviet Union would have in the European zone significantly fewer medium-range missiles and warheads on them than prior to 1976 when we did not have any SS-20 missiles, which, according to the NATO version, were the spark that set the forest on fire.

What, then, is unfair and unacceptable in our position? This is an honest, consistent and at the same time flexible position based on the principle of equality and equal security of the sides. Should

the United States and its NATO allies become even the least bit willing to come to agreement on equal terms, the Geneva negotiations would proceed quite differently and one would not have to wait long for an accord.

QUESTION: In addition to the evasive arguments of the United States and NATO that you have mentioned it is often alleged in the West that the USSR, while agreeing to reduce the number of its medium-range missiles in the European part of the country, intends merely to relocate them to its Eastern regions. What could you say in this regard?

ANSWER: Such allegations are patently untrue. There is no ruse here. We ourselves proposed some time ago that the principal method of reducing medium-range nuclear arms in Europe should be their dismantling, destruction. At the negotiations we straightforwardly said to the Americans: let us agree on what will be destroyed on both sides and now. But they shun this subject too.

Today I can say that we are ready to make another major step.

Should a mutually acceptable agreement be achieved, including renunciation by the United States of the deployment in Europe of new missiles, the Soviet Union, in reducing its medium-range missiles in the European part of the country to the level equal to the number of missiles of Britain and France, would liquidate all the missiles to be reduced. In this event a considerable number of the most modern missiles, known in the West as the SS-20S, would be liquidated as well.

It is hardly necessary to emphasize the exceptional importance of this new manifestation of good will on the part of the Soviet Union.

First, it renders totally groundless the assertions circulated in the NATO countries alleging that in actual fact the Soviet Union intends to retain the SS-20 missiles which are to be reduced, by merely relocating them from Europe to the East.

Second, no grounds whatsoever remain for the concerns that are at present expressed by China and Japan with regard to the possibility of such relocation.

The above makes it clear to any unprejudiced person that the Soviet Union has done and is doing everything in its power to find solutions

at the negotiations and to achieve a mutually acceptable agreement which would prevent a new and extremely dangerous round in the nuclear arms race in Europe.

Whether such agreement is reached, depends on the United States, on NATO as a whole. The forthcoming round of the negotiations beginning on September 6 will be decisive in this regard.

Throughout the negotiations the Soviet Union, and I wish to emphasize this once again, has manifested a constructive and flexible approach. But I would emphasize another thing too: our flexibility has its limits which are dictated by the security interests of the Soviet State and its allies.

And if the position of the United States at the negotiations continues to be unconstructive and lopsided and if it actually comes to the deployment in Europe of American Pershings and cruise missiles, we shall naturally be compelled to take appropriate countermeasures to preserve the balance of forces both on the regional, European, and on the global scale. This should be quite clear to everyone.

QUESTION: Since you have mentioned China in the context of the question of nuclear arms in Europe, what is the position of the PRC on the questions of nuclear arms limitation and disarmament in general?

ANSWER: As is known, the People's Republic of China has its own nuclear potential; it has gradually been growing. So far China has not been taking any part in the negotiations on the limitation and reduction of nuclear arms. At present, as we understand, the leaders of the PRC seem to become interested in some questions concerning nuclear and other arms which are discussed at the United Nations and in the Geneva Committee on disarmament. Should this trend develop further, China could undoubtedly make a substantial contribution to the solution of problems relating to the prevention of nuclear war and the cessation of the nuclear arms race.

QUESTION: Would you like to say anything about Soviet-Chinese relations?

ANSWER: We have regarded and continue to regard as abnormal the state of Soviet-Chinese relations that existed for two decades.

Recently some positive tendencies have become discernible in our relations. Political consultations are held between the two countries at the level of special representatives; their next round will begin in Peking on October 6. The volume of trade is growing; contacts have been gradually developing in a number of other fields.

The present level of bilateral relations is, however, far from being one that should, in our view, exist between such big and, moreover, neighbouring powers as the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China.

Much could be done in further expanding trade and developing economic, scientific and technical cooperation, and in the field of cultural, sports and other ties. Joint efforts in working out and implementing confidence-building measures in the area of the Soviet-Chinese border would significantly contribute to improving the climate in relations between the two countries.

We are also ready for a political dialogue with China on fundamental questions of world development, above all on problems of strengthening peace and international security.

Of course, we have substantial differences with China in approaches to some important international problems and relations with certain states. But we firmly believe that Soviet-Chinese relations should evolve in such a manner as not to be detrimental to third countries. We expect the same from the Chinese side too.

Achieving healthier relations between the USSR and the PRC becomes of special and topical importance in the context of the current aggravation of the international situation. We are confident that objectively the interests of the Soviet and Chinese peoples do not diverge as regards the elimination of the threat of war and the strengthening of peace. Not to mention the fact that peace is socialism's ideal, our two countries face major long-term economic tasks the successful accomplishment of which requires favourable external conditions.

Thus, both our countries stand to gain from a positive development of Soviet-Chinese relations, and this would also undoubtedly be beneficial for the entire international situation.

~~SECRET~~Translation from the Russian

Dear Mr. President:

I found it necessary to draw your attention once again to a question, the importance of which would seem to be beyond doubt. I have in mind the problem of limiting nuclear weapons in Europe, on which the next round of Soviet-American talks will begin in about a week in Geneva. A decisive breakthrough at those negotiations could be of fundamental importance from the viewpoint of how matters will develop in Europe and throughout the world, and consequently - and not least - between the Soviet Union and the United States as well.

The Soviet Union has just taken another major step which, if properly evaluated by the United States, will in many respects facilitate reaching agreement in Geneva. We have declared our willingness to liquidate in the European part of the USSR those of our medium-range missiles which would be subject to reductions. Among them there would be a considerable portion of SS-20 missiles as well, namely, that portion of those missiles which would be in excess of the aggregate number of medium-range missiles of Britain and France. It goes without saying that this can be done only if mutually acceptable agreement is reached as a whole on the problem of limiting medium-range nuclear systems in Europe, including renunciation of the deployment of new American missiles there.

The question of redeployment of SS-20 missiles to be reduced would thereby be removed, too. Indeed, American representatives have repeatedly emphasized the great importance for the progress of the negotiations in Geneva of what would happen to the Soviet missiles to be reduced in Europe.

Having taken this serious step for the sake of reaching agreement, we expect that the reciprocal step of the American side will be such as to make a mutually acceptable agreement possible.

As you understand, Mr. President, a great deal depends on what the forthcoming round of the negotiations will result in; we believe that an agreement is still possible and achievable. The Soviet delegation in Geneva will have instructions to exert additional efforts to work out an agreement based on the principle of equality and equal security. For success to be achieved, however, it is necessary for the U.S. delegation also to have corresponding instructions to work in the same direction.

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The Soviet leadership is deeply convinced that the situation truly dictates the need for a broad, considered approach and for taking bold political decisions looking to the future. For its part, the Soviet leadership is acting in this manner. I would like to hope that your government and you personally will approach the resolution of the task we face with a sense of high responsibility for the fate of peace and international security.

With respect,

Yu. Andropov

August 27, 1983

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