

Conference with advisers, October 31, 1988

What are we going to take to the United Nations? Attended: Shevardnadze, Yakovlev, Dobrynin, Falin, Chernyaev.

Gorbachev: This is what I think. First of all, we need to define new thinking--how our policy is reflected in the minds of the people, politicians, and the military. Single out significant, constantly present factors.

We should present "the new us," show them how we are changing, how we comprehend the changing world, and how we develop along with it. This is the first part of the speech.

The second part--and the main one--is to affirm that the new thinking, our new foreign policy, is fully connected with perestroika, and with the objective processes within the country. Tell them what we are going to do next at home.

Present the basic principles of our new military-political doctrine, as concrete as possible, and what it means for the international situation.

Show them our new military thinking as a part of the new political thinking and emphasize the military-technological side of our doctrine. In the speech we should make public the figures regarding our armed forces. Name the reductions that we are going to make unilaterally. It would be better if we could unburden ourselves of weapons in two years and then publish how much we had and how much we have left.

Recently, I met with Komsomol members at their exhibition on science and creativity. They overwhelmed me with questions: What do we need such an army for, Mikhail Sergeyevich? Why do we need so many tanks, so many missiles? In short, the people will accept the idea of unilateral disarmament in the event that the international situation changes. However, we are already acting in this direction. We have just given 6 billion rubles for public health--precisely by cutting military expenditures.

Shevardnadze raises the issue of whether it is time to withdraw our troops from Hungary.

Gorbachev: Yes, but first we need to reduce the numbers, not withdraw all at once. By the way, Khrushchev had all the right intentions in the military sphere. But look how he implemented them.

The third part--about the United Nations. Describe what it lived through during the Cold War. Emphasize that it was created for cooperation and coordination, and therefore it was only natural that its role diminished during the Cold War, its role "decreased."

This organization is called the United Nations for a reason. In this context it should have a universally accepted doctrine, which would reflect the rights of the peoples, their right of free choice, human rights. Show the U.N. role as an instrument of the new world.

The fourth part. How do we see our contribution to the creation of the new world? We are not just calling for it, we are going to act. In the speech, we should present a set of responses to Western anxieties.

In general, this speech should be an anti-Fulton--Fulton in reverse. And we can already lean on some experience of work done according to the new thinking, we can show movement in the right direction. But they will believe us only when they see that we are making clearly evident, real steps.

The American theme should be present in the speech, i.e. our look at Soviet-American relations now and in the future.

We should present our worldview philosophy based on the results of the last three years. We should stress the process of demilitarization of our thinking, and the humanization of our thinking.

We should point to the fact that today international politics and contacts are expanding not only to the level of the people and politicians, but generals as well.

[Source: Archive of the Gorbachev Foundation. Fond 2. Notes of A.S. Chernyaev. On file at the National Security Archive. Translated by Svetlana Savranskaya.]