

**SECRET** #16

DOS REVIEWED 14-Mar-2007: DECLASSIFIED IN FULL

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON*Warren  
J*

August 25, 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT  
FROM: Warren Christopher, Acting *W.C.*

1. Message from Brezhnev. This afternoon Soviet Charge Vasev brought in the attached letter to you from Brezhnev urging the early commencement of negotiations concerning TNF. We have been informed by the British that a similar letter was delivered over the weekend to Mrs. Thatcher. The letter appears to follow previously stated Soviet positions, with the possible exception of a paragraph which includes FBS bases as well as FBS systems as subjects for negotiation.

I told Vasev that we would forward the letter to you promptly, and that it would receive careful reading. I also recalled to him that we had begun our examination of the issue with our Allies during my trip to Europe in mid-July, with the intention of preparing for early preliminary exchanges with the Soviet Union.

In response to questions, Vasev said he expects Dobrynin back in Washington around September 9, and that Gromyko is tentatively expected to spend about a week or 10 days at the UN General Assembly in New York beginning around September 19th. As we have previously discussed, it has been our thought to have Ed work out arrangements for the commencement of the "preliminary exchanges" when he meets with Gromyko in New York.

2. Poland. The Polish Ambassador called on me again today on instructions to inform us officially of yesterday's leadership changes, to underline the new Prime Minister's determination to seek a peaceful solution to the crisis via dialogue, and to note the new government's intention to maintain good relations and close cooperation with the United States. The Ambassador emphasized that "the crisis is not yet over", and reported that intensive negotiations are now under way in several key cities.

**SECRET**

RDS 2/3 - 8/25/00

*Force, with  
Harold &  
Zig, a  
positive  
response - ob-  
viously not  
accepting  
Brezhnev's  
incorrect  
allegations &  
assumptions.  
Expedite  
J*

**SECRET**

- 2 -

3. Iran. Archbishop Capucci has returned to Iran from Rome and plans to raise the hostage issue with the Iranian leadership as soon as possible. We have given Capucci talking points to use with Parliamentary President Rafsanjani and others he may see. Capucci will also try to talk to the hostages themselves. In his meetings with Iranian officials, Capucci will stress that his interest in the hostages is a personal one, and will avoid any suggestion that he is representing us. Our conversations with Capucci were quite cordial, and it appears that his earlier animosity towards us has disappeared. He is grateful for our help on a visa case.

4. Law of the Sea. The 9th Session of the Law of the Sea Treaty negotiations being held in Geneva will conclude this Friday. While agreement has been reached on a number of issues, another six-week session has been scheduled for March and April of 1981. Helmut Schmidt's worry that the eight-year long process might be reaching too hasty a conclusion seems to have been unfounded.

The negotiations have been generally successful from our point of view. Our negotiators report that we have attained 95 percent of the changes that we sought in this round of talks. However, some difficult issues remain, including questions of decision-making within the Seabed Authority and access to seabed resources. Such issues continue to be the subject of debate between developing countries and industrialized nations, and further talks will be necessary to assure adequate safeguards for U.S. interests.

4. El Salvador. Ambassador White met last week with the Salvadoran Junta and military high command to explain our willingness to lease six helicopters to El Salvador, if there has first been measurable progress in controlling violence in the country. White suggested a series of specific measures that could be taken in the next 60 days to begin to bring the violence under control. The Junta members said that while they shared our human rights goals, they questioned our insistence on measurable progress in the next two months. They nevertheless agreed to consider the proposal and to discuss it with the officer corps. Ambassador White believes the Salvadorans will respond with a proposal of their own which will substantially meet our requirements.

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

- 3 -

5. Nicaragua. Sandinista Directorate member Huberto Ortega announced August 23 that the Nicaraguan Government will not call elections until 1985, ostensibly to allow time to rebuild the economy. In his speech, Ortega also accused the U.S. of withholding the \$75 million aid package to "pressure" the Nicaraguan Government, and criticized the Salvadoran Junta.

Moderate elements in Nicaragua, and Nicaragua's neighbors (including Costa Rican President Carazo who was at the ceremony) will likely be highly critical of this latest postponement of elections. Two days before Ortega's speech, the major independent political parties in Nicaragua had issued an unprecedented joint statement expressing their concern about the Directorate's failure to call elections and demanding municipal elections in late 1981 and election of a Constituent Assembly in late 1982.

6. Lebanon. In response to our strong representations, the Israeli Deputy Defense Minister assured our Embassy today that all U.S.-supplied equipment has now been withdrawn from Lebanon. He acknowledged that some non-U.S. equipment and IDF personnel remained, and we reminded him again of the need for complete IDF withdrawal.

While recent Israeli military actions in southern Lebanon have contributed to tensions in the region, they do not in themselves explain fully the present nervousness in the Arab world. There is a growing fear in some Arab quarters, that Israel contemplates a major military action in the next two months. The PLO, for example, is reportedly concerned that the Phalange militia will join with Israel in a pincer movement directed against them. These anxieties will complicate our ongoing efforts to restore a cease-fire and some measure of stability in southern Lebanon.

Attachment:

As stated.

**SECRET**

#16A  
C  
/

Distinguished Mr. President,

I deemed it necessary to address myself to You on the issue which deeply concerns and affects the peoples of the European continent and has also a substantial bearing on the prospects of USSR and USA relations.

I have in mind the issue emerged in connection with plans to develop and deploy in Western Europe new American medium-range missiles.

As is known, seeking to prevent a new round of nuclear arms race on the European continent, we approached, as far back as last fall, the United States and other NATO countries with a proposal to initiate negotiations on the medium-range nuclear systems, while readiness was expressed on our part even to cut the number of these systems deployed in the western regions of the USSR, provided there is no additional deployment of nuclear missiles of that category in Western Europe.

At the present time too, we believe that it would be the most correct and radical solution of the question of medium-range nuclear systems in Europe. We maintain our proposal to this effect but for it to be translated into reality it is necessary, of course, to restore the status which existed prior to the December session of the NATO Council.

It is also known to You, I believe, that in order to overcome the impasse created as a result of the said NATO decision we are ready to adopt yet another alternative, whereby the questions concerning medium-range nuclear missile systems in Europe

would not be subject of separate negotiations but would be discussed, after the SALT-2 Treaty enters into force, in the framework of SALT-3 negotiations and, naturally, on the basis of those principles which are agreed between our countries for the SALT-3 negotiations.

Although there followed no formal objection from the US side and the other NATO countries against such an alternative, it has proved impossible of practical realization since the United States does not ratify the SALT-2 Treaty.

Having thoroughly weighed up the existing situation and being guided by broader interests of peace and international security we decided to undertake one more step.

Without withdrawing our former proposals we expressed ourselves in the course of the Moscow conversations with FRG Chancellor H.Schmidt in favor of starting negotiations to discuss simultaneously and in organic relationship both medium-range nuclear systems in Europe and American forward-based nuclear systems.

That these weapon systems are to be considered as being inter-related and also in connection with the question of their locations, i.e. the bases, is determined by the factual state of affairs. After all, the Soviet Union cannot disregard hundreds of American nuclear carriers which due to their location can reach the territory of the USSR and its allies and which thereby constitute a substantial and integral element of the general strategic situation. The same is also true of the bases per se which not only expand operational capabilities of the systems already there but make it possible in a short time, additionally and on a great scale, to increase the number of such systems.

It is not a new question at all. This question was already subject of discussion in the process of negotiations on strategic arms limitation. It was touched upon by us too when we met in Vienna last year.

We are prepared to begin right now the negotiations that we are proposing, without waiting for the SALT-2 Treaty ratification. However, practical implementation of agreements that could be reached during these negotiations, as is understood, would be carried out only after the Treaty enters into force. This is necessitated by the fact, that the subject of the proposed negotiations is closely tied not only to the existing balance of forces in Europe but also to the <sup>general</sup> strategic equilibrium between the USSR and the USA.

I want You to understand me correctly, Mr. President: we are confident about our ability to neutralize any attempts to disrupt the existing correlation of forces, to change it in the NATO favor and to attain military supremacy over us. In other words, if the West triggers a new round of arms race, we will, although with a heavy heart, accept the challenge.

However, we believed and continue to believe that further arms race is not the kind of a road which can lead to a stronger security of anyone; on the contrary, this road is fraught with serious danger for all countries and peoples without exception. This is the reason why we resolutely favor negotiations and are convinced that only this way corresponds to the vital interests of the peoples of the USSR and the USA, as well as all other peoples.

Since there has been no answer from the American side to the proposal we made, we cannot but have an impression that the US government took the course of delaying the beginning of the negotiations. In the meantime, the possibility, which we believe is there, to find a mutually acceptable solution may slip away and be wiped out by the march of events.

I would like to hope, Mr. President, that You will accord all due attention to this communication of mine and that we will be able without further delays to reach agreement on the beginning of negotiations on the aforementioned question.

Sincerely,

L.BREZHNEV

August 21, 1980