

PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T 164/80

Dear Mrs. Prime Minister,

T 164/80
Unofficial translation

SUBJECT Filed on: Defence:
CTB; PT 3

ops.

I would like to convey to you some considerations on the matter which is now of a particularly topical value for all states and peoples of Europe.

It is our impression that your country, as well as ours, can not but be interested in averting a new spire in the nuclear arms race on the European continent. On this to the largest extent depend the future development of the whole situation in Europe, the prospects of peaceful cooperation among European states, the ensurance of their security.

You know of course that as early as in the autumn of last year I made a proposal to start negotiations about the medium-range nuclear means on the European continent - and with the Soviet Union being prepared to decrease the number of such means of its own deployed in western regions of the USSR if no medium-range means are additionally deployed in Western Europe.

This proposal remains in force at present too, but to implement it, naturally, it is necessary to restore the situation which existed before the adoption by NATO in December last year of a well-known decision about "supplementary armament", - the very decision in accordance with which it is intended to deploy new American medium-range missiles on the British territory as well.

We expressed our readiness to proceed in another way - the questions concerning the medium-range nuclear-missile means in Europe could be the subject matter not of separate talks, but could be discussed within the frame work of SALT-2 talks after the coming into force of the SALT-2 Treaty.

Formally it seems nobody objects to this option but its implementation in fact turned out to be blocked since the ratification of the SALT-2 Treaty in indefinitely postponed in the United States.

Meanwhile time is getting short especially if we take into account the fact that the United States are obviously accelerating the realisation of plans to create new types of medium-range missiles for deployment in Western Europe. As a result of this the opportunity to find a mutually acceptable solution which, we believe, exists now could be lost, overlapped by further developments.

No one should have any doubts that the Soviet Union together with its allies is capable of taking due measures in return in order not to allow to tip the balance of forces existing in Europe, to change it in favour of NATO. But our country always considered and considers that the arms race is the way not to strengthening peace but - at the contrary - to the growth of the military threat.

Taking into account all these circumstances we have elaborated and tabled recently a new proposal - to proceed to the talks about medium-range nuclear-missile means in Europe without waiting for the ratification of the SALT-2 Treaty but in the organic linkage with the question of the American forward-based nuclear means. The logic of this linkage is perfectly evident, it is determined by the factually emerged balance of forces on the European continent and by the need to observe the principle of equal security of the sides taking into account the strengthening of the strategic stability. The implementation of possible understandings would of course become real after the coming into force of the SALT-2 Treaty.

The essence of our new proposal was conveyed to the US Administration in early July. It would seem that the American government should have responded positively to our initiative if some serious intentions are behind the repeated statements of President J. Carter about the US interest in strengthening strategic stability. However more than a month have passed and we received no reaction to our proposal from the American side. One would have the impression that Washington is aiming at a delay by all means.

Adopting a decision about the production and deployment of medium-range weapons the participants of the December session of NATO stated that they link it organically with the start of negotiations with the Soviet Union on this subject. Now we - and not only we - can not help but begin to have serious doubts in the sincerity of such kind of statements.

I would like to inform you, Mrs. Prime Minister, that in connection with all this I am sending today the letter to President J. Carter proposing to agree without further delay about the start of official talks on the medium-range nuclear-missile weapons in Europe and the American forward-based nuclear means.

We are convinced that the earliest decision to begin such talks and their constructive tenure correspond with the interests of all European states - and not only them alone. I would like to believe that the agreement of your Government within the framework of NATO to deploy in Britain new American medium-range missiles does not restrict its freedom of actions to such an extent that you would have no possibility to support the proposal aimed at the cessation of the nuclear arms race in Europe, at the creation of conditions for a profound military detente.

It is not difficult to understand that this question assumes particular importance in the circumstances when the world has approached a sort of a divide - either events would go along the line of increasing the arms race and sliding to a dangerous confrontation, or reason would prevail and mutually acceptable solutions would be found. I am guided in addressing you by the realisation of the responsibility which falls in this situation on states and their leaders. The chance to strengthen peace must not be missed.

This makes me express the hope that your Government would render practical assistance to the positive solution of the question we have raised.

Yours sincerely,

L. BREZHNEV

21 August 1980