

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

*We must talk about
a reply to this. RR*

April 2, 1986

Dear Mr. President:

I have requested A.F. Dobrynin to transmit this letter to you personally as a follow-up to our exchange of views.

I would like to say that we value A.F. Dobrynin's long years of activity as Soviet ambassador to Washington and his vigorous efforts to develop mutual understanding between our two nations. This, of course, has been greatly facilitated by the contacts he maintained with the American leadership, including under your Administration. We hope that similar opportunities will be available to his successor who we are currently selecting and who will be named shortly.

I intend to send you a more detailed letter on a number of specific issues in our relations and also amplifying on those ideas that I have set forth before. Now, I would like to share with you some of my general observations that I have, and, surely, you must have your own, regarding the state and prospects of the relationship between our two countries. I believe, in doing so, one has to use as a point of departure our meeting in Geneva where we both assumed certain obligations.

I think our assessments of that meeting coincide: it was necessary and useful, it introduced a certain stabilizing element to the relations between the USSR and the USA and to the world

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situation in general. It was only natural that it also generated no small hopes for the future.

More than four months have passed since the Geneva meeting. We ask ourselves: what is the reason for things not going the way they, it would seem, should have gone? Where is the real turn for the better? We, within the Soviet leadership, regarded the Geneva meeting as a call for translating understandings of principle reached there into specific actions with a view to giving an impetus to our relations and to building up their positive dynamics. And we have been doing just that after Geneva.

With this in mind, we have put forward a wide-ranging and concrete program of measures concerning the limitation and reduction of arms and disarmament. It is from the standpoint of new approaches to seeking mutually acceptable solutions that the Soviet delegations have acted in Geneva, Vienna and Stockholm.

What were the actions of the USA? One has to state, unfortunately, that so far the positions have not been brought closer together so that it would open up a real prospect for reaching agreements. I will not go into details or make judgements of the US positions here. But there is one point I would like to make. One gathers the impression that all too frequently attempts are being made to portray our initiatives as propaganda, as a desire to score high points in public opinion or as a wish to put the other side into an awkward position. We did not and do not harbor such designs. After all, our initiatives can be easily tested for their practicality. Our goal is to reach agreement, to find solutions to problems which concern the USSR, the USA and actually all other countries.

I have specially focused on this matter so as to ensure a correct, unbiased and business-like treatment of our proposals. I am sure that it will make it easier to reach agreement.

Now what has been taking place in the meantime outside the negotiations? Of course, each of us has his own view of the policy of the other side. But here again, has the Soviet Union done anything in foreign affairs or bilateral relations that would contribute to mounting tensions or be detrimental to the legitimate interests of the USA? I can say clearly: no, there has been nothing of that sort.

On the other hand, we hear increasingly vehement philippics addressed to the USSR and are also witnessing quite a few actions directly aimed against our interests and, to put it frankly, against our relations becoming more stable and constructive. All this builds suspicion with regard to the US policy and, surely, creates no favorable backdrop for the summit meeting. I am saying it with no ambiguity in order to avoid in this regard any uncertainties or misunderstanding that only one side should exercise restraint and display a positive attitude. Our relations take shape not in a vacuum, their general atmosphere is a wholly material concept. The calmer the atmosphere, the easier it is to solve issues which are of equal concern to both sides.

The issues have to be solved - there is no doubt about it. And above all this bears on the area of security. You are familiar with our proposals, they cover all the most important aspects. At the same time I would like specifically to draw your attention to the fact that we do not say: all or nothing at all. We are in

favor of moving forward step by step and we outlined certain possibilities in this regard, particularly, at the negotiations on nuclear and space arms.

We maintained a serious and balanced approach to the problem of ending nuclear tests. One would not want to loose hope that we shall succeed in finding a practical solution to this issue in the way that the world expects us to do. It is hardly necessary to point out the importance of this matter as it is. The solution thereof carries with it also a great positive political potential. It is precisely one of the central thoughts contained in the message of the Delhi Six - countries which called for building a favorable atmosphere in the relations between the USSR and the USA and in the international situation as a whole. We took that also into account, having reacted positively to their appeal to our countries not to conduct nuclear tests pending the next Soviet-American summit meeting.

It was the desire that we work together in the cessation of nuclear tests and set a good example to all nuclear powers that motivated my recent proposal for both of us to meet specifically on this issue at one of the European capitals. Have another look at this proposal, Mr. President, in a broad political context. I repeat, what is meant here is a specific, single-purpose meeting. Such a meeting, of course, would not be a substitute for the new major meeting that we agreed upon in Geneva.

I do very serious thinking with regard to the latter, first of all with a view to making that meeting truly meaningful and substantial, so that it should enable us to move closer to putting

into practice the fundamental understandings reached in Geneva. As you know, I have mentioned some of the questions pertaining to the area of security which are worthwhile working on in preparing for our meeting. I reaffirm that we are ready to seek here solutions in a most serious way, which would be mutually acceptable and not detrimental to the security of either side. Given the mutual will it would be also possible to ascertain other possibilities for agreement in the context of the forthcoming meeting both in the area of space and nuclear arms and on the issues discussed in other fora. To be sure, we also have things to discuss as far as regional matters are concerned.

I assume that you are also working on all these questions and in the subsequent correspondence we will be able in a more specific and substantive way to compare our mutual preliminary ideas for the purpose of bringing the positions closer together. Obviously, this joint work, including the preparations for our meeting, will benefit from the exchanges of views at other levels and particularly from the forthcoming contacts between our Foreign Minister and your Secretary of State.

I will be looking forward with interest to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

M. GORBACHEV