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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20508

February 22, 1986

~~SECRET~~

MEMORANDUM FOR JOHN M. POINDEXTER

FROM: STEVEN E. STEINER *Steve*

SUBJECT: Response to Gorbachev--Public Diplomacy Plan

As I indicated at the ODSM on Friday, we recommend issuing a Presidential statement shortly after we deliver our decision to Allied leaders and Gorbachev and after the INF proposal and other aspects of our response are tabled in Geneva on Monday. We think it important to do this promptly so that we can help to shape the press play and make clear to other agencies that this will remain our only authorized public statement at least until we have spelled out our new proposal in Geneva.

The proposed statement is at Tab I for your approval. Provided that the messages to the allies and Gorbachev have been delivered, we would recommend its issuance at Larry's noon briefing Monday. We can expect a flood of requests for media appearances by SACG principals on Monday, but we recommend that all be turned down. As the proposed Presidential statement indicates, we feel strongly that we should lay out the details of our proposal in Geneva prior to further public statements.

Once we have tabled our new proposal in Geneva, and depending on how the discussions go there, we should consider on a case-by-case basis allowing SACG Principals to respond to selected on-the-record requests. We would authorize them to provide some general details on our new proposals, but still protect negotiating confidentiality--to retain the political high ground. If we want to put out more detail at that time, we could also hold a White House backgrounder.

We have prepared, and cleared interagency, a set of themes on our arms control objectives and our reaction to various elements of the Soviet January 15 proposals (Tab II). If you concur, we will send these to all of our diplomatic posts and share them (in a sanitized version) with allied governments. We wish to dispatch this over the weekend on an embargo until Noon Monday EST and instruct posts not to go beyond Monday's public statement (which will be sent as soon as issued) in commenting on our new proposal.

DECLASSIFIED / RELEASED

REF F99-060/1 #213

BY SM, RANA, DATE 5/24/06

~~SECRET~~

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) That you approve the Presidential statement at Tab I, which has been cleared with Speechwriters, for release on Monday.

Approve J as modified Disapprove \_\_\_\_\_

2) That we turn down for now all on-the-record media requests until we have laid things out in Geneva, and then consider appearances by SACG principals on a case-by-case basis, and/or hold a White House backgrounder.

Approve J Disapprove \_\_\_\_\_

3) That you approve the themes at Tab II, which will be dispatched to posts on an embargo and shared (sanitized) with allies after the Presidential statement has been issued. SACG Principals would also be authorized to use these themes with the media on a background basis, but would be asked to go no further.

Approve J Disapprove \_\_\_\_\_

SES ( Jack Matlock, Bob Linhard, Sven Kraemer, Bill Wright, Don Mahley, Ed Djerejian, Karna Small, Ty Cobb and Judyt Mandel concur.

Attachments

Tab I Proposed Statement

Tab II Themes

Please send me  
clean copies after  
change made.  
J

## Draft Presidential Statement

On January 15, I welcomed the fact that the Soviet Union had put forth arms control proposals which we hoped would help to bring progress in the Geneva and other negotiations. I noted that some elements in the Soviet announcement appeared to be constructive and to build upon proposals which we had earlier placed on the negotiating table, while others reflected previous Soviet positions which have presented serious obstacles to progress.

Our arms control experts made a detailed analysis of these Soviet ideas, and we consulted closely with our friends and allies in Europe and Asia prior to responding to the Soviet Union. These consultations were excellent, and they made a significant impact on our own thinking. We have now completed our review and reached our decision. I have communicated this to Allied leaders, and I have responded to General Secretary Gorbachev.

I have expressed to Mr. Gorbachev my desire to see progress in key arms control fora and in the other key areas of the US/Soviet agenda: regional issues, human rights and bilateral matters. And I have reiterated the US position that the first steps in the nuclear arms control area should be the deep cuts in US and Soviet offensive weapons which are now under negotiation in Geneva.

With respect to the concept advanced publicly by the General Secretary as his "plan" for the elimination of all nuclear weapons by the end of the century, I am pleased that the Soviet Union appears to agree in principle with our ultimate goal of moving to the total elimination of nuclear weapons when this becomes possible. Needless to say, this must be done in a careful manner, consistent with the overall requirements for security and stability of the United States and our allies.

As the means of accomplishing this, we support a process by which the US and Soviet Union would take the first steps by implementing the principle of 50% reductions in the nuclear offensive forces of both sides, appropriately applied, and by negotiating an INF agreement. We believe that the immediate focus should remain on the prompt accomplishment of these first necessary steps.

We are also pleased that the Soviet Union has indicated publicly that it now recognizes our long held position that verification of negotiated agreements is critical. We intend to pursue in specific terms at the negotiating table General Secretary Gorbachev's public offer to come to terms on any necessary verification issues.

On the other hand, many of the specific details proposed in the subsequent phases of the Soviet "plan" are clearly not appropriate for consideration at this time. In our view, the total elimination of nuclear weapons will require, at the same time, the correction of the conventional and other force imbalances, full compliance with existing and future treaty obligations, peaceful resolution of regional conflicts in ways that allow free choice without outside interference, and a demonstrated commitment by the Soviet Union to peaceful competition. Unfortunately, the details of the Soviet "plan" do not address these equally vital requirements. I would like to make progress now on all of these fronts.

While we will strive for progress across the board, one area where I hope we may be able to make immediate progress is in the negotiations on Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces. Today, our negotiators in Geneva have placed on the table a concrete plan calling for the elimination of U.S. Pershing II and Ground Launched Cruise Missiles and Soviet SS-20 missiles not only in Europe, but in Asia as well, with all such missiles to be removed from the face of the earth by the end of this decade.

I call upon the leadership of the Soviet Union to study carefully the details of our new proposal in the spirit with which it has been offered, and to respond concretely at the negotiating table. I urge the Soviet Union to respond as well to the concrete and comprehensive proposals which the United States placed on the table in Geneva on November 1. These proposals covered all three areas of the NST negotiations. Our proposals on strategic nuclear arms as well as on defense and space arms unfortunately have gone unanswered.

Let me emphasize that the place to make real progress in reducing nuclear and other forces is at the confidential negotiating tables. The United States is doing its part to foster in the Nuclear and Space Talks and other negotiations the practical give-and-take process which can lead to deep arms reductions. With an equal commitment by our Soviet negotiating partners, real progress is now within our reach.

Public Handling of Soviet Arms Control Proposals

The following is the interagency-cleared public diplomacy strategy for dealing with the January 15 Soviet arms control proposals announced by Mr. Gorbachev. It has been fine-tuned to ensure consistency with our new INF proposal. In commenting publicly on that proposal, Washington agencies (SACG Principals only until further notice) and diplomatic posts should stay on BACKGROUND and avoid going beyond the material in these themes and in the public statement to be released in Washington on Monday, February 24.

This paper consists of four sections:

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--Our objectives and suggested tactics.

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--Broad political points which should be made.

BY smf, NARA, DATE 5/26/8

--What is potentially constructive about Soviet proposals?

--What is still wrong with the proposals and Soviet positions, and would block agreements?

I. Objectives/Tactics:

In responding publicly to the Soviet proposals, it is in the US interest to:

--Keep arms control in perspective of broader US/Soviet agenda, and US emphasis on four areas of dialogue. Avoid having next summit perceived as focussed solely on arms control and avoid treating summit as a deadline for arms control progress.

--Stress US commitment to allied as well as US security, which we continue to consider indivisible, and fact that we have been consulting closely with our friends and allies in Europe and Asia on these issues.

--Stress US/Soviet summit agreement to emphasize and seek to build upon areas of common ground, including 50% reductions in offensive nuclear arms and an interim INF agreement.

--Keep the focus on our objectives in Geneva NST and other negotiating fora. Emphasize capability and flexibility of our negotiators, and confidentiality of process. Put onus on Soviets to negotiate there, not in public.

--Focus on need for first steps in nuclear disarmament--crawl before we walk, walk before we run, run before we fly. US has specific steps on table which could lead to ultimate goal of eliminating nuclear weapons. Challenge Soviets to respond at the negotiating table to these concrete U.S. proposals.

--Keep our concept for stabilizing reductions up front and make Soviets respond to it. Emphasize need for practical steps.

--Make clear the conditions that must be met before we can seriously contemplate a nuclear-weapons free world, including redressing of conventional and chemical imbalances. Emphasize US/Western proposals in these areas.

--Treat Soviet ideas as response to ours, avoid personalizing them as "Gorbachev proposals" and challenge them to put specifics on the negotiating tables.

--Welcome any Soviet positions that show apparent movement toward our concept, and express readiness to build upon these (as we did in November 1 NST proposals). Examples: Soviet acceptance of goal of ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons, and (in principle) of need for effective verification, including OSI. Note at same time the serious obstacles and uncertainties entailed in Soviet positions.

## II. Broad Political Points:

We should place public emphasis upon the following broad political points, putting arms control specifics in this context:

--We seek a stable strategic environment over the long term. Deep, equitable and verifiable reductions in offensive nuclear arms are a key requirement in this regard, but more is needed.

--President has emphasized that four key areas must be addressed in seeking a safer, more stable world:

1. Sharp reductions in offensive nuclear arms and, when and if feasible, moving to non-nuclear defense.

2. Cessation of using and threatening force to solve international disputes; peaceful resolution of conflicts in Asia, Africa and Central America so peoples there can freely determine their own destiny without outside interference.

3. Improving the US/Soviet working relationship, including compliance with commitments, past and future, and expanding contacts and communications.

4. Adherence to international commitments to respect human rights. This is important to peace, as it limits in practice the ability of governments to pursue aggressive policies.

--Negotiating processes are well underway in several fora. Focus should be there, and details should be presented there. We always look seriously at details presented by Soviets, but they are still not very encouraging.

--Soviet proposals, especially those pressed exclusively or primarily in public, have clear political purposes. These include: dividing us from allies, and allies from each other (e.g., Europe/Asia); stopping SDI; retaining Soviet areas of advantage, including in strategic defense; focusing the next Summit primarily on arms control and using it as a deadline for agreements, thus putting pressure on US to make concessions.

--West must therefore exercise caution and realism, and stay united. In fact, Allied consensus on our broad defense and arms control objectives has been instrumental in bringing the Soviets back to the Geneva negotiating table after their 1983 walkout and in creating the prospects for achieving real arms reductions.

--The Soviet tactic of holding progress in one negotiating area hostage to resolution of issues in other areas is unacceptable and inconsistent with Summit agreement to emphasize and build upon areas of common ground.

--Moving to a nuclear-weapons free world can only be accomplished on basis of significant prior progress in nuclear arms reductions, as well as redressing the conventional imbalance, achieving a CW ban, strengthening the NPT regime, and reducing regional tensions. No artificial deadlines. Can't discuss specifics of later steps or set target dates when first practical steps not even agreed. Such practical steps have been proposed by US, and constructive Soviet responses are needed.

--Equitable, verifiable agreements calling for deep reductions in US and Soviet offensive nuclear forces are needed now.

--Deterrence rests on overall balance. Conventional and chemical force levels are a crucial element which must be taken into account as nuclear reductions are addressed.

--Correction of Soviet noncompliance with existing arms control agreements also essential. Verification and compliance are at the heart of the arms control process and are therefore a mutual concern of the parties. Political trust in verification and compliance must be rebuilt.

--Existence of nuclear weapons must be seen in political context--symptom, not cause, of East/West tensions. Until we have better way to deter and until conventional imbalances are corrected, safety of West depends on them. Seeking better way to deter now through research in strategic defense, but don't have all the answers yet.

III. Constructive Elements of Gorbachev Proposals:

The following could be cited publicly as elements of the Soviet proposals which could potentially be constructive, while emphasizing that the Soviets need to show their seriousness by doing their part to bring specific progress at the negotiating tables:

--In INF, apparent acceptance in principle of zero US/Soviet LRINF as goal, although this is still based on unacceptable conditions and would apply at least initially only in Europe. Agreement in principle on destruction as means to achieve reductions. Apparent delink from SDI.

--Agreement on ultimate goal of eliminating nuclear weapons. We have long advocated this, while stressing that the focus now must be on achieving equitable, verifiable agreements calling for deep and stabilizing reductions in offensive nuclear forces, as well as on correcting the conditions which give rise to the need for reliance on nuclear weapons for deterrence.

--Expressed interest in verification, an element of arms control that US has long recognized as essential. Onus on Soviets to agree on specific measures tailored to limitations agreed upon and to respond meaningfully to US and Western verification concerns and proposals in various negotiations. Soviet public statements can't be evaluated without such specifics.

IV. Problems with Soviet Positions:

The following should be stressed in pointing out aspects of Soviet NST positions which remain unacceptable and some of which, if left unchanged, would present serious obstacles to any agreements:

--Grandiose public concept for eliminating nuclear weapons, but initial reductions under Soviet concept would in fact perpetuate Soviet advantages and create dangerous imbalances.

--Holding hostage progress in one negotiating area to resolution of differences in others. This goes against Summit agreement to accelerate NST and work for early progress in areas of common ground.

--Soviet definition of "strategic." Clearly drawn for political purpose of dividing the democracies. (Gorbachev even said publicly that "Europe would have a special mission. . . .") This approach would lock in clear Soviet superiority in strategic and intermediate-range nuclear forces, and was rejected by US in both SALT I and II.



--In INF, Soviets still seek constraints on third country forces, which is unacceptable. Further, they still fail to address Asian security.

--Continued Soviet insistence on banning of US SDI research, despite its potential for enhancing stability and deterrence, and despite the inability to verify limits on research.

--The Soviets still have not responded at the negotiating table to our concrete and comprehensive NST proposals of November 1. Overall, they still seem to be placing their emphasis more on public posturing than on negotiating. Getting down to specifics at the confidential negotiating tables would be a mark of Soviet seriousness.