

06/13/2024 Ronald Reagan Presidential Library
Digital Library Collections

This is a PDF of a folder from our textual collections.

Collection:
Robinson, Roger W: Files
Folder Title:
INF-Start-Freeze:1982
Box:
91008 (RAC Box 13)

To see more digitized collections visit:
<https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/digitized-textual-material>

To see all Ronald Reagan Presidential Library Inventories, visit:
<https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/white-house-inventories>

Contact a reference archivist at: **reagan.library@nara.gov**

Citation Guidelines: <https://reaganlibrary.gov/archives/research-support/citation-guide>

National Archives Catalogue: <https://catalog.archives.gov/>

Last Updated: 06/25/2024

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Oklahoma City, Oklahoma)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 16, 1982

STATEMENT BY THE PRINCIPAL DEPUTY PRESS SECRETARY

Upon examination the "unilateral moratorium" offered by President Brezhnev is neither unilateral, nor a moratorium.

The offer, President Brezhnev makes clear, is limited to the European Soviet Union, thus leaving the USSR free to continue its SS-20 buildup east of the Urals, well within range of Western Europe. As we have noted on many occasions, given its range and mobility, an SS-20 is a threat to NATO wherever located.

President Brezhnev clearly links his "unilateral" offer to the condition that Western preparations for the deployment of Ground Launch Cruise Missiles (GLCM) and Pershing II's, agreed upon in December 1979 do not proceed. This condition, plus the fact that the Soviets have already prepared sites for new SS-20's west as well as east of the Urals, demonstrate that this is a propaganda gesture, and that the Soviets do not really intend to stop their SS-20 buildup.

The Soviet SS-20 force already exceeds the dimensions of the expected threat when NATO took its decision of December 1979 to deploy U.S. GLCM and Pershing II missiles in Europe, and to seek through arms control to reduce planned levels of long range Intermediate Nuclear Force (INF) missiles on both sides. The Soviets now have 300 SS-20 missiles deployed, with 900 warheads. Brezhnev's freeze proposal is designed, like previous Soviet statements over the past three years, to direct attention away from the enormous growth of Soviet capabilities that has already taken place, and the enormous preponderance that the Soviet Union has thereby acquired.

It is unfortunate that the Soviets did not choose to exercise real restraint before their SS-20 buildup began. NATO, for its part, has been observing restraint on INF missiles for well over a decade, which the Soviets simply exploited.

In sum, President Brezhnev's offer is neither evidence of Soviet restraint, nor is it designed to foster an arms control agreement. Like previous such Soviet freeze proposals, this one seeks to legitimize Soviet superiority, to leave the Soviet Union free to continue its buildup, to divide the NATO Alliance, to stop U.S. deployments, and thus to secure for the Soviet Union unchallenged hegemony over Europe.

The United States has put forward concrete proposals in Geneva for the complete elimination of missiles, on both sides, cited by Brezhnev in his remarks of today. We regret the Soviet Union

MORE

apparently prefers propaganda gestures to concentrating on serious negotiations in Geneva. For its part the United States, with the full support of its Allies, will continue to implement both tracks of the December 1979 decision on the deployment of new systems to Europe, and the pursuit of genuine arms control which we hope will make those deployments unnecessary.

President Brezhnev's proposal to place limits on the operations of missiles submarines is also not a serious proposal. U.S. submarines, by deploying to extensive ocean areas, are able to remain invulnerable to Soviet attack, and thus constitute a stable deterrent force. Reducing their area of operations in the world's oceans would increase their vulnerability and erode our confidence in their deterrent capability. The Soviet proposal, therefore, is entirely self-serving. Having made a large fraction of our land-based ICBM force vulnerable through their large ICBM buildup, the Soviets in this proposal are attempting to reduce the confidence we have in the sea-based leg of our deterrent.

The proposal for a ban on the deployment of ground-based long range cruise missiles is yet another transparent effort to disrupt NATO's 1979 two-track decision. Moreover, in focusing on sea-based as well as land-based, long-range cruise missiles, the proposal ignores the hundreds of shorter range cruise missiles that the Soviet Union currently deploys aboard its warships.

Finally, we want to reiterate the four principles underlying the Reagan Administration's approach to arms control. These are to seek agreements that:

1. Produce significant reductions in the arsenals of both sides;
2. Are equal, since an unequal agreement, like an unequal balance of forces, can encourage coercion or aggression;
3. Are verifiable, because when our national security is at stake, agreements cannot be based simply upon trust; and
4. Enhance U.S. and Allied security, because arms control is not an end in itself, but an important means toward securing peace and international stability.

These four principles were highlighted by the President in his speech of November 18, 1981. They underlie our position in the current Geneva negotiations on the elimination of U.S. and Soviet intermediate-range nuclear missile forces. They also form the basis for our approach to negotiations with the Soviet Union on the reduction of strategic arms -- the START talks.

#

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Oklahoma City, Oklahoma)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 16, 1982

STATEMENT BY THE PRINCIPAL DEPUTY PRESS SECRETARY

Upon examination the "unilateral moratorium" offered by President Brezhnev is neither unilateral, nor a moratorium.

The offer, President Brezhnev makes clear, is limited to the European Soviet Union, thus leaving the USSR free to continue its SS-20 buildup east of the Urals, well within range of Western Europe. As we have noted on many occasions, given its range and mobility, an SS-20 is a threat to NATO wherever located.

President Brezhnev clearly links his "unilateral" offer to the condition that Western preparations for the deployment of Ground Launch Cruise Missiles (GLCM) and Pershing II's, agreed upon in December 1979 do not proceed. This condition, plus the fact that the Soviets have already prepared sites for new SS-20's west as well as east of the Urals, demonstrate that this is a propaganda gesture, and that the Soviets do not really intend to stop their SS-20 buildup.

The Soviet SS-20 force already exceeds the dimensions of the expected threat when NATO took its decision of December 1979 to deploy U.S. GLCM and Pershing II missiles in Europe, and to seek through arms control to reduce planned levels of long range Intermediate Nuclear Force (INF) missiles on both sides. The Soviets now have 300 SS-20 missiles deployed, with 900 warheads. Brezhnev's freeze proposal is designed, like previous Soviet statements over the past three years, to direct attention away from the enormous growth of Soviet capabilities that has already taken place, and the enormous preponderance that the Soviet Union has thereby acquired.

It is unfortunate that the Soviets did not choose to exercise real restraint before their SS-20 buildup began. NATO, for its part, has been observing restraint on INF missiles for well over a decade, which the Soviets simply exploited.

In sum, President Brezhnev's offer is neither evidence of Soviet restraint, nor is it designed to foster an arms control agreement. Like previous such Soviet freeze proposals, this one seeks to legitimize Soviet superiority, to leave the Soviet Union free to continue its buildup, to divide the NATO Alliance, to stop U.S. deployments, and thus to secure for the Soviet Union unchallenged hegemony over Europe.

The United States has put forward concrete proposals in Geneva for the complete elimination of missiles, on both sides, cited by Brezhnev in his remarks of today. We regret the Soviet Union

MORE

4

apparently prefers propaganda gestures to concentrating on serious negotiations in Geneva. For its part the United States, with the full support of its Allies, will continue to implement both tracks of the December 1979 decision on the deployment of new systems to Europe, and the pursuit of genuine arms control which we hope will make those deployments unnecessary.

President Brezhnev's proposal to place limits on the operations of missiles submarines is also not a serious proposal. U.S. submarines, by deploying to extensive ocean areas, are able to remain invulnerable to Soviet attack, and thus constitute a stable deterrent force. Reducing their area of operations in the world's oceans would increase their vulnerability and erode our confidence in their deterrent capability. The Soviet proposal, therefore, is entirely self-serving. Having made a large fraction of our land-based ICBM force vulnerable through their large ICBM buildup, the Soviets in this proposal are attempting to reduce the confidence we have in the sea-based leg of our deterrent.

The proposal for a ban on the deployment of ground-based long range cruise missiles is yet another transparent effort to disrupt NATO's 1979 two-track decision. Moreover, in focusing on sea-based as well as land-based, long-range cruise missiles, the proposal ignores the hundreds of shorter range cruise missiles that the Soviet Union currently deploys aboard its warships.

Finally, we want to reiterate the four principles underlying the Reagan Administration's approach to arms control. These are to seek agreements that:

1. Produce significant reductions in the arsenals of both sides;
2. Are equal, since an unequal agreement, like an unequal balance of forces, can encourage coercion or aggression;
3. Are verifiable, because when our national security is at stake, agreements cannot be based simply upon trust; and
4. Enhance U.S. and Allied security, because arms control is not an end in itself, but an important means toward securing peace and international stability.

These four principles were highlighted by the President in his speech of November 18, 1981. They underlie our position in the current Geneva negotiations on the elimination of U.S. and Soviet intermediate-range nuclear missile forces. They also form the basis for our approach to negotiations with the Soviet Union on the reduction of strategic arms -- the START talks.

#

5
THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 31, 1982

PRESS BRIEFING
BY
AMBASSADOR PAUL NITZE
AND
ACDA DIRECTOR EUGENE ROSTOW
CONCERNING THE INF TALKS IN GENEVA

The Briefing Room

11:05 A.M. EST

AMBASSADOR NITZE: Gentlemen, I have had the opportunity to --

Q Gentlemen? Ladies.

AMBASSADOR NITZE: Ladies and gentlemen.

Q It is all right with me. (Laughter.) It's a man's world.

AMBASSADOR NITZE: Well, I have had the opportunity to brief the President in substantial detail about the progress of our talks in Geneva. As you know we began those talks last November. We had a slight interruption during Christmas, and then we agreed to break for a few weeks to return to our capitals to report on the progress of the negotiations thus far.

We lost no time at all in the beginning of the negotiations on the usual questions of agenda, procedures, and so forth. We got through those in a day or two. And we got right to the subject matter, the hard substance of the negotiations.

We have had the opportunity to outline -- present to the Soviet side the full basis in fact and in principle and logic of the U.S. position and to outline how we think that the President's proposal of November 18th can best be implemented and carried into practice and then in February we presented a draft of the text of an agreement -- an agreement fully ready for signature.

The Soviets on their side have presented a number of proposals. Basically they are all variations from or implementation of the positions taken by Mr. Brezhnev last fall prior to the beginning of the negotiations, first in his interview in Der Spiegel magazine and then in his speeches in Bonn when he was meeting with Chancellor Schmidt.

Now the essence of the U.S. position is that the U.S. is prepared to forego the production and testing and development and deployment of the Pershing II missiles and the ground-launched missiles which are being readied for deployment in Europe pursuant to a NATO decision in 1979 provided that the Soviet Union would forego the deployment of the comparable missiles on its side. In other words, what the U.S. position is, it should be with this range of weapons -- should be zero on the U.S. side and zero on the Soviet side.

Now the essence of the Soviet position is that there should be no appreciable restraint upon the 300 SS-20 missiles that they have already deployed on their side, some of them in Europe, some of them in Siberia, and that their deployments in the non-European part of the Soviet Union should be basically without constraints.

Now there are a whole series of secondary issues, and we, I think, have made great -- made substantial progress during these negotiations so far in clarifying and dealing with, in a way, these secondary issues. Now there is an awful lot of work which remains to be done and I cannot say that we have made any progress on what I outlined as being the central issue. But nevertheless I am -- people generally ask me whether you are optimistic and I consider myself to be a hard-line optimist, so that even though one can realistically see all the differences that remain to be worked out, still I think that we are working at it constructively.

MORE

Q What was your impression of Mr. Brezhnev's recent threat, as it's been interpreted, that if we go ahead with the Pershings, he will take some comparable action somewhere else?

AMBASSADOR NITZE: I was in Europe at that time, when that was made. And I got the feeling that that did not help his side of the public opinion contest in Europe, that that was considered not a useful statement for him to have made.

Q Do you think he meant something in this hemisphere, something in Cuba?

AMBASSADOR NITZE: He didn't specifically say so, but it seemed to me to be implied.

Q Brezhnev is ill again; he seems to be in the hospital; it may be more than that. And if so, therein ensues a period of struggle for the replacement. How does that delay the talks, and what might that eventually do, particularly if the sitting is controlled by hard liners, to the successful conclusion of the talks?

AMBASSADOR NITZE: In the negotiations, I've tried to stay away, as far as I can, from anything having to do with politics on either side. And, certainly, the succession issue in the Soviet Union is very much a political issue on their side. And I wouldn't propose to address it.

MR. ROSTOW: We've got -- maybe I should add a word on that set of problems, not the political speculation about the future leadership of the Soviet Union, but Ambassador Nitze has agreed to keep the content of the talks confidential. So that any wider comments should be taken up by officials here. And I think one thing to remember, Mr. Donaldson, you referred to hard-liners and soft-liners in the Soviet Union. The line taken under Mr. Brezhnev's instructions, has been a very hard line, I'm disappointed to say. And, so far, it has not been a serious negotiation. Now, they have been proposing steps, as Ambassador Nitze outlined them, which would have a tremendous impact, permit the Soviet Union to increase its forces in European -- forces of this category in European Russia, have no restraints on comparable force in Siberia, while we would have no comparable weapons within Europe. In other words, these proposals are designed to drive us out of Europe and to weaken our commitment to the defense of Europe. So that these are very disappointing, and there's no sign that it could have been any harder -- could be any harder under any successor.

Q Things could only get better.

Q Mr. Rostow, does the political debate, in the United States, over a nuclear freeze or, alternatively, the Jackson-Warner proposal, affect the negotiations?

MR. ROSTOW: They don't affect them at all. But I'll have to remit those questions to the President tonight.

Q Do you have a view on the Kennedy-Hatfield proposals.

MR. ROSTOW: Same answer.

Q Well --

MR. ROSTOW: Kennedy-Hatfield proposal, no we have a very strong view that it would be a trap for us.

Q A what?

MORE

MR. ROSTOW: A trap; that is, freezing at current levels would remove any incentives Soviet Union might have to negotiate seriously with us, and, at the same time, prevent us from restoring -- modernizing our forces so as to restore our deterrent, second-strike capability beyond any apparent doubt.

Q What about the Jackson-Warner proposal, where it's talking of freeze after parity is achieved.

MR. ROSTOW: Well, you'll have to see what the President says tonight.

Q You sound like you don't expect to get anywhere on these negotiations that are being conducted.

MR. ROSTOW: Mr. Nitze and I are, as he says, hard-line optimists. We wouldn't be here otherwise.

Q You mentioned the hard-line first. I --

Q What about the battle for the minds of the Europeans? Where are we in that? Are we, now, winning it, or --

MR. ROSTOW: I think the European, public opinion is very sensible in its vast majorities. And I think the President's speech in November was extremely well received, and is still dominating the battle for opinion in Europe.

Q So we're ahead?

THE PRESS: Thank you very much.

END

11:17 A.M. EST