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CBS NEWS SPECIAL

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"The Great Nuclear Arms Debate"

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With CBS News Correspondent Walter Cronkite

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PRODUCER: Joel Heller

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Burton Benjamin

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CRONKITE:

Good evening, I'm Walter Cronkite.

What follows for the next 90 minutes is not an entertainment program. It's a serious discussion on an issue of life or death -- yours, mine, our children's, our civilization.

So important is the subject that there are no concessions to entertainment tonight. No outside panelists, no call-ins, no studio audience. The subject is heavy; the tendency to turn out backs and hope it will go away, strong. But we ignore it at our peril.

The United States has begun building facilities in Europe in which to place its newest nuclear weapons -- the Cruise and Pershing II missiles. We call these new weapons in Europe tactical weapons as opposed to the long-range intercontinental missiles deployed by both sides. NATO expects to begin putting the weapons there by the end of this year -- part of its answer to what it sees as a continuing Soviet nuclear build-up in the East.

The new Soviet nuclear missiles and our own proposed deployment of Cruise and Pershing have sparked a great international debate concerning the United States' nuclear arms policies -- demonstrations in Western Europe, threats of retaliation from the East.

It's almost inevitable that the debate and the demonstrations will become more intense as the day for deployment grows nearer.

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CRONKITE (con't):

It is our hope that this unusual broadcast will help each of us understand and clarify in our own minds the complex issues involved.

Tonight in a spontaneous and unedited trans-Atlantic debate of their own we will bring together four experts who have personally dealt with the nuclear realities but who have differing ideas about what to do next.

In New York ... former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.

In Florence, Italy ... one time SALT negotiator Paul Warnke.

In London ... British Defense Minister Michael Heseltine.

And in Bonn ... Social Democratic Parliament Member Egon Bahr.

Their debate tonight will address nuclear issues which began to form 38 years ago.

1945 ... Hiroshima. The United States ends a war that has an atomic monopoly. Some say a deterrent which assures world peace. But the monopoly ends in 1949 when the Soviets explode an atom bomb. Four years later they complete development of an intercontinental missile to carry it. Also in the 50's as we build up large forces to fight in Korea, they build up large conventional forces in Europe. NATO, seeking a quick and effective way to counter this, decides for the

CRONKITE (con't):

first time to deploy short range nuclear weapons in Europe. The Soviets respond by doing the same.

But during this period, Europe's most effective deterrent against invasion is not on European soil at all. It is the United States' so-called Triad -- weapons which can be launched at Russia from silos in the United States, submarines at sea and from B-52 bombers. However, our nuclear superiority eventually becomes parity as the Russians develop their own missile capability.

By the late 60's both sides are ready to talk about ways to slow down this nuclear race. This leads to SALT -- the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks -- and the first of two agreements to limit certain kinds of weapons and testing.

When the Russians invade Afghanistan the United States Senate retaliates by refusing to ratify the second SALT agreement. Meanwhile in Europe, the Soviets and the Warsaw Pact nations continue to build up their conventional forces. Then in 1976 the Soviets begin introduction of the medium-range SS-20, a solid fuel, mobile, three-warhead missile, each warhead nine times as powerful as the Hiroshima bomb. NATO has nothing like it.

To keep pace in the late 1970's, at the initiative of our European allies, the Carter administration agrees to develop and supply NATO with two new nuclear missiles, beginning

CRONKITE (con't):

in late 1983. They are the Pershing II, a longer range missile capable of hitting targets in the Soviet Union within 8 minutes ... and the Cruise, airplane without a pilot flying under radar and deadly accurate.

In 1981 President Reagan takes office saying we must modernize our nuclear arms capability. He encourages final development and deployment of more advanced weapons systems -- the MX missile, the Trident submarine, the Stealth and the B-1 bombers.

Reagan agrees to the second track of the NATO deployment proposal -- to continue arms control talks with the Russians.

Then in late 1981, with opposition mounting in Europe to the deployment of the new NATO weapons, President Reagan proposes the "Zero-Zero" option. He tells the Russians "Remove all of your missiles from Europe, and we will not deploy our new ones." The Russians turn "Zero-Zero" down because they say it does not include other systems, especially the 162 missiles controlled by the British and the French. Then, last month, President Reagan modifies his all or nothing stand in favor of an interim reduction in weapons. Once again, the Russians turn him down.

As arms control talks for both strategic and tactical weapons continue in Geneva with no resolution, there's a growing movement in the United States to freeze and in Europe, not

CRONKITE (con't):

to deploy, the new systems. Now, as we approach the December deployment of the new nuclear weapons in Europe, the Soviets have threatened to respond by installing new intermediate nuclear missiles that can reach the United States.

And so the super-powers are at an impasse ... facing each other with awesome weapons ... with Europe in the middle. Where are we headed? Is the defense of Europe possible without total nuclear war? Would a freeze work? Are the Soviets being successful in separating the United States from its European allies? Have these new and powerful weapons blurred the distinction between short-range tactical weapons and long-range strategic weapons? Can arms control talks be productive? Or are they just posturing? Can the nuclear arms race be stopped or even slowed down?

These are only a few of the enormously important questions which face our distinguished guests this evening. Dr. Kissinger and Mr. Hazeltine on the affirmative. And Mr. Warnke and Mr. Bahr on the negative. As they debate -- Resolved: The United States should proceed with its scheduled deployment of new nuclear weapons in Europe.

COMMERCIAL #1

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CRONKITE:

The rules of tonight's debate are simple. In the first round each speaker will have 5 1/2 minutes to present his position. In the second round he'll have 4 minutes for rebuttal and then in the final round he'll get 4 minutes to sum up his views. At the end of the debate all of the speakers will join me in a brief free exchange.

And now to begin ... in New York ... former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. Recently, Dr. Kissinger has been urging a new plan which calls for both deployment and arms control. Dr. Kissinger will take the first affirmative position on the resolution ... The United States should proceed with its scheduled deployment of new nuclear weapons in Europe. Dr. Kissinger.

DR. KISSINGER:

Mr. Cronkite, ladies and gentlemen, the pre-eminent objective of any statesman in the nuclear age must be the preservation of peace. And we must begin by realizing that peace has been preserved in Europe for the longest time in European history in this century. In the 40 years since the end of World War II there has been no military conflict in Europe and the reason for it seems to me to be that the defense of Europe and the defense of the United States have appeared to be indissoluble.

That NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, has

DR. KISSINGER (con't):

been prepared to preserve peace without abdication by building military forces to resist any possible aggression. And also, that the Atlantic Alliance has been prepared to negotiate about a reduction of armaments and a reduction of tensions.

In order to maintain this position for the next indefinite future, I believe that the issue of the deployment of intermediate-range weapons in Europe has become crucial.

In the early days of NATO, American nuclear superiority could counter-balance the overwhelming Soviet conventional superiority that then existed. In the past decade and a half there have been three developments. First, there has been a build-up of Soviet strategic forces that has brought them to at least parity with the United States in the strategic field -- raising inevitable doubts and justified hesitations about resorting to the mass extermination of civilians as a counter to any aggression. Secondly, the Soviet Union has given its conventional forces, already very strong, an extraordinary offensive capability. And thirdly, and most disquietingly, the Soviet Union has built up the intermediate-range weapons that can threaten all of Europe. In these circumstances it is essential that we do not give the Soviet Union the impression that they can attack Europe with the thousand and fifty warheads that they now have against none for us in this category with impunity. It is also important from the political

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DR. KISSINGER (con't):

point of view.

The United States has offered to eliminate all of these intermediate-range weapons. It has also offered to settle for any other number that defines an equilibrium. The Soviet Union has insisted on counting weapons that have already existed, in effect seeking to impose what amounts to unilateral disarmament in this field on us. So what we have before us is one, the ability to maintain the military posture of NATO. Secondly, to maintain the integral connection between Europe and the United States. And third, to convey to the Soviet Union the essential necessity that any negotiation has to be based on reciprocity. So far all of the Soviet proposals have been that the United States do away with all of its weapons while it continues to maintain most of the weapons that threaten Europe. As soon as the Soviet Union is prepared to negotiate on the basis of reciprocity, a settlement can be found and will be found very rapidly. So the issue before us now is whether we're willing to maintain our strengths and whether we are willing to negotiate on the basis of equality. That is of significance not only for the defense of Europe. It is, and for the cohesion of the Atlantic Alliance, it is of great consequence in terms of the negotiations in which we are likely to be engaged with the Soviet Union in the years ahead.

DR. KISSINGER (con't):

An end to the arms race should be negotiated. But it cannot be achieved if the Soviet Union believes that they can with demonstrations, with psychological warfare, and with essentially preposterous propositions, get the West to disarm unilaterally. So I favor the deployment of nuclear weapons on military grounds, on political grounds and for the sake of the preservation of peace. Thank you.

CRONKITE:

Thank you Dr. Kissinger for your opening statement. The first of our speakers who is against the resolution -- the United States should proceed with its scheduled deployment of new nuclear weapons in Europe, is lawyer Paul Warnke, who tonight is in Florence, Italy on a business trip. Mr Warnke, a former member of the Defense Department, was the chief arms negotiator for the United States at the SALT talks during the Carter administration. He said that the United States and the Soviet Union in their mindless pursuit of weapons superiority have become "apes on a treadmill."

Mr. Warnke, you have 5 1/2 minutes to present the first negative position.

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MR. WARNKE:

Thank you Mr. Cronkite. Ladies and gentlemen, we've been faced with a fundamental question ever since the nuclear age began. And that's whether security lies in more nuclear weapons or in arms control. And that's the fundamental question we face with respect to the intermediate nuclear forces in Europe. We have to decide whether we're going to be better off with fewer Soviet intermediate-range warheads or with more American intermediate-range warheads. I'm pretty clear that the security of Europe, which of course is integral to the security of the United States, will be best served by significant reductions in the Soviet SS-20's and the remaining SS-4's and SS-5's.

Now we have to recognize that this is not a new threat. The Soviet Union has had something like 600-700 warheads deployed against Western Europe for at least the past 20 years. Not only that but many of their strategic range intercontinental ballistic missiles have been targeted against Europe. So we're not faced with a new threat. We're faced, however, with a political reality. We're faced with the fact that the Soviets have built up these new SS-20's. Now the question is, what can be done to reduce that threat. I'm quite clear that they will not accept a zero option. I'm quite clear that they won't accept something which says that they can have no more intermediate-range nuclear warheads than those that the United States deploys. Why? Because they would

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MR. WARNKE (con't):

then be compelled to ignore the British forces, the French forces and the Chinese forces. Because we talk about a global equality of these intermediate-range nuclear forces.

Now my experience leads me to believe that the Soviets will not allow us to negotiate an arms control agreement for the Chinese. And therefore, we have to decide what our best procedure is at the present time.

Now the Committee for National Security, of which I'm the Chairman, proposed last fall that we see what we could get for a deferral, that we would agree not to deploy 572 new American missiles in Europe provided that they would make very significant reductions in the Soviet SS-20's and the elimination of the 4's and 5's. We would then move the entire issue of the intermediate nuclear range forces into the overall START talks. We have to recognize that these are just a small part of the overall strategic balance. And that we can't expect to get any kind of a durable, lasting agreement that would eliminate let's say, all of the intermediate-range nuclear forces until we have all of the cards at the same bargaining table.

What, for example, would the Soviets say to a proposal that we would not deploy 464 new ground launch Cruise missiles? When we could take 464 or 500 or 1000 Cruise missiles and deploy them instead on ships. Which we would be free to do even if a zero option were negotiated in the intermediate-

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MR WARNKE (con't):

range nuclear forces. So we with our allies ought to consider where our best interest lies today.

Now from the military standpoint: 572 new American warheads adds nothing. We already have 10,000 strategic-range warheads that can blow up every target that these 572 could strike. And there's no magic in the launch point. I know that these 572 are referred to as NATO's missiles. But let's not kid ourselves. They're American missiles with an American President's finger on the button. And he's no more apt to push that button to launch a Pershing II from the Federal Republic of Germany than he is to push that button to launch an ICBM from the Great Plains of the United States or a submarine launched ballistic missile from one of our Poseidon or Trident submarines.

The argument for these missiles is mainly theological and mythological rather than logical. It is a political question. Obviously we need a response to the immense Soviet SS-20 build-up. But what I would suggest is that the appropriate response is to get the Soviets to cut that force back. Now they won't do it if what we say is whether you cut it back by one half to something like 600 or whether you cut it by 2/3 to something like 400 we can still go ahead with the deployment of the Pershings or the ground launched Cruise

MR WARNKE (con't):

missiles. That from their standpoint is going to be a very unappetizing deal.

Now maybe we don't want a deal. But if so we ought to make up our minds. We ought to put an end to the arms control charade. Either we're going to have significant Soviet reductions or what we will have instead is the full deployment of the Soviet SS-20's, 4's and 5's and 572 new American missiles in Europe. I know where I come out. I come out for fewer SS-20's. I think that's where our security lies. Thank you.

CRONKITE:

Thank you Mr. Warnke. Now, for the second affirmative position on this evening's nuclear arms debate we go to London. Standing by is Michael Heseltine. In January he became Britain's Secretary of State for Defense. He's a staunch and eloquent supporter of his government's forthcoming acceptance of Cruise missiles on British soil. Mr. Heseltine will have 5 1/2 minutes to state his opening views on the resolution: the United States should proceed with its scheduled deployment of new nuclear weapons in Europe. Mr. Heseltine.

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MR. HESELTINE:

Can I thank you for enabling me to take part in this very distinguished program and to say how much I appreciate the introductory remarks that you used setting the sense of significance of this obviously critical issue for the Western democracies. Perhaps I can of course stress that I put the view of a Secretary of State for Defense in Britain charged with the responsibility of defending our essential interests. And I speak as one of the Western allies.

Obviously, looked at from this side of the Atlantic, I see no alternative for the defense of the Western European nations and for the defense of the Atlantic and the North American peoples except as part of the alliance which we formed in the 1940's against a threat. And you can't begin anywhere else except with that threat. We didn't want to form the NATO alliance. We didn't want actually to maintain the level of armaments that we have in the Western world. We began to disarm after the last war. The Americans, many of them, went home. And it wasn't until we saw the massive maintenance of Soviet forces and the occupation by Soviet forces in Central Europe that we realized that we had to re-think in the Western world our approach to the maintenance of peace.

We came to the view that the way to do it was to work together in a common accord in the NATO alliance. And, as Henry Kissinger

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MR HESELTINE (con't):

said, we've now had peace in Western Europe for the longest period of time in contemporary history. And we've achieved that peace because we have remained strong at every time during the course of those nearly 40 years. It's required a great deal of effort and a great deal of will by the politicians and the peoples of the Western democracies. But before you change those policies you have to realize they have worked. And that means that there is a great deal of credibility behind them.

Now, I want to support this motion. And I want to make four points in support of it. First of all, over the course of those 40 years, we've seen a vast expansion in the scale of Soviet conventional and nuclear forces. We've tried in the NATO powers at all levels, to negotiate reductions with the Soviet levels, Soviet Union. We tried to persuade them to reduce their strategic forces. We've tried to persuade them to reduce their conventional forces. So, we've always been prepared to negotiate for the main purposes of peace. But in those discussions, as technology advanced, the Soviets found a way to deploy principally now the SS-20 missile system which operates at a level of weapon systems in a gray area -- somewhere between the inter-continental missile systems which make up and have made up our nuclear capability and the conventional forces that are

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MR HESELTINE (con't):

obviously at the front-line of our defensive capability. And we have, in the West, therefore to make a judgement as to whether we allow the Soviets the very substantial advantage that has come from the deployment of that intermediate-range of systems without countering it, or whether we should counter it.

In Western European nations we began a dialogue with the Americans encouraging you to deploy your Cruise and Pershing II systems because we believed it was necessary to present the Soviet Union, quite clearly, with the certainty that at any level at which they considered an aggressive attack we had a counter to that attack. We're never going to attack anybody. In the NATO allies. We have no aggressive plans in my ministry and I am absolutely clear you have no aggressive plans in the Pentagon or in the various policy departments of the United States or certainly in my colleague allies in Europe. But we have to make it clear to the Soviet Union that there can be no gain to them from aggression.

At the same time, we say to them, we want to negotiate with you. And we want to achieve a reasonable settlement. That's what's happening now at Geneva. And the fact is that your President, after consultation with the allies of Europe, has made it absolutely clear the genuineness of our attempts to negotiate. He started off with the zero option. What

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MR HESELTINE (con't):

could be better than that? He said let's have no intermediate-range weapons of any sort. There'll be none deployed by NATO if the Soviets will take theirs away. They wouldn't. Now your President said again after consultation, that we would be perfectly prepared to have an intermediate solution. We're waiting for their response. But the critical question I believe before all of us tonight, is whether we'll ever get a real response from the Soviet Union if they think that they can get away with the deployment of those SS-20's without us showing that we are prepared to modernize our existing deterrents.

Now the whole lesson of negotiating with the Soviet Union is they respect strength. I want to see that maintained.

CRONKITE:

Thank you very much Mr. Heseltine. And now for the final negative position rounding out tonight's debate panel. In Bonn, West Germany, is Egon Bahr. Mr. Bahr is a Social Democrat who has chaired the Disarmament and Arms Control Sub-Committee of the Bundestag Foreign Affairs Committee. He supports the policy of no first use of nuclear weapons and he's for strengthening conventional non-nuclear forces. Mr. Bahr will also have 5 1/2 minutes to say why he disagrees with the resolution: the United States should proceed with its scheduled deployment of new nuclear weapons in

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CRONKITE (con't):

Europe. Mr. Bahr.

MR BAHR:

Thank you Mr. Cronkite. Ladies and gentlemen, I think I cannot make up my mind today if we should proceed with the deployment of American Cruise missiles. Especially for the reason that we have to wait until the outcome and until we can judge about the outcome and the stage of the negotiations at the end of this year.

If I recall for just a minute the situation. Without the consent of my Party, early in December '79 we would even now have this double track decision. I have been in favor at that time for the double track decision, as the only reason I saw at that time to bring the Americans to the negotiating table. Because up to this time before the American side took the position to start to arm and to build-up these weapons and to start negotiations after, only after the deployment.

So we pressed for a decision of NATO to have at the same time arms building up and negotiations and I think we stick to this decision. Now, you have said earlier that there is a lot of skepticism and doubts especially in my country but not only in my country. And I want to explain this with some figures.

MR BAHR (con't):

Following recent serious polls there are 86% of the German population in favor of NATO and I belong to those. And there are 65% against deployment of additional American missiles. And I'm inclined to share this majority too. The reason for this skepticism is partly based upon the fact that the Federal Republic is really a forward-based country and when you mentioned earlier the Triad and it's quite obvious even in the case of a pure conventional attack we would be the first who would be damaged, not the United States. And even in the second round of the Triad. If it would escalate to a limited nuclear war the United States would not be damaged at all.

So I think this is one point of scepticism which brought us to the result to concentrate only and purely to one point. How to prevent a war. I can understand that a super-power like the United States have not only this priority. They must think in addition to this priority how to prevent a war, how to make a war, how to limit a war, and if necessary, how to win a war. And I can assure you there has been no remarkable peace movement before the Reagan administration. This peace movement has developed only since we have had this stupid debate in the United States: how to win a limited war in Europe.

MR. BAHR (con't):

Now I would like to come to our position with respect to the INF negotiations in Geneva. I think our position is we should bring down remarkably the SS-20 so that it is unnecessary to deploy American missiles. One of my friends in the French government has just recently said, if the Soviets would be prepared to go down with their SS-20 to 50 systems, then he thinks, it would be unnecessary to deploy American missiles. I agree and I share this view.

I think Geneva will mean, first of all, in the field of arms control, can we stop this arms race? Can the people, the population believe that it's useful to have negotiations and to stop the arms race? Secondly, as far as the security is concerned, bringing down the Soviet missiles it would mean more security and politically Geneva would mean we would have more stability in the countries concerned and within the alliance which is so necessary for our security at all.

CRONKITE:

Thank you Mr. Bahr. And that completes the opening statements. In a moment we'll return to give our speakers a chance for rebuttal.

COMMERCIAL #2

CRONKITE:

Clearly some interesting lines of disagreement have developed now in the initial statements. Our speakers have presented their opening views and we have a better idea where they stand. It's time now for rebuttal. Everyone will get 4 minutes for that. As is customary the rebuttal begins with the speaker who held the first negative position. In Florence, Italy, that's Paul Warnke.

MR. WARNKE:

I am of course delighted Mr. Cronkite, to find that my debating partner, Egon Bahr, has said things with which I agree completely. I agree completely with him that it may be necessary for us to deploy the Pershing II's and ground launched Cruise missiles. If it turns out that the Soviet Union is unable, unwilling to make significant reductions in their INF warheads, then clearly we would not be in a position at which we could then say okay, we roll over, we were just bluffing.

I also agree of course, with Minister Heseltine, that we shouldn't change the policies that I think have been a very, very important part of keeping the peace in the years since World War II. Nobody is suggesting that we give up that policy. Nobody is suggesting that we refrain from maintaining a strategic balance.

MR WARNKE (con't):

We have to decide, however, what are the best weapons for that purpose. In my view those are the weapons that are the most survivable. And that present the least threat to the survivability of the other side's deterrent. From that standpoint I don't believe that the SS-20's or the Pershing II's or the ground launched Cruise missiles meet these fundamental criteria. But then the question is, what do we do about that? And in my view what we ought to do is to bring down the number of Soviet intermediate nuclear range missiles. And I think we can do it.

But we ought to do it, of course, as an alliance. To me the important thing is to preserve alliance solidarity. This entire question of deployment of these new American forces began as a result of expressions of discomfort from our Western European allies. Now that's why the double decision in December of 1979 was made. But I would point out that was not a decision that said, zero option or nothing. That was not a decision that said, the Soviets could only maintain the number of warheads that the Americans introduced. It was instead a decision that said we should seek an arms control solution. And I think we have to try. I think we've got a duty to try. A duty to European security, to American security, that are inextricably linked. And a duty to the double decision of December of 1979. And

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MR WARNKE (con't):

that I think requires that we recognize that the Soviet Union has other threats than the American missiles. That they do have these forces of other countries. That they have to take those into consideration and that they will do so. And that therefore, we should come forward with a proposal that is a negotiable proposal. Something that goes all the way to restoring the status quo ante -- the situation that existed prior to the time that the Soviets increased the number of intermediate-range warheads directed against Western Europe.

Now possibly they won't do that. If they don't, then I think we will have laid a sound political foundation for the deployment of the new American missiles. We will have demonstrated that we lived up to the challenge. That we have tried to make an arms control solution. But we should recognize, as I pointed out in my opening remarks, that a permanent solution to the INF problem cannot take place divorced from the overall strategic context. I would disagree with Minister Heseltine that these are gray area systems. They're unrelievedly just as bad as the intercontinental-range systems that can strike the United States. Alliance security means just that. A weapon that can strike Western Europe is just as black as any weapon that can strike the United States.

CRONKITE:

Thank you very much Mr. Warnke. And now we'll have other chances, of course, to hear from you as our debate progresses but let's have now the first affirmative rebuttal and four minutes for Dr. Henry Kissinger in New York.

DR. KISSINGER:

Clearly there has to be an arms control solution. That is not the subject of debate. The subject of debate is how one defines such a solution. And it seems to me that there are a number of implications in what has been said that go to the heart of the matter. The Soviet Union has been deploying these SS-20's since 1977 -- for 6 years. The Western nations have not yet deployed one single weapon while the Soviet Union has a thousand and fifty-three warheads backed up by some 8-10,000 strategic warheads.

The Soviet Union has been building for accuracy all along. They have been doing exactly what Mr. Warnke said should not be done -- namely they have attempted to threaten the survivability of both American and European systems.

As far as the fundamental issue between us is concerned, it seems to me to be this. Mr. Warnke and Mr. Bahr seem to be implying that we should go down to zero in return for a reduction of the Soviet intermediate-range missiles.

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DR. KISSINGER (con't):

So far what the Soviet Union has offered is that its definition of reduction is to move its, the surplus, most of it into Asian Russia and one has to remember that the complexes that exist in the Asian part of the Soviet Union, 2/3's of them can cover Europe and from all of them the weapons could be returned to Europe within a matter of, within a matter of weeks. There hasn't been even the beginning of a serious proposition from the Soviet Union.

Secondly, it is absolutely not clear to me why the proposal made by our administration is unfair. That the number of systems should be roughly the same on each side. That the number of warheads that are aimed at each other should be roughly the same. Why are the Soviets building the SS-20's? It must be because they want to create the impression in Europe that at the end of the day that the United States President will be more reluctant to launch the weapons from Europe than when they are part of the overall strategy, of the overall strategy on the ground. So the deployment of weapons at this time is necessary to make clear to the Soviet Union that the unconstrained build-up is, will not go unanswered. And secondly, to impel the Soviet Union and to convince the Soviet Union that if they want to control arms they will find a ready partner but not on the basis of unilateral disarmament in the West. Not

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DR. KISSINGER (con't):

on the basis on which they are counting systems that have always existed.

Now a lot has been made of the 162 British and French weapons. Nobody in his right mind will believe that the British and French with 162 weapons will attack the 1053 intermediate-range weapons of the Soviet Union backed by 10,000 strategic weapons. That simply does not make any sense. Those weapons are, the British and French weapons are weapons of last resort. The Soviet weapons are weapons that at least are designed to create the impression that they will be intended to blackmail Europe and to bring home its sense of separation from the United States and the sense of impotence.

So the Soviets have the option of equivalence. And they have the option of zero. They do not have the option and they should not have the option of zero on our side and a so-called reduction on their side.

CRONKITE:

Thank you Dr. Kissinger. We'll continue our debate in a moment.

COMMERCIAL #3

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CRONKITE:

Continuing our rebuttals, we hear next from the second negative position. In Bonn, Egon Bahr.

EGON BAHR:

I would like to make some comments on what Henry Kissinger just has said. He pointed out that the Soviets should not be in a position to decide upon what we have, and they cannot have their kinds of weapons and on our side would be zero. I agree completely. You have formulated each side has to have an equivalent same number of kinds of options. I agree also with this. But if you say "each side" then the question is, do you mean the United States, or do you mean the Western side? Including France and Britain. Because I think there is a real solidarity and must be a solidarity of the alliance. And it's quite clear that the British and French weapons are weapons of independent nuclear countries. But I think, as a whole, one can rely upon that these countries will react in the case of an attack. And this is one reason the existence of the British and French Euro-strategic weapons, defecto Euro-strategic weapons, that I am in favor to fuse as early as possible, the two tables in Geneva, and to combine these talks and the INF talks. The second point I would-- which I would like to make is this. You have mentioned that even if the Soviet Union will deploy some of their SS-20 in Asian parts, they could bring it back within weeks. I think this is correct, but I think, in such a case, the United States would be prepared, and would be able to bring Pershing II's within hours to our soil to meet such a challenge. So I think we have to concentrate upon the negotiations, to stop the

BAHR (cont'd.):

arms race in Geneva. Also for the following reasons: if we fail in these negotiations, then I have not the slightest doubt that we will be faced with a new round of the new race of new weapons - in other words, with short-range missiles, which we don't have today to a remarkable degree. But then we will be faced with the same experience we made with SALT. By talking on the intercontinental field, the new race has been started in the middle-range, long-range, intermediate race, and while we are talking and negotiating now, about INF, we might be faced if we fail, with a new race, short-range missiles. And this would again, directed, especially, against the center of Europe, and....we should try whatever we can to avoid such a terrible situation.

CRONKITE:

Thank you very much, Mr. Bahr. And now for the last of the rebuttals in this round, we go back to London and the affirmative side of the argument, Michael Heseltine.

MICHAEL HESELTINE:

Well, as I have listened to the debate so far, I've come to the conclusion that there really isn't that much that separates any one of the four of us who are taking part. In a sense, we are talking about an unreal motion. Because the motion says that we believe that the United States should proceed with the deployment, of the-- its intermediate range nuclear weapons. Now, the U.S. doesn't intend to do that, today. It has made it quite clear that there

HESELTINE (cont'd.):

is a time scale. And of course that was the time scale, by the end of 1983, that was agreed in 1979. As I listened to Mr. Bahr, I think his words were "I can't make up my mind whether we should, because I can't see what's going to come out of the Geneva discussions." I think that Mr. Warnke was saying that he would seek a deferral in order to see if there was more time for negotiation. So we're not really saying let's not deploy these intermediate range....American systems. What everybody is saying is that before it happens we've got to be absolutely sure that we have explored every negotiating avenue to seek the avoidance of such deployment. Now, if we see it from that point of view, actually that's exactly where the NATO powers are. That's where we've been since 1979. And where I've got some doubts about Mr. Warnke's proposal, when he says "Let's have a deferral," what does he think we would actually achieve in the deferral that we haven't been able to achieve in the four years when the Russians had known we were going to deploy the cruise missile and Pershing II systems. Is it not just possible that what the Soviets would say is____, now the Western world is losing its nerve? We've been able to operate on the peace movements in their countries, a little bit more pressure, a little bit more propaganda, and the Western world will not make the deployment, which they consider to be necessary to counter our SS 20's. Now my feeling is, and it is the NATO feeling, that the only way you can do business with the Russians is to say "We are quite resolute about the defense of the Western world. But if you want negotiating, we are also resolute about that." I noticed that Mr. Bahr said that in some way Mr.

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HESELTINE (cont'd.):

Reagan, created the peace movements. Well not in Britain. We've had peace movements here all my political life, from the 50's onward. They've never made any great impact on the governments of the day, but they make an immense impact on the television of the day and that's-- of course the fascination of democratic politics. We have to have our debates in public. A very wide-ranging, and proper debate in order to persuade people. But the Soviets conduct their discussions, such as they are, behind closed doors. They will play this business in the most calculating way that they can, for their advantage. And if the NATO alliance now were to back off the decisions we announced in 1979, the Soviets wouldn't think that-- that was a gesture towards peace. They would see it as an advantage that they had gained, over the course of their negotiating posture. So I think the arguments are pretty close. If, by the end of this year, the Soviets haven't negotiated responsibly, we must deploy. But we must use every ingenuity we know how to persuade the Soviets that there are agreements to be had, if they will come to the negotiating table. What particular agreement? That's to be played for. That's for the negotiators. That's for the hard business of talking through the details. But let's have no doubt: we want a negotiation if we can get it. But we will only make it less likely if we show a lack of resolution about the policies that we've been pursuing now, for some three and a half years.

CRONKITE:

Thank you Mr. Heseltine, in London. We will be back for the summations in

CRONKITE (cont'd):

just a moment as we continue our nuclear arms debate.

COMMERCIAL #4

OFF CAMERA DISCUSSION

CRONKITE:

Although the resolution for tonight's debate is that the United States should proceed with its scheduled deployment of new nuclear weapons in Europe, I think the debate has shown us that this is only one issue of many in the complex and dangerous world of nuclear weapons. Gentlemen, you each now have four minutes for a final rebuttal or summation of your views. This time, we'll begin with Dr. Kissinger.

KISSINGER:

I think it is important to get a number of facts straight. People talk about the deployment of American nuclear weapons in Europe at the end of this year as if this were the end of the process. But the fact is that the United States is planning to deploy only five hundred and seventy-two warheads as against the one thousand and fifty-three Soviet warheads and that this deployment will take us a period of four years. So that even when-- if the deployment should start at the end of this year, there will still be an enormous Soviet

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KISSINGER (cont'd.):

superiority during that period of deployment and plenty of opportunities to negotiate. It seems to me, two issues have emerged in this debate. First, whether the agreement that we are all seeking, and on which we are all agreed should balance reductions on the Soviet side against no deployment on the American side. The second issue is whether if at the end of the year there is no agreement, we should defer deployment, in the expectation that this will fuel the-- the negotiations that are going on. With respect to the first question: It is important to keep in mind what the Soviets have said about reduction. Their definition of reduction is some vague hint that they might scrap some of their weapons, but the major emphasis has been on the fact that they would move the weapons from European Russia into the Soviet Union. The fact is that of the bases in the Eastern Soviet Union on-- in Asia, of the major bases that they have, two of them can cover most of Europe even without moving the missiles back. And of course there exists the option of moving the missiles back. And it won't be so easy for the United States to reintroduce Pershings, because if there's no deployment in Europe, we probably won't build Pershings, there will be no point in having them. Secondly: What is more likely to spur negotiation - a deferral of deployment, or a beginning of a rather slow deployment in December if there should be a failure of negotiations during this year. I think the record leaves almost no doubt of-- about the fact that the beginning of deployment is more likely to spur the negotiations. At this moment, it seems to me the biggest obstacle

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KISSINGER (Cont'd.):

to negotiations is the Soviet conviction that the West will handel unilaterally what they should be negotiating for. The Soviets have not made a serious proposal. To compare the hundred and sixty-two Soviet warhead-- British and French warheads against the thousand and fifty-three Soviet warheads and intermediate range missiles is absurd. That is not the real obstacle in negotiations. That could be folded into the START talks as Mr. Warnke and Mr. Bahr ha-- have suggested. The test is whether the Soviet Union is prepared to accept military equivalence, and whether the Soviet Union is prepared to negotiate on the basis of....of equality. And it is a test not only in Europe, it is a test for the negotiations that in my view, conditions in the Soviet Union, conditions in the world, and the state of all of Western public opinions, make inevitable. If the Soviets believe that they can achieve their objective uni-- by unilateral concessions on the part of the West, there will be no serious negotiation. I believe we have a chance for serious negotiation, but we must be willing to face the fact that not every fault is on the Western side. In this particular case the Soviets have not yet made a serious proposal. When they make a serious proposal, I have confidence in our administration with which I haven't always agreed, but I have confidence in our administration and in NATO, that we will respond creatively and positively.

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CRONKITE:

Thank you, Dr. Kissinger, your time is up, and we go for the first response in the summation, from the negative side, Mr. Paul Warnke in Florence.

WARNKE:

Well let me make one thing clear. And that is that I am not proposing that we defer any deployment. Unilaterally, or in the hope that perhaps the Soviets might negotiate more seriously. What I have suggested is that we defer the deployment only if the Soviets agree to destroy at least a substantial number of more warheads than we would deploy. It would be compensated, it would be an interim, temporary agreement. We would then proceed to put the entire issue in the overall strategic arms context, where we have the trade-offs available, where we have the ability to make proposals that I think would bring about a very substantial elimination of all of the INF. And I want to make it very clear I'm not talking about just a deferral. I'm talking about a deferral if the Soviets destroy a significant number of their SS 20's. And I'm also not talking about redeployment. I would agree with what has been said, by those on the other side, that redeployment buys us nothing. All it would do would be to increase the threat to our Japanese and South Korean allies. And it would certainly not be regarded as a friendly gesture towards the People's Republic of China. So I'm talking about actual destruction of a significant number of the Soviet INF forces. I think that that would

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WARNKE (cont'd.):

then put us in a position where we could negotiate very effectively in the overall START negotiations. We would be able, for example, to trade-off the possible deployment of sea-launch cruise missiles, for further very significant reduction, perhaps total elimination of the Soviet SS-20's. I would agree that so far as I can see, neither side, at least in their public descriptions, of their negotiating positions, has come up with something that is in my opinion remotely negotiable. It's up to us to see to it that serious negotiations take place. And if they don't, if the Soviets prove intractable, prove inflexible, then I would agree that NATO ought to go ahead with the deployment of these new American missiles. We would still have that option. I don't think that would be necessary. I think the Soviets are sufficiently concerned about this proposed deployment so that they would be serious. If they can see some chance that there will be a-- an agreement, that would prevent the deployment of these forces, I think that beginning the deployment probably would handicap rather than help negotiations. I think that the best way to get reductions is to reduce. Not to increase. And that we ought to make it clear that that's what we're looking for, is reductions. Now with regard to the counting of the British and French forces, I would certainly agree with Dr. Kissinger. You can't balance one hundred and sixty-two British and French missiles against the Soviets' three hundred and fifty or so SS-20's and the remaining SS 4's and 5's. But should we not explore what they meant when they

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WARNKE (cont'd.):

suggested a very significant reduction in the number of SS-20's? We ought to make it clear that redeployment is not the answer. We also ought to take into account the fact that both the British and the French plan to increase their intermediate range nuclear forces. Both by the mervening(ph) of existing missiles, and by the addition of new missiles. And this is a further reason why it's, in my opinion, not productive to think that these can be simply eliminated. I don't think anybody would believe that the British and French would start a nuclear war or that they would launch without the United States being involved. And I think that the Soviets recognize that same fact.

CRONKITE:

Thank you, Mr. Warnke. For his final summation of the affirmative position, four minutes are allotted to Michael Heseltine in London.

HESELTINE:

Well I think that, listening to Mr. Warnke, he's moved perhaps even closer to the position that I would hold now, because he's making it quite clear that his deferral is only in response to a Soviet willingness to destroy significant number of those missiles that it has already deployed. So there has to be a Soviet response to the offers that the West has been making since 1979. I can't anticipate on behalf of the NATO alliance what our

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HESELTINE (cont'd.):

response would be to their offer-- to their responses. But there's been no serious response since 1979, and the moment that there is we will respond positively to it. And that brings me to the next question, which I think has rightly been raised. And that is the position of the British and the French independent nuclear deterrents. Of course, it is quite true the Soviets, in order to try and justify their deployment of SS-20's, have now begun to talk about the matching of those SS-20's against the British and the French systems. But it was only a couple of years ago when the Soviets wanted to prove some other point in negotiating that they made it perfectly clear that they regarded the British and French systems as belonging to the intercontinental range of missiles. And therefore not appropriate to the intermediate range discussions. In other words, they've changed their position. I must say that my view is that they've done it for negotiating reasons. So I think we are back in the critical issue that we are really discussing now in this debate, tonight. We are committed to deploying the..... cruise missiles and the Pershing II Missile Systems at the end of this year. We don't want to do it. We've been trying to find a way of avoiding doing it. And the sort of proposals that Mr. Warnke's talking about - deferral or whatever it may be - they're not so good as the Zero Option that the President put forward originally. He said let's have no weapon systems of this sort. Well that's better than deferral. That's better than destroying some of them. That's none. What happened when the Soviets had nothing to do with

HESELTINE (cont'd.):

that? The President said "Right. Tell us what you will accept. Put your cards on the table. Give us something we can talk about realistically and reasonably." Now you can't be more flexible or reasonable than that-- that's another way of covering the point that Mr. Warnke's making. And that's what's now on the table. Now at any time the Soviet Union can pick up that offer. But they've got to be absolutely clear that they're not going to be given an endless, unlimited amount of time. But it's even better than that. Because if we do deploy, this year, on time, as we intend to do, if the Soviets then realize that they ought to have negotiated with us seriously from the beginning, we've made it absolutely clear that the weapon systems that have been deployed can be undeployed. What we have put in position can be taken away. And as our whole purpose is to achieve the elimination or reduction of these systems, of course we will do that. So I think we are left with the central issue: How do you do business with the Soviet Union - the only experience of success in the last 40 years, in which we have maintained the peace with remarkable skill, is that they respect strength and firmness. And that means keeping our word, deploying as per the program we've laid out, modernizing the systems upon which our credibility depends. That seems to me the only practical alternative available now. We can undo it if the Soviets change their minds, show flexibility. Genuinely want lower levels of deployment. It's up to them. They know what we want because the

HESELTINE (cont'd.):

Democracies will never attack; are in no way an aggressive alliance. We are purely there for defense.

CRONKITE:

Thank you Mr. Heseltine. And now for the last four minutes of our formal debate, before we get to the minutes of Free Exchange. They belong to our second speaker on the negative side, Egon Bahr in Bonn.

BAHR:

When Mr. Heseltine just has said, we need a firm position of the Western governments concerned for the negotiations, then this goal is fulfilled. Because, based upon the position, all the governments concerned have taken just recently in Portugal, one can say all governments concerned have stated they will start the deployment if the negotiations fail at the end of this year. If this is a precondition to have a success with the Soviets, then we will have....the success and we can look forward very positively as far as the outlook is concerned. I doubt that this is enough and this is sufficient. I think that both sides have not offered real, sincere negotiating positions. I think the Soviets have changed their maximum position on the 21st of last December, and I think this has been called a step in the right direction, but not enough by President Reagan - I share this view and this-- this judgment. And then the Americans have made another proposal without changing their main pillar positions. I think up to now, I cannot

BAHR (cont'd.):

foresee that based upon the present proposals of both sides, we will have fruitful discussions and positive negotiations. If the Soviets would not become more flexible, then they are today, then I would come to the resolve that we have to start the deployment. But this can only be seen later this year. If the Americans would not change their present position too, then I think my party would come to the other judgment. And say "No" to the deployment. But I think we hope that both sides will negotiate seriously. And this brings me to the point-- what will happen at the end of this year. Clear, if the negotiations fail, we will have to make the decision, based upon the last sentence of the Double Track(ph) Decision, if the negotiations are not come to an end then my view is we should see if the negotiations have had the political breakthrough for the decisive political points. For the decisive five political points. As far as the region is concerned, how to take into account the British and the French forces, what is with verification, air-launched, sea-based systems included or not, and prevent a short-range missile race in addition. These are, in my view, the five decisive points. If we have a political breakthrough in these five points and we only need some additional technical time to prepare the signature of the treaty, and if both sides would say, then, "We need another two, three, four months for this ", then I would be inclined maintaining the pressure upon the Soviet side to have a moratorium and not to have

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BAHR (cont'd.):

for this limited period of time, no deployment. Otherwise, we have to make our decision.

CRONKITE:

Thank you, Mr. Bahr. The time is up for our formal portion of our debate. In a moment, all of our guests will return and we'll have an opportunity to question each other directly on points raised.

COMMERCIAL #5

MR. CRONKITE:

Gentlemen in the time remaining you will have an opportunity now to question each other directly. However, I'm going to take the moderator's prerogative here and if I may, put the first question which occurred to me as a wide open one here. It seemed to me that it's quite clear that both Mr. Warnke and Mr. Bahr on the negative side of the question raised the matter of whether or not the United States and the West is negotiating seriously at this time. And I was rather surprised, I must say Dr. Kissinger, that you didn't seem to respond to that challenge. And I wonder what your response is.

DR. KISSINGER:

My response is that the West is negotiating seriously. First of all, the American deployment foresees 572 warheads as against 1053. So we have not even in our unilateral decisions insisted on exact equivalence. But secondly, I do not see how a proposal could be more serious than our current position. We are willing to accept either no deployment on either side or any intermediate numbers suggested by the Soviet Union that is less than the full deployment that now exists.

As I understand it we have not put forward a precise figure because we did not want to get hung up in the, in a numbers

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DR. KISSENGER (con't):

game. But the Soviet Union knows that it has the option of proposing a figure which is considerably below the planned deployment and that this figure will then be negotiated in some, on some basis of equivalence with the Soviet Union. I believe we have been serious and I do not believe that that criticism is justified.

MR CRONRITE:

Any answer from the other side?

MR. WARNKE:

I'd like to answer that question. Now, obviously, as Mr. Heseltine says, the zero option is very good for us. It's too good. It's too good to be negotiable. And as Dr. Kissinger just pointed out what we have now proposed is that the Soviets could come down to a figure which we would then match. Now they have approximately 1200 warheads -- it's 1200 if you count in the 4's and 5's. If they cut that in half and come down to 600 we will do them the great favor of deploying the full 572. Now it's just not an offer that they can accept. Similarly if they went down to 400 we could still deploy, presumably, the 108 Pershing II's in Germany. Now granted, these would be great results. But my experience is that they aren't dumb enough to accept them.

DR. KISSINGER:

But I also don't think we are silly enough to make such a proposal. We have not put forward any specific figures. Since the unilateral deployment foresees 572 as against 1053, it is absolutely logical that if the Soviet Union were to cut its forces by half, that the United States would accept a proportional reduction in its own, in its own deployment.

MR. WARNKE: (OVERLAP)

That was not the President's proposal.

DR. KISSINGER:

It seems to me that the President, the President did not give a specific number. But ---

MR. WARNKE (OVERLAP)

But he said equal numbers ---

MR HESELTINE (OVERLAP)

Can I just, can I just come in on this because I, in one way, slightly different to the the other three taking part tonight because I'm actually a member of one of the governments now involved in this procedure. And so I was actually involved, personally, in the consultation that took place between the President and the NATO allies

MR HESELTINE: (con't)

about this matter. And I hope I'm not revealing any great diplomatic sort of secrets if I say that we, we did discuss privately whether we came forward with a specific number such as Mr. Warnke's talking about -- whatever the number was -- or whether we took the totally open position of saying to the Soviet Union, look, what will you accept? What are the reasonable alternatives that you've got in mind? Now, one of the factors that influenced us in reaching the judgement to take the decision that the President then took of saying we will take a flexible no numbers approach is precisely because we knew that in the way that democracies work whatever number had been put forward would then have become the subject of a massive debate within the alliance. Divisive, much criticized by those who have all sorts of views of their own within the alliance and the coherence of the NATO negotiating position with the Soviet Union would have been completely undermined. So what the President did, and I don't see how you can fault it, was to say, look, I have an open mind. I will negotiate reasonably on an interim basis depending on what you the Soviet Union will accept. Now, I don't see how you can criticize that. And I think it is harmful to our position in the Western world to spend our life looking inwards at our own negotiating position when we should never take our

MR. HESELTINE (con't)

eyes off what the real threat is. And that is the fact that there are over a thousand of those SS-20 warheads, 2/3 of which are pointing in the direction of Western Europe.

So, I think it's important to realize just how much consultation there is and how much of it goes on, but of course a lot of it in private.

DR. KISSINGER:

Could I ask Mr. Heseltine this question? Is it conceivable that if the Soviet Union cut its deployment in half we would then insist on our full deployment as Mr. Warnke suggested?

MR. HESELTINE:

Well, I think if I may be frank and, and Henry Kissinger has an experience of negotiating way out of accord to anything I've ever had, but if I can be quite frank, this reveals the difficulty of the NATO alliance. Because as a minister of a government, who is consulted by the United States, I can't anticipate whatever the Soviets might say and sort of run a dress rehearsal of the Geneva conversations on, on even a prestigious television program like this. I have to remain silent because I know that I will be fully involved but admittedly in private as a member of one of the NATO governments with the United States govern-

MR HESELTINE (con't):

ment, when the Soviet Union responds. But I can't put in public all the reactions that we might have whatever the Soviets might say.

MR. WARNKE:

(SLIGHTLY OFF MIKE) But I think fundamentally what this (ON MIKE) raises is the question as to whether or not there are private negotiations going on. In which perhaps proposals that are more reasonable such as that just advanced by Dr. Kissinger are in fact being discussed. Now if all we have is what's going on in public, then I'm afraid it's not much of a negotiation.

MR. HESELTINE:

No, but I think the position is well known to, to all of us that first of all the Geneva negotiations have gone into recess at the moment but they're coming back at the President's suggestion earlier than was originally intended. And obviously the negotiators there are in constant touch with the Soviet Union and can conduct their negotiations as best they may see fit. But at the moment our position is quite clear. We have said to the Soviet Union, we have a flexible and open approach to this matter. What is your view about how we now make progress? Now, you can't make better -- I don't think you can make a more reasonable or sensible approach

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MR. HESELTINE (con't):

than that. We'll see what happens when the negotiations get underway again. What we want to happen is that the Soviets will respond positively. But I can't tell you and nor can anybody else on the Western side, what they are going to say. I know what we want them to say. But we have to wait for them to respond.

MR. CRONKITE

I would be --

MR. BAHR (OVERLAP)

I would like to make one, one remark maybe in in this connection. Based upon the NATO double track decision, the Soviet Union has made a proposal that they are willing to reduce down their present number of SS-20 to 162. I think this should not be forgotten. Number two, th 162 are not acceptable and would be not acceptable for me if I would have to negotiate. But if they would be prepared to go down let me say to 50 then I think it is acceptable. Then the West would be in a much better position than we have been when the whole process has been started. And so I think one should give the negotiators a little bit room for the negotiations. I could go along with the line which has been expressed by the famous walk of Mr. Nitze and Mr. Kzitsinky for example. So there is room and one has to concentrate upon the negotiations now.

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MR CRONKITE:

Thank you.

MR. BAHR:

I would ---

MR. CRONKITE:

Thank you Dr., Mr. Bahr. Thank you each and every one of you. I do have to interrupt you now. Usually at the end of most debates the judges declare a winner. We're not going to do that tonight. We'll leave that to the audience and perhaps to history.

What we have learned is that there are no easy ways of dealing with the nuclear threat and with this immediate issue which we put before you tonight -- the question of the deployment of the Pershing and Cruise missiles. What one person considers will bring peace another says may bring increased tensions, perhaps even war. We could wish that as the Great Nuclear Arms Debate rages in the West we could expect a similar open debate within the Soviet Union. It certainly would be interesting if they would devote 90 minutes of their prime time and make it available for us to listen to, to a discussion such as we've heard here tonight.

I could wish also that perhaps we had gone a little broader

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MR. CRONKITE (con't):

afield and discussed some of the issues which people who were not invited tonight on the far sides of this argument -- for instance on the freeze and such things -- might have brought up, but we did limit it to the immediate practical problems of the deployment of the Cruise and Pershing.

Now I'd like to say thank you and good night to our guests. To Dr. Henry Kissenger in New York. To Paul Warnke in Florence. To Michael Heseltine in London. And to Egon Bahr in Bonn.

This is Walter Cronkite. Good night.