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His Excellency
Ronald W. Reagan
The President of the United States of America
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President,

In connection with your letter I would like to express some thoughts in continuation of our exchange of views with you.

I, of course, took note of the pledge of commitment to the lessening of tensions between our countries made by you in the handwritten addition to your letter. In turn, I can affirm once again what I wrote in my first letter to you -- namely, that it has been and continues to be our wish that there be a turn toward steady, good relations between the USSR and the USA. As a matter of fact, the numerous specific proposals submitted by our side, including those proposals put forward in my letters to you, have been aimed at reaching that very objective.

As regards interpreting a certain period in the history of our relations, about which you had already written once before, here our views differ. We have presented our point of view in this regard, so I will not repeat myself. I will note, however, that one side's having military superiority or seeking such superiority cannot be perceived by the other side as an indication of good intentions. There can be only one indication -- a willingness to conduct affairs as equals, a willingness reflected in practical policies. The position of the Soviet Union in this regard is clear and precise: we are not seeking superiority, but we will not allow superiority over us. I do not see anything here that should be unacceptable to the United States, if one wants stability and a lessening of tensions. It is from a position of equality that it is possible to agree on really mutually-acceptable solutions, when neither side can have reason to believe that it is making unilateral concessions.

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I thought it necessary to point this out, having in mind the way in which the intentions of the Soviet Union are interpreted in your letter. I cannot agree with this. This has already been stated on our side in the past. But since you return again to the question of intentions and how they can be perceived, I will express a few opinions, illustrating them with specific examples.

If one is to sum up what on many occasions has been publicly stated by you and other representatives of the Administration, one concludes that the only situation that would be acceptable to the United States would be one in which it was militarily ahead of the USSR. The fact of the matter, however, is that such a situation has not been and is not acceptable to us. In this respect we have experience -- bitter experience. The history of our relations, especially in the postwar period, has seen quite a few complications too. Quite a few attempts have been made to exert political, economic, and even military pressure on us.

Let us take the current situation. There is, it seems, an American idiom "to turn the table." Try to look at the realities of the international situation from our end. And at once one will see distinctly that the Soviet Union is encircled by a chain of American military bases. These bases are full of nuclear weapons. Their mission is well known -- they are targeted on us. Nothing like it can be found around your country.

And what about the fact that entire regions of the globe have been proclaimed spheres of American vital interests? And not only proclaimed, but made the object of a U.S. military presence. And this is done, among other places, at our very doorstep. And again we, for our part, are not doing anything

like it. What conclusions should we draw from this as to the intentions of the U.S.? I believe the conclusions readily present themselves. Such an approach is nothing other than a hypertrophied idea of one's interests in which the legitimate interests of others are completely ignored, an effort to gain, to put it mildly, positions of privilege at the expense of the other side. This approach is not compatible with the objective of ensuring stability. On the contrary, such an approach as a matter of policy objectively helps to create and sustain tensions.

Or let us take strategic arms. Here, too, no claims can be directed toward the Soviet Union. The fact that there is rough parity between the USSR and the USA and, in a wider sense, between the Warsaw Pact and NATO, can be disputed by no expert familiar with the situation. The SALT-2 Treaty was a reflection of this fact. It was not the end of the road, and we did not consider it as such. But the merit of the treaty was, among other things, that it established, I would say, with mathematical precision the strategic balance that has evolved.

Your military experts can tell you that the Soviet Union has done nothing to upset this balance. At the same time we see what kind of attitude is displayed toward the Treaty by the other side. Is it not the criterion by which to judge its intentions?

The same applies as well to medium-range nuclear forces in Europe. I will recall only that it was we who offered to reduce their number to the minimum on the side of the USSR and NATO. In response, "Pershings" and cruise missiles are appearing near our borders. How would you regard it, Mr. President, had something similar happened with respect to the U.S.? I believe

that your assesment of the intentions of the other side under the circumstances could only be one -- as regards both the other side's approach to negotiations and the essence of its intentions.

But even under these circumstances we have displayed and continue to display utmost restraint. The response we were forced to take, in terms of its scope and character, has not gone beyond the limits necessary to neutralize the threat posed to us and our allies. Moreover, we propose to return to the initial situation and, instead of further unleashing an arms race, to address ourselves in a decisive fashion to curbing the arms race, and to radically limiting and reducing nuclear arms. This is far from imposing conditions. As a matter of fact, what is unfair about the two sides cancelling those measures whose effect was to heighten the level of nuclear confrontation and, conversely, to lessen global security? There can be nothing unfair or damaging for either side in this. A return to the previous situation in the present circumstances would constitute forward movement by both sides toward stabilizing the situation, toward the practical renewal of the entire process of limiting nuclear weapons that is of decisive importance for the future of international relations and for peace as such.

So far, however, we see no indication that the American side proceeds from such an assumption. Regrettably, nothing new on this major issue of the day can be found in your letter either. I say this not for the sake of polemics, but rather in the hope that you will still find it possible to appreciate the way out of the extremely grave situation that we are suggesting.

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From my correspondence with you, Mr. President, as well as from previous correspondence, one can conclude that, in general terms there seems to be an understanding on your part that there are a number of important questions concerning the problem of security which require solutions and where joint efforts by our two countries are necessary.

For my part, in my last message I specifically mentioned several of these questions. Let me remind you that these included renouncing the construction of large-scale anti-ballistic missile defense systems, entering into negotiations on preventing the militarization of outer space and on banning anti-sattelite weapons, a freeze on nuclear weapons, resuming talks on a complete and comprehensive ban on nuclear tests, and some other measures. In other words, we are not for dialogue in a general sense between our two countries, but propose to fill it with concrete, weighty substance. We are convinced that practical movement in these and other directions and mutual determination to achieve practical results would fundamentally ease the situation in our relations and throughout the world in general. The degree of trust would increase significantly.

But we have not received a response to these proposals that would enable us to say that the United States is prepared for such concrete actions. I will not make a judgment as to what is the problem here, but I am convinced that, seriously speaking, there is no good reason and, moreover, no justification for avoiding the solution of problems that can play a decisive role in determining the road the world will take in the near future. Awareness of this is growing on the part of the public and the leaders of many states. Graphic evidence of this is the recent appeal by the leaders of six countries from four continents to the governments of the nuclear powers. Mr. President, this

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appeal is a very serious reminder, to our countries as well, of the enormous responsibility they bear for the destinies of the world and mankind. Our common duty is to respond to this appeal honestly, without delay, and through concrete actions. For its part, the Soviet Union is prepared for it.

In addition to those of our proposals already mentioned, I would also like to draw your attention to additional areas of possible cooperation in the interests of strengthening peace. One of these is the limitation of naval activity and naval armaments. This problem is very urgent; it is no coincidence that the United Nations has attached such importance to it as well. We have specific ideas on what could be done to reduce the growing tensions on the high seas, to ensure freedom of navigation and the safety of international sea communications. We have spoken in favor of discussing this problem within the framework of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament or in separate multilateral negotiations. Taking into account the role of our countries, we also propose to discuss this set of questions on a bilateral basis. We would like to know your opinion on this score.

Furthermore, the Warsaw Pact countries recently made a proposal to NATO countries to begin multilateral consultations on the subject of concluding a Treaty on mutual non-use of military force and the maintenance of peaceful relations. The essence and the importance of the idea of such a Treaty are well known. Attention to this proposal has been growing from the moment of its introduction. And here our two countries could also play an important part. We are ready to study any ideas the American side might have on this question.

The Soviet Union will, furthermore, do everything in its power to promote agreements on the problem of banning chemical weapons and on the reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe. Our delegations in Geneva and Vienna will be prepared to cooperate with American representatives. It goes without saying that, within the framework of these fora, we shall also express in detail our views on recent positions advanced by the American side. However, I have to note that the overall impression -- and not only ours -- is that these positions do not constitute a constructive contribution to the work already done in these fora.

Recently the Soviet Union introduced at the Stockholm conference a concrete and carefully balanced document directed at attaining a really significant agreement, which would fundamentally strengthen security on the European continent. In preparing this document, we took into account the opinions expressed at the first round of the conference as well as in the course of bilateral consultations, including those with American representatives. We would like to expect that in Stockholm the United States will take a position that would make possible agreement on mutually acceptable solutions.

As it has already been pointed out on our part in correspondence with you, we favor a bilateral exchange of opinions on regional matters. Our Ambassador is instructed to present to the Secretary of State more specific considerations on these and some other matters. Here I find it necessary to stress the main point: the need for restraint, for refraining from actions -- no matter what their motives -- which could only intensify dangerous tensions in various regions and make difficult the achievement of a just political settlement. The world has proven more than once that it is a hundred times more difficult to extinguish a fire than to prevent it. To remember this is in everyone's interests.

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I do not want to conclude this letter on a negative note, but in view of some of the remarks in your letter, I must point out that introduction into relations between states of questions concerning solely domestic affairs of our country or yours does not serve the task of improving these relations -- if this is our goal. I wish questions of such a nature did not burden our correspondence, which both of us, as I understand it, value.

Sincerely,

K. Chernenko

MOSCOW
June 6, 1984

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THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

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June 14, 1984

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MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
FROM: George P. Shultz *GPS*
SUBJECT: Chernenko's June 6 Letter and Dobrynin's
Talking Points: Analysis

I would like to share with you my analysis of Chernenko's reply to your last letter and to the points Dobrynin handed over in my meeting last Tuesday.

These communications basically contain nothing new, and confirm my impression that the Soviets are currently uncertain about how to handle us. Since the letter was signed June 6, it does not respond to your Dublin speech. But your last letter already contained your offer to negotiate on non-use of force if they would negotiate on confidence-building measures at Stockholm. Meanwhile, we have put down two other new arms control negotiating proposals, on chemical weapons and in MBFR. The Soviet reaction has been to pull out of the Olympics and to ratchet up their propaganda campaign, while claiming privately that they are willing to move forward (and agreeing to another round of talks on minor consular issues). In this letter and these points, Chernenko repeats the general argument that they want to move forward and we do not, but offers practically nothing to back it up.

Chernenko's language is correct and non-polemical. In response to your effort to explain why we see a threat in many Soviet actions, he goes on at length with a familiar rendition of Soviet complaints about us (encirclement with bases, INF missiles at their doorstep, etc.). The core theme is that we refuse to treat the USSR as an "equal."

On the security side, Chernenko basically reiterates the same tired agenda of one-sided arms control proposals as the solution to the problems in the relationship. On regional issues, he calls for restraint and says Dobrynin will present some "specific considerations" on our proposals for talks, but all Dobrynin had to say was that they are willing to listen to our views on southern Africa and the Middle East/Persian Gulf before deciding whether they will sit down for actual exchanges of views.

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As in previous letters, Chernenko leaves bilateral issues to others, i.e. Gromyko and the Foreign Ministry, but even here Dobrynin had mainly complaints that we are not moving on the things they care about, like fishing allocations and Aeroflot flights to the U.S. However, he also promised to get back to us soon on our proposals for new rounds of talks on hotline upgrade and the Pacific maritime boundary and for talks on search and rescue operations in the northern Pacific.

Finally, Chernenko closes with a complaint that you keep injecting Soviet internal affairs -- meaning human rights -- into your letters.

On the arms control side, there are a few items of detail worth pointing out:

-- In terms of the emphasis given to various arms control items, the "Chernenko agenda" as it now stands is: negotiations on outer space arms control; renouncing construction of large-scale anti-ballistic missile defense systems; limitations on naval activities and naval armaments (a recent Gromyko "initiative"); non-use of force; and nuclear testing.

-- On non-use of force, Chernenko is careful: he touts their proposal for a Warsaw Pact-NATO treaty on non-use of force, which they propose to discuss separately from the Stockholm conference; he next talks about chemical weapons and MBFR, and only then turns to Stockholm, where he expresses the hope that "the United States will take a position that would make possible agreement on mutually acceptable solutions." Dobrynin's points do not mention non-use of force at all. This suggests there may be some unresolved differences between Chernenko and Gromyko on how to handle your offer to discuss non-use of force together with our confidence-building measures in Stockholm. (Their negotiator in Stockholm is being almost totally non-committal at this point.)

-- Finally, both communications promise to negotiate on chemical weapons in Geneva and MBFR in Vienna, even though they are very skeptical of our offers, but Dobrynin's points turn down our offer of private discussions here on either issue "in view of the character of the latest American proposals." In other words, they accept bilateral discussions, but only at the negotiating sites.

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In sum, then, the Soviets have given us a mixed but, on balance, a poor showing. The tone is defensive, and so is the content. This is not surprising: they are on the defensive because we have the initiative in most aspects of our relationship. I found it interesting that Dobrynin -- in his remarks -- insisted so strongly that they "are not afraid to be seen negotiating with this Administration," and that they can do business even this year. But there may be some daylight between him and Moscow, where they continue to appear unwilling to negotiate on the basis of the substantial agenda you have put forward. So, despite Dobrynin's complaint about accusations that they are "hibernating," I think that remains a fairly accurate description of what they are doing.

To sustain our initiative, I think you should respond fairly quickly to Chernenko's message, and I will be sending you a draft in the next week or so. Overall, our response should be to keep pressing them both privately and publicly, as you did so successfully in your Dublin speech.

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THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

June 14, 1984

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MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
FROM: George P. Shultz *GPS* *PS*
SUBJECT: My Meeting with Dobrynin June 12

I had an interesting 40-minute meeting with Dobrynin this afternoon, at which he handed over Soviet Embassy translations of Chernenko's reply to your last letter of April 16 and of some additional "talking points" on issues he and I have been discussing. The Russian original with our more accurate translation of the letter is attached along with their version of the talking points. I read them over quickly at the meeting, and will be getting you my analysis of them shortly. At first glance they do not appear to move things forward very much, if at all.

After he handed over the Chernenko reply, I raised Sakharov. I said that you had told me about his call with the message from Chernenko, and that I thought everyone's interests, including theirs, would be best served if they could figure out a way to reassure people about the health of Sakharov and his wife. I suggested that Mitterrand's upcoming visit to Moscow might offer an opportunity for the Soviets to clarify the Sakharov situation.

Dobrynin replied that they saw things differently, and the fact that Chernenko had replied to you directly and so quickly should be understood as a "gesture of good will," even though the Soviets consider Sakharov purely a domestic matter. Asking for more information casts doubt on Soviet credibility, he added. I said I was not questioning their credibility, but making the observation that the issue was a real problem of concern to many people, especially scientists worldwide. He replied that the Soviets are prepared to live with the problem.

Turning to the letter and talking points, I said we would study them carefully and respond shortly. The problem, I said, is that we have been trying to do what we can to move the relationship in a positive direction, but cannot seem to get it off dead center. We have talked about revitalizing our bilateral agreements, we have made proposals in the arms control field, and we have suggested discussions on regional issues.

To take an example, on southern Africa we have a report that they had offered to discuss the issue with the British,

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yet it seemed unclear whether they were ready to talk with us. Dobrynin replied that if we had something to say on southern Africa, they were prepared to listen. I told him that on some regional issues we should be thinking of going beyond information sharing to damage control and even to trying to find mutual solutions.

Summing up, I reiterated that the general problem is how to get our relations off the ground and moving forward. If we could do that, I suggested, he and I and perhaps others might take a day and review the whole relationship. If no progress seemed possible on some issues, we could move on to others.

Dobrynin replied by saying that movement on bilateral issues should be easy. He said we had been discussing them for almost a year and a half without getting anywhere. I said our preparations to upgrade activities under the four bilateral agreements we had been discussing were ready. He replied there are no obstacles on the Soviet side.

Security and arms control problems were more difficult, he went on, but still he thought it should be possible to begin or renew negotiations on some of them. Our election year did not matter to them, he stressed. He had been hearing "tales" of the Soviets "hibernating" and accusations that they were interfering in our politics. The Soviets are not afraid to move ahead on bilateral issues and to begin negotiations on "big subjects." It would be good to show the world that the "big boys" are talking, he said. "We are not afraid to be seen negotiating with this Administration," he concluded. He said he hoped we would study the messages, and that I would sit down with Gromyko in the fall at the United Nations and "get something done."

I went back to Sakharov in conclusion, urging him to consider what I had said. He ended by saying that requests for more information raise the issue of credibility after Chernenko had given a substantive answer. Chernenko had only done so because the President himself had asked. I said it was not a credibility issue, but an objective and scientific fact about the importance of the problem.

Dobrynin said he would be going on vacation at the beginning or in the middle of July, in order to get to Moscow while Gromyko was still there. I said I would be going to Asia for two weeks in July. We agreed we should get together again before we both left town.

Attachments: As stated