

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

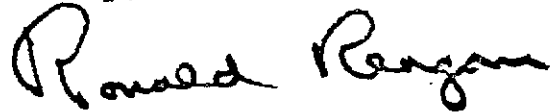
March 8, 1984

Dear Mr. General Secretary:

I have asked General Brent Scowcroft to take advantage of his visit to Moscow to discuss with you my thinking on the issues before our countries. As I have noted in previous communications, I believe the time has come for us to examine closely how we can make progress in the relationship and particularly in the area of nuclear arms reductions. An informal exchange of views may assist us in this effort.

General Scowcroft has my full confidence and that of Secretary Shultz, and I shall welcome any informal comments or suggestions which you may wish to convey to me through him.

Sincerely,



Konstantin Ustinovich Chernenko
General Secretary of the Central Committee
of the Communist Party
of the Soviet Union
Moscow

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WASHINGTON

March 8, 1984

Dear Brent:

I understand that you will be travelling to Moscow shortly as a member of a private group which has scheduled discussions with Soviet scholars and officials.

If the opportunity should arise during your visit to meet privately with Soviet policy makers, I would appreciate your discussing with them our current thinking on possible ways to improve the relationship and in particular to reduce the levels of nuclear arms. As you know, I attach the highest importance to making progress in this vital area.

Your counsel, particularly on strategic and nuclear questions, has always been of great value to me, and you are thoroughly familiar with my thinking on these matters. For this reason, it seems to me that you are in an excellent position to explain informally the possibilities for making progress, and to relay to us any thoughts or suggestions your Soviet interlocutors may have.

I look forward to meeting with you when you return.

Sincerely,



Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft, USAF (Ret.)
International Six, Incorporated
Suite 440
1875 I Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20006

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TALKING POINTS ON START AND INF

-- I appreciate the opportunity to meet with you. As you may know, I have been in close consultations with President Reagan and key members of his Administration for many months. My most recent meeting with the President was this Thursday. When the President heard that I was coming to Moscow, he asked me to share with you here the current views in Washington regarding ways in which we might reduce tension between our countries. The President is committed to reducing tensions by solving some of the problems in the relationship. He is prepared to renew talks in areas where agreement seems possible. Secretary Shultz has informed Ambassador Dobrynin of this officially and has suggested a number of areas for negotiation.

-- The President also takes into account the fact that you and we agree that nuclear arms issues are a central feature of our relationship. He, therefore considers it important to look for ways in which negotiations on strategic and intermediate range weapons systems can be resumed. I, of course, have not come to negotiate on behalf of the United States Government. The President understands your position that you are not prepared to negotiate on START or INF at the moment, and will not assert that we are in negotiations.

-- However, the subject of nuclear arms control is one of central importance to both our countries, and the President thought it would be useful for us to have an informal discussion. In doing so, I will be pleased to convey to the President and his advisers any comments or suggestions you may wish to make. We will consider them informal, just as are my comments.

-- The Reagan Administration is serious in its desire to see the talks resume so that we might reach agreements in both START and INF. At the same time, the President feels that he has already enunciated forthcoming positions and is not inclined to make pre-emptive concessions. He is willing to conclude useful agreements on the basis of compromise by both sides.

-- The Soviet walk out of INF and START after failure to respond to build-down and "walk-in-the-woods" initiatives has been widely criticised and concern over compliance issues has increased.

-- The Reagan Administration believes that it has acted responsibly with respect to the NATO dual track decision and our differences over compliance, and has sought not to create obstacles to a return to negotiations nor to making progress once talks resume. The Administration seeks a constructive dialog to address our differences.

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-- Despite the refusal of the Soviet Union to set a date for resumption of START and INF negotiations, the United States has continued work on the issues which separate us. It is clear to us that the current Soviet proposal does not provide an acceptable basis for an agreement. However, we have been examining approaches in which trades between Soviet and American systems can be accomplished in ways which are both equitable and stabilizing. Some of these approaches would involve changes in framework from existing Soviet and American negotiating structures.

-- Such a framework could involve several different mechanisms for balancing areas of US interest with areas of Soviet interest including rights and limits which apply equally to both sides, different rights and limits for each side designed so that advantages granted to one side are compensated for by advantages granted the other side, and through the use of common measures which can accommodate different force structures under the same limits. A common framework incorporating elements of both sides approaches does seem possible.

-- The President remains strongly committed to the objective of significant reductions in nuclear arms and desires to achieve a long term agreement which will achieve those reductions. Officials in his Administration are also looking at the possibility of achieving those objectives in a series of steps.

-- The Administration remains interested in reaching an agreement on LRINF. Washington believes that the US and the Soviet Union are closer on substance than is widely recognized and that the major obstacle to concluding an agreement is political on the part of the Soviet side. The NATO alliance is highly suspicious of the political motivations of the Soviet Union during the INF negotiations. The very negative response Moscow gave to the "walk-in-the-woods" proposal was viewed as the most significant of many signals from the Soviet Union that the USSR did not desire an agreement. The President personally believes very strongly that the general structure for an agreement was contained in his United Nations Speech of September 1983. In that context, if the Soviet Union were to return to the LRINF negotiations in Geneva, the United States would undoubtedly be negotiating along lines which could result in what one might call a "modified walk-in-the-woods."

-- The United States will continue to negotiate in good faith in the many fora in which we are now engaged in arms control talks. However, the United States does not view these other negotiations as mitigating the responsibility of both sides to return to the START and INF negotiations. The absence of the Soviet Union from these key talks cannot but influence the climate of negotiations.

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-- The Reagan Administration, and much of the Congress, does not believe that the Soviet Union payed proper attention to the discussion of START trade-offs which was offered in the last round of START in Geneva.

-- The Administration has conducted extensive studies of various approaches to an equitable START agreement which would trade reductions in areas of US advantage or interest for reductions in areas of Soviet advantage or interest. The US position already contains within it much flexibility with respect to the content and structure of an agreement and further work has been completed.

-- During the development of the build-down initiative, I was involved with many of these approaches and have since been briefed on the current work in progress. All of these approaches have been designed to move in the direction recommended by the bipartisan Presidential Commission which I headed. Each attempts to address the question of trade-offs in an equitable and negotiable way.

-- It is not the intent of these proposals to mandate inequitable changes in Soviet force structure. Both the President and the Congress have agreed that arms control must move in the direction of more stabilizing systems. This means that, over time, we must move away from a preponderance of emphasis on heavily MIRVed land based missiles. Nevertheless, the US recognizes that MIRVed missiles play an important role in both sides nuclear forces.

-- The US has in mind trade-offs which would provide incentives to move away from MIRVed missiles and toward non-MIRVed missiles and aircraft in ways which provide for differences in force structures. For example, the Soviet Union currently has an advantage in non-MIRVed missiles, the US has the advantage in heavy bombers. Also, the Soviet Union has advantages in missile destructive capability and potential (for example, heavy ICBMs and missile force throwweight) and the United States has an advantage in the number of heavy bombers which are being equiped for long-range air launched cruise missiles.

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