

SUBJECT

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PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T154/83

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FM THE WHITE HOUSE
TO CABINET OFFICE, LONDON
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US Declassified

FEBRUARY 16, 1983

DEAR MARGARET

VICE PRESIDENT BUSH HAS BRIEFED ME ON HIS RECENT MEETING WITH YOU. HE AND I ARE MOST GRATEFUL FOR THE WARM RECEPTION YOU GAVE HIM AND THE CANDID INSIGHTS YOU PROVIDED ON A NUMBER OF MATTERS, PARTICULARLY INF.

WITH RESPECT TO INF, I WOULD LIKE TO CONTINUE IN A WAY WHICH WILL BE MOST HELPFUL TO YOU IN SUSTAINING THE INF DEPLOYMENT SCHEDULE AND THEREBY PROVIDING THE INCENTIVES NEEDED TO REACH AN EQUITABLE AGREEMENT. BASED UPON THE VIEWS EXPRESSED TO THE VICE PRESIDENT, IT SEEMS TO ME THAT OUR CURRENT POSITION -- ONE OF COMMITMENT TO ZERO-ZERO AS THE OPTIMAL AND MOST MORAL OUTCOME -- BUTTRESSED BY CLEAR OPENNESS TO CONSIDER ANY REASONABLE ALTERNATIVE, IS AS FAR AS WE SHOULD GO AT THIS TIME. IN THE CONTEXT OF REAFFIRMING OUR COMMITMENT TO NEGOTIATE IN GOOD FAITH, IT OCCURS TO ME THAT IT MIGHT BE USEFUL FOR ME TO PUT ON THE PUBLIC RECORD A MORE PRECISE STATEMENT OF THE CRITERIA WE ARE FOLLOWING IN THE TALKS. I WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO DO THIS IN PUBLIC REMARKS NOW SCHEDULED FOR NEXT TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 22. AT THAT TIME I MIGHT SAY THAT THE U.S. IS SETTING FORTH IN GENEVA CERTAIN PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES WHICH MUST SHAPE ANY OUTCOME. THESE CRITERIA INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- (A) EQUAL RIGHTS AND LIMITS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND SOVIET UNION.
- (B) BILATERAL LIMITS WITHOUT COMPENSATION FOR THIRD COUNTRY SYSTEMS.
- (C) APPLICATION OF LIMITS TO INF MISSILES REGARDLESS OF LOCATION (AS A COROLLARY, NO EXPORT OF THE EUROPEAN SECURITY PROBLEM TO THE FAR EAST).
- (D) NO LIMITS THAT WOULD RESULT IN WEAKENING THE U.S. CONTRIBUTION TO NATOS CONVENTIONAL DETERRENCE AND DEFENSE.
- (E) VERIFIABILITY OF TREATY PROVISIONS.

MY REMARKS COULD CONCLUDE WITH A PARAGRAPH SUCH AS THE FOLLOWING:

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THE VICE PRESIDENT NOTED THE STRONG ALLIED SUPPORT FOR THE PROFOUND MORAL OBJECTIVE OF ELIMINATING THE ENTIRE CATEGORY OF LONG-RANGE LAND-BASED NUCLEAR MISSILES. THE VICE PRESIDENT ANNOUNCED TO THE PEOPLE OF EUROPE MY READINESS TO MEET WITH GENERAL SECRETARY ANDROPOV TO SIGN AN AGREEMENT WHICH WOULD ACHIEVE THIS HISTORIC GOAL. HE ALSO REAFFIRMED OUR WILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER SERIOUSLY ANY REASONABLE ALTERNATIVE IDEA FOR PRODUCING THE SAME RESULT. THAT IS OUR PLEDGE, AND I HAVE REINFORCED TO MY NEGOTIATOR, AMBASSADOR NITZE, MY INSTRUCTIONS TO RENEW HIS EFFORTS TOWARD THIS END.

I WOULD DEEPLY APPRECIATE RECEIVING YOUR VIEWS ON THE VALUE OF SUCH A PUBLIC STATEMENT. IT WILL VERY CAREFULLY CONSIDER YOUR COMMENTS AS WELL AS THOSE OF OTHERS VISITED BY THE VICE PRESIDENT.

IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO ME TO HAVE YOUR VIEWS IF POSSIBLE THIS WEEK.

MARGARET, I WAS STRUCK BY YOUR PROPOSAL THAT WE MAKE A NEW INITIATIVE AT SOME FINITE LEVEL OF WEAPONS ABOVE ZERO AND CONSIDERED IT AT SOME LENGTH. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT WE MAY WELL REACH A POINT WHERE SUCH A PROPOSAL WILL BE NECESSARY. TIMING IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT IN THIS REGARD AND FOR THE MOMENT MY FOREMOST CONCERNS ARE FOR THE OUTCOME OF THE GERMAN ELECTION. ON THAT SCORE, HELMUT KOHL IS UNDER PRESSURE FROM THE LEFT TO GO FOR AN INTERIM POSITION NOW. TO THE EXTENT THAT SUCH A PROPOSAL BY US NOW MIGHT BE EXPLOITED BY HIS OPPOSITION AS RESULTING FROM THEIR PRESSURE, I AM DISINCLINED TO EVEN MENTION IT NOW. NEVERTHELESS I VALUE YOUR COUNSEL ON THIS VERY DEEPLY AND WOULD WELCOME YOUR THOUGHTS ON BOTH THE SUBSTANCE AND TIMING ASPECTS.

SINCERELY
RON

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