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Collection Name	EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT, NSC: HEAD OF STATE FILE	***Withdrawer***	CAS 9/14/2012
File Folder	USSR: GENERAL SECRETARY GORBACHEV (8591293) (1/2)	***FOIA***	M476
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ID	Doc Type	Document Description	No of Pages	Doc Date	Restrictions
143598	LETTER	TRANSLATION OF LETTER FROM GORBACHEV TO REAGAN ***R 6/22/2015 M476/1***	5	ND	B1
143599	MEMO	WILLIAM MARTIN ET AL TO JOHN POINDEXTER RE HANDWRITTEN LETTER ***R 9/14/2012 GUIDELINES***	1	12/27/1985	B1
143600	LETTER	TRANSLATION OF LETTER FROM GORBACHEV TO REAGAN ***R 6/22/2015 M476/1***	14	12/24/1985	B1

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

B-1 National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
B-2 Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
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WITHDRAWAL SHEET
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Collection: National Security Affairs, Office of the Ass't to the Pres. for Records (Head of State Files) **Archivist:** ggc

File Folder: U.S.S.R. : General Secretary Gorbachev (8591293) **Date:** 11/6/95

Box 40

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
lettercase (8591293)			
~~1. HOS corres.~~	~~from M. Gorbachev to Ronald Reagan, 5 p.~~ R 6/22/15 M476/1	~~12/24/85~~	~~P1~~
~~2. memo~~	~~from William Martin/Tyrus Cobb to John Poindexter re: letter from Gorbachev, 1 p.~~ R 9/14/12 GUIDELINES	~~12/27/85~~	~~P1~~
~~3. HOS corres.~~	~~from Gorbachev to Reagan, 14 p.~~ R 6/22/15 M476/1	~~12/24/85~~	~~P1~~
~~4. HOS corres.~~	~~from Gorbachev to Reagan [original hand written copy], 15 p.~~ A 10/16/00 NLSF99-051 #384	~~12/24/85~~	~~P1~~
~~5. memo~~	~~from Nicholas Platt to Poindexter re: Gorbachev letter 3 p.~~ R F99-051 #385 7/25/00	n.d.	~~P1~~
~~6. talking points~~	~~re: Gorbachev letter, 4 p.~~ R " #386 "	n.d.	~~P1~~
~~7. HOS corres.~~	~~from Gorbachev to Reagan [final translation], 15 p.~~ A 10/16/00 NLSF99-051 #387	~~12/24/85~~	~~P1~~

RESTRICTION CODES

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- P-5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA].
- P-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA].

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Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]
- F-1 National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA].
- F-2 Release could disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA].
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- F-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA].
- F-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA].
- F-7 Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA].
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SECRET/SENSITIVE ID 8591293

RECEIVED 27 DEC 85 09

TO PRESIDENT FROM GORBACHEV, MIKHAIL S DOCDATE 24 DEC 85

PLATT, N 27 DEC 85

COBB 27 DEC 85

UNCLASSIFIED UPON REMOVAL OF CLASSIFIED ENCLOSURE(S) NSJ 5/26/99

KEYWORDS: USSR HS

SUMMIT

SUBJECT: GORBACHEV HANDWRITTEN LTR DEC 24 RE GENEVA SUMMIT DISCUSSIONS

ACTION: FOR DECISION DUE: STATUS X FILES SII

FOR ACTION FOR CONCURRENCE FOR INFO

POINDEXTER

COMMENTS

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The White House

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cc: VP Regan Buchanan Other JFM, TC, REL, SIT

COMMENTS

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SYSTEM II: 912953

4

United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

January 8, 1986

SECRET/SENSITIVE

MEMORANDUM FOR VADM JOHN POINDEXTER
THE WHITE HOUSE

SUBJECT: 12/24/85 Letter to the President
from General Secretary Gorbachev

Attached is the official translation of the December 24, 1985, letter to the President from General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev.

B McKinley
for Nicholas Platt
Executive Secretary

UNCLASSIFIED UPON REMOVAL OF CLASSIFIED ENCLOSURE(S)

DECLASSIFIED
Department of State Guidelines, July 21, 1997
By dlb NARA, Date 5/18/99

SECRET/SENSITIVE
DECL:OADR

143598

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF LANGUAGE SERVICES

(TRANSLATION)

LS NO. 118545
DZ/GT/WH/LB
Russian

His Excellency
Ronald W. Reagan
President of the United States
Washington, D.C.
The White House

Dear Mr. President:

I consider your letter important and also value the form you used in writing to me.

I say this to you because I see the desire to continue and to strengthen what we achieved in Geneva. I am glad that we began there -- both in substance and in spirit -- a direct and frank discussion. I attach special significance to the fact that we have been able to overcome the serious psychological barrier which for a long time has hindered a dialogue worthy of the leaders of the USSR and USA.

I have the feeling that now you and I can set formalities aside and can get down to the heart of the matter -- establishing a specific topical agenda for discussion over the next few years on the basis of our understanding, and straightening out Soviet -American relations. I visualize this task very concretely: we have to broaden areas of agreement, strengthen the elements of responsibleness in our policy, and make the appropriate practical decisions. In my opinion the ideal situation would be one in which you and I would give impetus to a constant forward movement. I agree with what you said: in the final analysis no one besides us can do this.

The first thing we should do is to take upon ourselves the task of undoing the knot which has been tied around the issues of nuclear and space weapons. I was encouraged by the fact that you, Mr. President, also consider that this is of key significance.

I think you understood from what I told you in Geneva that our decisive opposition to the development of space-strike weapons is dictated by the fact that weapons of this class which, due to their specific nature, possess the capability of being used both for defensive and offensive aims, represent in the final analysis an extremely dangerous build-up of offensive potential, with all the consequences inevitably ensuing therefrom from the point of view of further escalating the arms race.

DECLASSIFIED
NLRR M476 # 143598
BY RW NARA DATE 6/22/15

You say, Mr. President, that the U.S. has no intention of using the SDI program to obtain military superiority.

I do not doubt that you personally may really have no such intentions. But you must agree that the leadership of one side has to evaluate the actions of the other in the area of developing new types of weapons, not in accordance with intentions, but in accordance with the potential cababilities which may be attained as a result of the development of these weapons.

Examining the SDI program from this perspective, the Soviet leadership comes to the same conclusion every time: given the realities of the current situation, only a country which is preparing for a first (disarming) strike needs a "space shield"; a country which does not base its actions on such a concept should have no need for such a weapons system.

After all, space-strike weapons are all-purpose weapons. The space-strike weapons that are being created in the U.S. are kinetic energy weapons and also long-range, directed energy systems (with a range of several thousand miles and great destructive power). As our experts and scientists and yours confirm, those weapons are capable of destroying in space, as well as from space, within a very short time, in great quantities and selectively, objects which are thousands of miles away. I stress -- thousands of miles away.

For example, how should we regard the space weapons of a country which have the capability of destroying another country's centers for controlling space objects and of destroying its space devices for monitoring, navigation, communication etc. within very short time intervals measured in minutes? Essentially, these weapons can only be intended for "blinding" the other side, catching it unprepared and depriving it of the possibility of countering a nuclear strike. Moreover, if these weapons are developed, the process of perfecting them and giving them even better combat characteristics will begin immediately. Such is the course of development of all weaponry.

How then, Mr. President, should the Soviet Union act in such a situation? I would like to repeat what I already told you in Geneva. The USSR cannot simply reduce and will not reduce nuclear weapons to the detriment of its security, when the SDI program is being implemented in the U.S. Whether we like it or not, we will be forced to develop and improve our strategic nuclear forces and increase their capability of neutralizing the U.S. "space shield." At the same time, we would also have to develop our own space weapons inter alia for the purpose of

a territorial ABM defense. Probably, the U.S. would in turn then take some other additional steps. As a result, we will not get out of the vicious cycle of measures and countermeasures, out of the whirlpool of an ever-increasing arms race. The consequence of such competition for our peoples and for all of mankind is unpredictable.

I am convinced that the only sensible way out is not to engage in this at all. From every point of view the correct path for our countries is negotiation on the prevention of an arms race in space and its cessation on earth. And we need to come to agreement on the basis of equal and mutually acceptable conditions.

You and I agreed to accelerate the negotiations. I took satisfaction in hearing you say that the U.S. would not "develop space-based offensive weapons."

As I see it, some kind of common basis is emerging between you and me for a very significant part of the problem of preventing an arms race in space. Let us have our representatives at the negotiations proceed on this basis to begin working out specific measures to prevent the development of offensive space weapons, i.e., all space-based weapons which can destroy targets in space and from space.

In the spirit of the frankness in which we are talking, I would like to say that this issue has now become very acute: either events will determine policy or we will determine policy. In order not to be governed by events, it is especially important once again to conduct a profound analysis of all aspects of the objective interrelationship between offensive and defensive weapons and to hear each other out on this issue. However, it seems to me that there will be little meaning to such discussions if in tandem with them weapons of war start coming out of the doors of our laboratories, weapons whose influence on strategic stability we must not now miscalculate. Common sense dictates that until we determine together those consequences, we must not permit anything to go beyond the walls of the laboratory. We are prepared to negotiate to reach agreement on this matter as well.

It appears to me this is a practical way to implement the joint accord you and I confirmed in Geneva concerning the inadmissibility of an arms race in space and concerning the ultimate elimination of nuclear arms.

In line with such an approach it would also make sense at the Geneva negotiations to discuss the issue of eliminating the danger of a first (disarming) nuclear strike. I would like to

state to you again very definitely: we are not making a bid for a first nuclear strike, we are not preparing our nuclear forces for one.

I cannot agree with the way you formulate the issue of first strike nuclear forces. This issue, of course, is not merely one of ICBM warheads. For example, there is no difference between U.S. ballistic missile warheads on "Trident" submarines and warheads on modern Soviet land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles as far as their kill capability is concerned, i.e. in terms of such indices as accuracy, power and range. And if one considers this issue from the point of view of warning time, then, for a significant portion of submarine missiles, where the U.S. has a three-fold advantage in warheads, the warning time is significantly shorter.

And can we view the "Pershing II" missiles deployed in Europe with their high accuracy and short flight time to targets on USSR territory as anything other than first-strike weapons?

Please forgive me for dealing with technical details in a personal letter like this. But these are vitally important realities, and we simply cannot get around them.

Believe me, Mr. President, we have a genuine and truly serious concern about U.S. nuclear systems. You talk about mutual concerns. This matter can be resolved only through considering and counting the sum total of the respective nuclear systems of both countries. Let our delegations discuss this matter as well.

Mr. President, I would like to give you my brief reaction to what you said concerning regional conflicts. At the time when we touched on these issues in Geneva, I stressed that it is most important to view things realistically, to see the world as it is. If we recognize the fact that independent states exist and function in the international arena, then we also have to acknowledge their sovereign right to have relations with whomever they wish and the right to ask for assistance, including military assistance.

Both you and we offer such assistance. Why apply a double standard and assert that Soviet assistance is a source of tension and U.S. assistance is beneficial? It would be better for us to be guided by objective criteria in this matter. The Soviet Union is assisting legitimate governments which come to us because they have been and are being subjected to outside military interference.

And, as the facts indicate, the U.S. incites actions against governments and supports and supplies weapons to groups which are inimical to society and which are, in essence, terrorists. Looking at things objectively, it is such actions and outside interference that create regional tension and conflict. If such actions cease, I am convinced tensions will decrease and the prospects for political settlements will become much better and more realistic.

Unfortunately, at present, developments are proceeding in a different direction. Take, for example, the unprecedented pressure and threats which the government of Nicaragua is being subjected to - a legitimate government brought to power through free elections.

I will be frank: what the United States has done recently causes concern. It seems that there is a tilt in the direction of further exacerbation of regional problems. Such an approach does not make it easier to find a common language and makes the search for political solutions more difficult.

With regard to Afghanistan, one gets the impression that the U.S. side intentionally fails to notice the "open door" leading to a political settlement. Now there is even a working formula for such a settlement. It is important not to hinder the negotiations in progress, but to help them along. In that event a fair settlement will definitely be found.

Mr. President, I would like to have you take my letter as another one of our "fireside talks." I would truly like to preserve not only the spirit of our Geneva meetings, but also to go further in developing our dialogue. I view our correspondence as a very important channel for preparing for our meeting in Washington.

The new year will be upon us very soon, and I would like to send you and your wife our very best wishes.

Sincerely,

M. Gorbachev

Moscow, December 24, 1985

Copy of package to RSL. Tx. Bob

Nation
Th

86 JAN 2 P4:

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91293

DOCLOG _____ A/O _____

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MKS,

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Subject: Gorbachev

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DATE, TIME & SIGN THIS RECEIPT & RETURN TO: Cathy Millison [redacted]T, SITUATION ROOM, WHITE HOUSE

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

SYSTEM II
91293

SECRET/SENSITIVE

December 27, 1985

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR JOHN M. POINDEXTER

FROM: WILLIAM F. MARTIN WM
TYRUS W. COBB TWC

SUBJECT: Handwritten Letter to the President from Gorbachev

General Secretary Gorbachev has written a 14 page handwritten letter to the President in response to the President's own personal letter sent earlier this month. At our request State has prepared an analysis of the letter and drafted suggested talking points for your use with the President today.

RECOMMENDATION:

That you read the rough translation of Gorbachev's letter at Tab A, review State's analysis at Tab B, and use the talking points at Tab C in your brief to the President.

Approve JP Disapprove _____

Transmitted directly to the President.

TAB A - Gorbachev Letter
TAB B - State Analysis
TAB C - Talking points

SECRET/SENSITIVE

DECLASSIFIED
Sec.3.4(b), E.O. 12958, as amended
White House Guidelines, Sept. 19, 2003
BY NARA CU 9/19/12

84

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143600

TOP SECRET
SENSITIVE SPECAT

Dear Mr. President!

I consider your letter important and value the spirit in which it was written.

I am speaking to you because I see a desire to continue and to that which we achieved in Geneva. I am gladdened that we have begun—both in fact and in spirit—a direct and frank discussion. I attach special significance to the fact that we have been able to overcome the serious psychological barrier which for a long time has hindered the dialogue achieved by the leaders of the USSR and USA.

I also have the feeling that now we together can set aside our differences and get down to the heart of the matter—we can set a specific agenda for discussing in the upcoming years how to set straight Soviet-American relations.

TOP SECRET
SENSITIVE SPECAT

DECLASSIFIED
NLRR M476 # 143600
BY RW NARA DATE 6/22/15

This much is perfectly obvious: we must expand areas of agreement and must increase painstaking responsibilities in our policies and must adopt the appropriate specific resolutions.

In my opinion, such a position would be ideal in which we together make steady progress. I agree with what you said: no one except us, in the final analysis, can achieve this. And especially we should assume the duty to untie the knot surrounding nuclear and space weapons. It has struck me that you, Mr. President, also consider that this is of critical importance to us.

From what we said in Geneva, you, I think, have understood that our decisive opposition to the creation of nuclear space weapons is rooted in the fact that weapons of this class, possessing in their very nature

the ability to be used both for defenseive and offensive aims. In the final analysis they present the extreme danger of broadening the offensive potential with all the inevitable consequences entailed in this in the sense ou have said, Mr. President, that the US has no intention of using the SDI program for achieving military superiority.

I am sure that you personally could not have any such intention. But we agree that it is the duty of the leaders on both sides to evaluate the actions of the other in the area of the creation of new types of weapons not in terms of intentions but rather in terms of the potential capabilities which might be achieved due to the creation of a new weapon.

Viewing the SDI from such a position, the Soviet leadership

inevitably arrives at one conclusion: in the current actual conditions "the space shield" is needed only by that side which is preparing a first (preemptive) strike. For the side which does not proceed from this notion, the need for such a weapons system need not arise.

Indeed, space strike weapons are global weapons. The space strike weapons being developed in the US are long-range directed-energy and kinetic weapons (which have a range of several thousand miles and are highly destructive). They are capable — and here your scientists and ours are in agreement — in a short period of time, in mass quantities of (lg) destroying targets thousands of miles away both in space and from space. And I emphasize, thousands of miles. Now, for example, should one consider the space weapons of one side,

which have the capability in a short period, (2g), of destroying the other side's monitoring, navigation, communications and other space systems by strikes from guided space weapons. In essence, the use of this weapon can only be considered as a means to "blind" and take the other side by surprise, and to interfere with its capability to respond to a nuclear attack. Moreover, once this weapon is created the process of improving it will begin, giving it ever increasing combat characteristics. Such is the law of the development of any weapon. How, Mr. President, should the Soviet Union respond in this situation? I would like to repeat what I said in Geneva. The USSR simply can not and will accept the situation of the U.S. realization of the SDI program to reduce nuclear weapons to provide for its security. Come what may, we will

be forced to develop and perfect strategic nuclear forces, to increase their ability to neutralize the American "space shield." At the same time we would be force to develop our own space weapons, including those for national ballistic missile defence. Apparently, the U.S., for its part, would adopt other kind of measures. As a result we would not be able to break out of this vicious circle and in the final analysis, from the whirlpool of the ever-spiraling arms race. The end results of such actions inimical to our people and all of mankind would be unspeakable.

I am convinced that the only rational way out is not to do this. From all points of view the right path for our countries is to prevent an arms race in space and halt it on earth. Moreover, it is necessary to negotiate under equal and mutually acceptable conditions.

Together we are committed to speeding up the negotiations. I was pleased to hear your words to the effect that the U.S. will not "create offensive space-based weapons."

As I understand it, we now have a common ground on a very essential part of the problem of preventing an arms race in space. Let us do what needs to be done so that our representives at the talks will begin to develop specific measures on this basis aimed at preventing the development of offensive space weapons; that is, all such space-based weapons which are capable of destroying targets in space and from space.

In the spirit of that frankness, with which we conducted our talks, I tell you that this question is now acute; either future events will determine policy or

they will be determined by us. In order not to be caught up in events, it is again especially important to look into all aspects of the objectively existing interrelationships between offensive and defensive weapons and to listen to each other on this question. I think, however, that there is little sense in such discussions if at the same time from the doors of our laboratories begin to appear weapons of [ ], whose effects on strategic stability cannot be calculated. Common sense tells us that until we jointly clarify these consequences, it is impossible to produce anything behind the walls of the laboratories. We are also ready to discuss this question.

It seems to me that this is the primary course toward the realization of joint talks, which we considered

in Geneva on the unacceptability of an arms race in space and, in the final analysis, on the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Such an approach makes sense at the disscussion in the Geneve negotiations on eliminating the danger first strike (preemptive) nuclear weapons. I would like to again tell you definitely that we are not gambling on a nuclear first strike nor are we preparing our nuclear arsenal for this purpose.

I cannot agree with the way in which you consider the question of first strike nuclear weapons. This, of course, is not simply a matter of ICBM warheads. There is no comparison of the distructive capability between, for example, "Trident" submarine ballistic missle warheads and warheads on current Soviet land-based intercontinental ballistic missles; that is,

in such indicators as accuracy, (1g) and range. If it is a question of warning time, then there cannot be less time than for a significant part of submarine missiles, in which warheads the U.S. has a great superiority. A can we view in any other way than as a first strike weapon the "Pershing-2" missiles deployed in Europe with high accuracy and short flight time to targets in the USSR?

Please forgive me for being concerned with technical details in a personal letter of this kind. But, really, this is a vitally important situation and it cannot be avoided.

Believe me, Mr. President, we have real and extremely serious concern over U.S. nuclear weapons. You speak of mutual

concerns. The solution of this problem is only possible through consideration and calculation of sum total of the corresponding nuclear weapons on both sides. Let our negotiators discuss this, too.

Mr. President, in short, I would like to respond to your reference to regional concerns. I already emphasized, when we spoke on these matters in Geneva, that the most important thing here is that we look at things as they are. If we acknowledge that in the international arena independent states are speaking and acting and that we must recognize their sovereign right to maintain relations with anyone they wish and to seek assistance, including military.

Both of us are providing this kind of assistance. Why apply a double

standard here and assert that Soviet aid is a source of tension and American aid is goodwill? Better to be guided in this matter by objective criteria. The Soviet Union will help lawful governments which ask us for aid because they have been and are being subjected to external armed intervention.

But the U.S., and such are the facts, inspires action against governments and supports and arms antisocial and , in essence, terrorist groups. Objectively looking at the matter, it is specifically such actions and external interference which creates regional tensions and conflict situations. Were there no such activities, I am sure that tensions would be reduced and the prospects for political control

would be much better and more realistic. Unfortunately, developments are proceeding in another direction. Take, for example, the unprecedented pressure and terror to which the government of Nicaragua which has been lawfully elected by the people in free elections has been subjected.

I will be frank — the things which the United States has done lately make us wary. It seems that just now a shift is being made in the direction of further exacerbation of regional problems. Such an approach does not facilitate finding a common language and complicates the search for poltical solutions.

As far as Afganistan is concerned, the impression is being formed that the American side is intentionally overlooking the "open door" leading to a political settlement. Now there is a working formula for such a settlement. It is important not to interfer

with the ongoing negotiations but to assist them. Then a just settlement will definitely be found.

Mr. President, I would like for you to view my letter as another of our "fireside chats." I sincerely would like not only to keep the warmth of our Geneva meetings but also move further in the development of our dialog. I look at correspondence with you as the most important channel in preparing for our meeting in Washington.

There are only a few days until the New Year and I would like to convey to you and your spouse our warmest wishes.

Respectfully

M. Gorbachev

Moscow,

24 December 1985

b

SYSTEM II
91293

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Его Превосходительству
Рональду У. Рейгану,
Президенту США.
Вашингтон, Белый Дом.

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Уважаемый господин Президент!

Ваше письмо я считаю важным, ценю и ту душу, в которой Вы обратились ко мне.

Говорю так потому, что вижу желание продолжить и закрепить то, что нам удалось достигнуть в Женеве. Меня радует, что так мы начали — и по существу, и по духу — прямой, откровенный разговор. Я придаю особое значение тому, что нам удалось преодолеть серьезный психологический барьер, который долгое время мешал наладить диалог, достойный руководителей СССР и США.

У меня такое чувство, что сейчас мы с Вами можем оставить в стороне официальности и закрытую дипломатию — определить конкретную повестку дня для обсуждения на ближайшие годы, руководствуясь нашей доброй волей, выправить советско-американские отношения.

Я вижу себе эту работу вполне целесообразно: надо расширять сферы согласия, усиливать элементы ответственности в политике, принимать соответствующие практические решения. Идеальным, на мой взгляд, было бы такое ~~дело~~ положение, когда мы с вами стимулировали бы непрерывное движение вперед. Согласен с тем, что сказали вы: никто кроме нас, в конечном счете, обеспечить этого не сможет.

И в первую очередь нам следует взять на себя задачу развязать узел, запутывающий вопросы ядерных и космических вооружений.

Меня обнадежило, что вы, господин президент, как же считаете, что это имеет ключевое значение.

Из того, что я вам говорил в Женеве, вы я думаю, поняли, что наша решительная отговорка создания ядерных космических вооружений продиктована тем, что вооружения этого класса, обладая в силу своей стремительн

способностью быть использованным
и в оборонительных, и в наступа-
тельных целях, в конечном итоге представ-
ляет собой крайне опасное нарушение
наступательного потенциала, со
всеми неизбежно вытекающими
отсюда последствиями в смысле дан-
нейшей эскалации гонки вооруже-
ний. Исходя из Президент, что у
США нет намерений использовать кра-
тную систему СОИ для получения воен-
ного преимущества.
Я не ставлю под сомнение, что лично
у вас таких намерений действительно
может и ~~нет~~ не быть. Но согласитесь,
что обязанностью руководства одной
стороны является оценивать дей-
ствия другой в области создания
новых видов оружия не по намерени-
ям, а по тем потенциальным воз-
можностям, которые могут быть полу-
чены в результате создания этого
оружия.
Рассматривая программу СОИ с
такой позиции, Советское руководство

неизменно приходит к одному выводу:
в нынешних реальных условиях „ко-
мический щит" может понадобиться
только той стороне, которая гото-
вит первый (обезоруживающий)
удар. Для стороны, которая не ис-
ходит из такой концепции, в подо-
бной системе оружия необходимости
не должно возникать.
Ведь космические ударные вооруже-
ния универсальное оружие. Создавае-
в США ударные космические средства
это дальнобойные (с дальностью в
несколько тысяч миль и с высоко-
поражающей мощью) средства на-
правленной энергии и кинетическо
оружие. Они способны — это подтвер-
ждают ваши и наши специалисты
и ученые — в кратчайшие сроки,
в массовом количестве и абсолю-
тельно уничтожать удаленные
на тысячи миль объекты как в
космосе, так и из космоса. Под-
черкиваю, на тысячи миль.
Каким, нашему, считать косми-
ческое оружие одной стороны,

которые обладают способностью в кратчайшие сроки, измеряемые минутами, уничтожить цепочку управления космическими средствами, космические аппараты контроля, навигации, связи и т. д. другой стороны? По существу применение этого оружия может быть рассчитано только на то, чтобы „ослепить", захватить другую сторону врасплох, лишить ее возможности ответа на ядерное нападение. К тому же, будь это оружие создано, сразу же начнется его совершенствование, придание ему еще более высоких боевых характеристик. Такова закономерность развития любого оружия. Как же в этой ситуации, господин Президент, должен действовать Советский Союз? Хочу повторить то, что я уже говорил в Женеве. СССР не может просто пойти и не пойдет в условиях реализации в США программы СОИ на сокращение ядерных вооружений в ущерб своей безопасности. Волей-неволей мы будем

вынуждены развивать и совершенствовать стратегические ядерные силы, повышать их способность к нейтрализации американского „космического щита". Одновременно нам пришлось бы также создавать свои космические вооружения, в том числе и в целях противоракетной обороны страны. Видимо, США в свою очередь приняли бы еще какие-то меры. В итоге мы так и не вырвемся из порочного круга и конкурируем, из водоворота все усиливающейся гонки вооружений. Финал такого противоборства для наших народов и всего человечества неизбежен.

Уверен, единственно разумный выход не делать этого. Со всех точек зрения правильный путь для наших стран — договорённость о предотвращении гонки вооружений в космосе и прекращении ее на Земле. Причем договариваться необходимо на равных и на взаимоприемлемых условиях.

Мы условились с Вами ускорить переговоры. Я с удовлетворением воспринял Ваши слова о том, что США не будут „создавать наступательные вооружения космического базирования".

Как я понимаю, у нас с Вами теперь появляется какая-то общая основа по весьма существенной части проблемы предотвращения гонки вооружений в космосе. Давайте сделаем так, чтобы наши представители на переговорах на этой основе начали выработку конкретных мер по предотвращению создания наступательных космических вооружений, то есть всех таких вооружений космического базирования, которые способны поражать цели в космосе и из космоса.

В духе той откровенности, с которой он вел эту беседу, скажу Вам, что вопрос сейчас стоит круто: либо события будут развиваться по политике, либо ~~ее будем~~

её будем определять мы. Чтобы не оказаться во власти происхождения, особенно важно мы рассмотрели глубоко разобраться во всех аспектах объективно существующей взаимосвязи между наступательными и оборонительными вооружениями, высказать по этому вопросу друг друга. Думается, однако, что будет мало смысла в наших обсуждениях, если параллельно из дней наших лаборатории станут появляться орудия войны, влияние которых на стратегическую ситуацию есть нельзя сейчас просчитать. Здравый смысл подсказывает: пока ~~не поймем~~ мы совместно не выясним этих последствий, нельзя выпускать начто за стены лаборатории. Вы готовы договариваться и по этому вопросу. Мне представляется, что это прежде всего путь к реализации совместной договоренности, которую мы с вами подготовим

в Женеве, о недопущении гонки вооружений в космосе и о ликвидации в конечном итоге ядерного оружия.

При таком подходе будут иметься и обсуждения на переговорах в Женеве вопроса об уменьшении опасности первого (обезоруживающего) ядерного удара. Хотел бы еще раз определенно сказать вам: мы не делаем ставки на первый ядерный удар, не готовим к нему свои ядерные силы.

Я не могу согласиться с тем, как вы ставите вопрос о ядерных силах первого удара. Он, конечно, не сводится к баллистическим ракетам подводных лодок „Трайдент" и боеголовкам современных советских наземных межконтинентальных баллистических ракет равных по разрушающих способностях, то

сент в таких показателях, как точность, бесшумность и длительность действия, нет. А если говорить о времени предупреждения, то оно существенно меньше как раз у значительной части ракет подводных лодок, по боеголовкам которых США имеют тройное преимущество.
А разве мы можем рассматривать как действие первого удара развернутые в Европе ракеты „Першинг-2" с их высокой точностью и малым временем подлета к целям на территории СССР?
Прошу простить меня, что я вдался этими техническими деталями в личном письме такого рода. Но ведь это настолько важные обстоятельства, и обойти их просто невозможно.
Поверьте, господин Президент, что у нас реальная и весьма серьезная озабоченность по поводу ядерных средств США. Вы говорите о своих

ных обязанностях. Решить этот вопрос можно только через размышление и учет всей совокупности соответствующих звуковых средств стадии. Пусть наши делегации займутся обсуждением и этого.

Господин Председатель, прежде хотел бы предложить на рассмотрение Вашего относительно региональных конфликтов. Я уже подчеркивал, когда мы выдвигали эти вопросы в Женеве, что здесь самое важное — реалистически смотреть на вещи, видеть мир таким, какой он есть. Если мы признаем, что на международной арене выступают и действуют независимые государства, то мы должны признавать и их суверенное право иметь отношения с тем, с кем они хотят, обращаться за помощью, в том числе и военной.

Такую помощь оказываем и мы, и вы. Зачем применять тут двойной

стоит ждать, утверждает, что совет-
ская помощь — это остатки на-
циональности, а американская —
благоденствие? Давайте лучше ру-
ководствоваться в этом деле объ-
ективными критериями. Советский
Союз помогает законным пра-
вительствам, которые обращаются
к нам потому, что они подвергаются
и подвергаются вооруженному вме-
шательству извне.
А США — таковы факты — инспи-
рируют вмешательство против пра-
вительств, подрывают, скатыва-
ют острым антиобщественное,
по сути террористические акции.
Обязательно глядя на дело,
именно такие действия, вмеша-
тельство извне и создают ген-
ональную напряженность, конфли-
ктные ситуации. Не будет таких
действий, и, уверен, напряженность
пойдет на спад, а предпосылки
политического урегулирования

станут намного лучше и сильнее.
К сожалению, развитие пока идет в другом направлении. Возьмите, например, бесцеремонное давление и угрозы, которым подвергается законное, избранное народом в ходе свободных выборов руководство Никарагуа.
Буду откровенен: то, что делается Соединенными Штатами в последнее время, настораживает. Похоже, что курс делается как раз в сторону дальнейшего обострения региональных проблем. Подобный подход не облегчает нахождения общего языка, затрудняет поиски политических решений.
Что касается Аргентины, то складывается впечатление, что американская сторона намеренно не замечает „открытую дверь", ведущую к политическому урегулированию. Ситуация есть и рабочая формула такого урегулирования. Важно не мешать

ведущимся переговорам, а оказывает им содействие. Когда справедливое урегулирование окончательно будет найдено.

Господин Президент, я хотел бы, чтобы Вы отнеслись к моему письму как к еще одной нашей беседе у камина. Мне искренне хотелось бы не только сохранить каждый наших женевских встреч, но и пойти дальше в развитии нашего с Вами диалога. На переписку с Вами я смотрю как на важнейший канал подготовки нашей встречи в Вашингтоне.

До Нового года остается совсем немного, и хотел бы передать Вам и Вашей супруге наши самые теплые пожелания.

С уважением

М. Горбачев

Москва,
24 декабря 1988 года.

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United States Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

~~TOP SECRET~~

MEMORANDUM FOR ADMIRAL JOHN M. POINDEXTER
THE WHITE HOUSE

SUBJECT: Gorbachev's Letter of December 24

Tone: Informal, Upbeat

Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev has sent a lengthy, handwritten response to the letter sent by the President after the Geneva summit. The fact that the President wrote his letter in longhand obviously made an impression. Gorbachev not only answered in kind, but with an unusual lack of formality. In several places, for example, Gorbachev lines out words or inserts new phrases. The style is very much his own -- plain and direct. He asks the President to view his letter as "another of our 'fire side chats'", and describes the exchange of letters between the two leaders as the most important channel in preparing for the 1986 summit.

Gorbachev stresses his appreciation that he and the President "have begun -- both in fact and in spirit -- a direct and frank dialogue". He says it is especially significant that "we have been able to overcome the serious psychological barriers" to dialogue between American and Soviet leaders. He states that "we can set a specific agenda for discussing in the upcoming years how to set straight Soviet-American relations."

Substance: Uncompromising

Gorbachev, however, is characteristically unyielding on substance, whether arms control or regional issues. On the former, he basically reaffirms current Soviet positions, dwelling, as in Geneva, on SDI. On the latter, he attacks U.S. support for resistance movements in various regions of the world, while reaffirming Moscow's right to assist governments which request its aid.

SDI: Common Ground, Soviet-Style

Gorbachev's extensive treatment of SDI is most interesting for his suggestion that the President's earlier assurances that the U.S. will not develop "offensive space-based weapons" might serve as "common ground" for discussion in Geneva. His definition of such weapons -- all space-based weapons capable of destroying targets in space or from space -- would have the practical effect of barring many potentially promising SDI technologies. But his expression of willingness to discuss the offense-defense relationship in detail appears to take the Soviet position beyond its previous refusal of U.S. proposals for a serious dialogue in this area.

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Gorbachev goes to some lengths to avoid accusing the President personally of hostile intentions against the Soviet Union. He states tnat he is "sure (the President) personally could not have" any intention of developing space-based weapons tor offensive purposes. But he makes clear he must be guided by U.S. capabilities rather than intentions, and he goes into some detail to demonstrate the validity of Soviet concerns, referring, for example, to the potential of space-based weapons by one side to blind the other by knocking out its reconnaissance and communication satellites. Gorbachev warns that "realization of the SDI program" would force the Soviet Union both to "perfect" its offensive nuclear forces and to develop a territorial ABM defense including space-based weapons.

Gorbachev also disputes the President's concerns about Soviet first-strike capabilities, and claims that the Soviet Union is not "gambling on" or preparing its arsenal to conduct "a nuclear first strike". He declares that the Soviets "have real and extremely serious concern over U.S. nuclear weapons" such as Trident, other submarine missiles, and Pershing II. He argues that the solution must take into account the "sum total of the corresponding nuclear weapons on both sides", probably a reference to the Soviet demand in Geneva that all U.S. nuclear systems capable of striking Soviet territory (including U.S. LRINF missiles) be defined as strategic forces.

Regional Issues: U.S. at Fault

In a brief discussion of regional questions, Gorbachev rejects alleged U.S. attempts to apply "double standards" in assessing Soviet behavior. He then applies one of his own, affirming Moscow's determination to help "lawful governments which ask us for aid ... because they are being subjected to external armed aggression," while charging us with assisting "in essence, terrorist groups." He complains specifically against "unprecedented pressure and terror" against Nicaragua. In a possible indirect reference to the possibility of direct U.S. assistance to UNITA, Gorbachev claims to see a disturbing "shift" underway in U.S. policy toward "further exacerbation of regional problems." This, he says, has made Moscow "wary."

Gorbachev's treatment of Afghanistan is, by comparison, more upbeat. In responding to the only regional issue specifically raised by the President in his letter, Gorbachev conveys his "impression" that the U.S. is overlooking an "'open door' leading to a political settlement" for which a "working formula" -- presumably that being considered in the

UN-sponsored Afghanistan-Pakistan "proximity" talks -- already exists. In a somewhat more positive formulation than that normally used by the Soviets in describing the U.N. process, Gorbachev states that a "just settlement will definitely be found" if the "ongoing negotiations are assisted." Gorbachev does not, however, offer concrete suggestions on how the talks can be furthered, and does not deal with the most pressing problem of Afghanistan--Soviet troop withdrawal.

Non-Issues

Gorbachev does not address a number of issues which have figured in post-Geneva correspondence. The most striking is human rights, the subject of a separate letter from the President (delivered by Secretary Baldrige). But Gorbachev also avoids entirely the nuclear testing issue he had raised with the President. Neither of these issues was raised in the President's handwritten letter.

David Hess for Nicholas Platt

Nicholas Platt
Executive Secretary

~~TOP SECRET~~

TALKING POINTS

GORBACHEV'S DECEMBER 24 LETTER

General

-- Your handwritten letter to Gorbachev made an impression. Gorbachev has responded to your post-Geneva letter in kind, with a lengthy, handwritten note.

-- The style is direct, frank and personal. He asks you to consider the letter as an extension of your "fire-side chats". He pointedly notes that he believes that the exchanges of correspondence between you are "the most important" means of preparing for the Washington summit.

-- Gorbachev seems to view the Geneva meeting as we do: an important step in breaking down barriers and establishing a a dialogue between the U.S. and USSR, and particularly between the two of you. In language that mirrors our own, he talks about expanding areas of agreement and developing a specific agenda for the years ahead.

-- On substance, however, Gorbachev is unyielding; there is no real change of position on SDI, on Soviet offensive forces, or on regional issues. There are, however, a few nuances of note.

Security Issues

-- Gorbachev takes up your offer for a discussion at Geneva of ways to prevent development of space-based weapons capable of offensive use. He even uses the term "common ground." But he gives an all-encompassing definition to such weapons: anything that can strike a target in or from space. This would, of course, rule out any sort of defensive weapons in space.

-- On offensive forces, Gorbachev notes that the Soviets don't intend a first strike, aren't developing such a capability, but are concerned about the first-strike potential of U.S. Trident, other SLBMs, and Pershing II missiles. The passing reference to Pershings is his only allusion to INF.

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-- He seems to go beyond past Soviet positions in expressing his willingness to look at the offense/defense relationship. But he implicitly reaffirms the demand in the Soviet September initiative to include in U.S. strategic forces any systems capable of striking Soviet territory.

Regional Issues

-- With the partial exception of Afghanistan, Gorbachev's approach is uncompromising. He does not directly refer to your regional initiative, but accuses us of arming and assisting "anti-social" and "terrorist groups," and thus exacerbating regional conflicts. He repeats Soviet charges of U.S. pressure on Nicaragua.

-- He also seems to hint at displeasure over our plans to aid UNITA in claiming to see trends in our policy toward "exacerbating" regional tensions. He says this makes Moscow "wary."

-- Gorbachev states the USSR will continue to help governments who request it when they are subjected to external armed intervention. This is their sovereign right, he asserts.

-- As in Geneva, Gorbachev's tone is relatively moderate in discussing Afghanistan. He refers to an "'open door' leading to a political settlement" for which a "working formula" exists. This is presumably a reference to the U.N.-sponsored proximity talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

-- Gorbachev suggests the U.S. and USSR assist the talks. If so, a "just settlement" would definitely be found. Gorbachev makes no concrete suggestions of how progress could be achieved, however, and does not deal with the pressing problem of Soviet troop withdrawal.

Conclusions

-- Gorbachev affirms the value of the dialogue, particularly between you and him. He noted at one point the importance of a "painstaking" consideration of the consequences of current policies on both sides. He emphasized the need to listen to each other.

-- He also seems to recognize that development of better relations is going to be a process measured in years, not months.

-- His letter makes clear just how slow and difficult that process is going to be. At one point, Gorbachev complains about an American double standard on regional issues, yet he applies a double standard of his own. At another point, he says he has to assess SDI not on the basis of your intentions but on the capabilities of the weapons; but in the next breath, he asks you to accept his assurances that the Soviets aren't developing a first-strike capability with their offensive forces.

-- SDI continues to dominate Soviet thinking on security issues. Gorbachev goes into length on the consequences of the program. He saddles his willingness to talk about defensive weapons with a definition that would outlaw any space-based defense. Nevertheless, the discussions might create a greater Soviet awareness over time of the potential benefits of more reliance on defense. In other words, it may be a start.

-- On regional questions, Gorbachev seems to be leaving the door open to future movement on Afghanistan, but not giving his hand away at this stage. It seems clear from this letter that near-term progress on the other major regional conflicts is going to be tough going.

-- It is worth noting that Gorbachev did not refer to a number of other issues. The most obvious was human rights, where he made no reference to the message Mac Baldrige carried. Nor did he address the question of nuclear testing, which he had earlier written you on, and which the Soviet press has focused on recently. These issues, of course, weren't addressed in your handwritten letter.

Next Steps

-- There's no need for a quick reply. You will be addressing the Soviet people on January 1. The text for your message is not affected by the content of the letter, although we may want to put in a reference to your continuing exchanges with Gorbachev.

-- Our negotiators at Geneva should be prepared for a detailed exchange with the Soviets in fulfillment of your offer to talk about steps to prevent development of space-based weapons with offensive potential. We'll want to make sure their instructions are up to the task.

-- We'll also want to see how Gorbachev responds to your letters on human rights and testing.

-- In light of Gorbachev's tough line on regional issues, we'll need to consider how to revise the draft letter on regional issues which is on your desk.

-- George Shultz's next meeting with Shevardnadze will be an opportunity to go over regional problems, and especially to probe on Afghanistan (NOTE: the timing is uncertain -- the Soviets owe us an answer on our proposal for a meeting in late January).

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