

OPS U MASTER

01 SUBJECT: DEFENCE - INF Pt 4

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
LONDON

PRIME MINISTER'S

November 14, 1983

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T182/83

Dear Prime Minister:

I have been asked to forward to you the enclosed message from President Reagan regarding INF.

Sincerely,


Edward J. Streater
Charge d'Affaires ad interim

Enclosure:

SECRET

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.,
Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
London, S.W.1.

SECRET

Dear Margaret:

I believe the strong support received from Allied governments and publics for our negotiating position was instrumental in producing the limited movement in the Soviet position outlined by General Secretary Andropov October 26.

Clearly, however, that Soviet position fails to meet our criteria for an acceptable agreement. It would preserve a substantial and threatening Soviet monopoly in LRINF missiles, bar NATO deployments, demand compensation for the independent nuclear forces of third countries, and rejects equal global limits on LRINF missiles. Ambassador Nitze is pressing his Soviet counterpart to explain other important ambiguities and apparent shortcomings in the Soviet position.

Despite the failure of the Soviet Union to move on the crucial issues in the negotiation, I know you share my belief that we should make every reasonable effort to achieve an agreement this year. Based on my own review of the situation, the results of our most recent NATO ministerials, last week's Special Consultative Group meeting -- and Deputy Secretary Dam's consultations in your capital -- I have concluded that it would be useful in the near future to elaborate further on my September initiatives by indicating to the Soviet Union and our own publics a specific equal level of global LRINF deployments which would be acceptable to us.

I have in mind informing the Soviet negotiators that while the U.S. continues to prefer the complete elimination of the entire class of land-based, LRINF missiles, and while we remain prepared to discuss other interim global ceilings on such missiles, the U.S. would be prepared to accept an equal global ceiling of 420 LRINF missile warheads. This would equate to a global limit of 140 of the Soviet three-warhead SS-20 missiles, which is, as you will recall, the number to which they have proposed to limit their SS-20 force in Europe. The U.S. would reiterate its willingness, under such a ceiling, not to offset the entire Soviet global LRINF missile deployment by U.S. deployments of LRINF missiles in Europe. We would also reiterate our willingness to distribute the reductions to be made from planned levels of forces between both the Pershing II ballistic missile and GLCM deployments, in an appropriate manner.

SECRET

I believe such an elaboration of our proposal would be a further demonstration of Allied flexibility and would be an integral part of the framework set out in the March proposal for an interim agreement involving reductions to equal global ceilings of warheads on LRINF missile launchers.

I intend to authorize Paul Nitze to propose this new figure for a global ceiling of 420 warheads at his next meeting with the Soviet negotiator, which will occur early this week. I am not planning to give this move any publicity -- but would have no objection if, in the course of your upcoming Parliamentary debates on INF, you alluded to the fact that the U.S. has taken yet another step in an effort to secure an INF agreement in Geneva.

The readiness of the West to continue negotiating, and to advance constructive new proposals, stands in sharp contrast to the crude threats from the Soviet Union to break off the talks. We must not be distracted by such threats, and we must ensure that our publics understand the efforts we are making to achieve a more stable and secure peace. However, we must be equally clear to all concerned that in the absence of an agreement which meets our criteria, NATO will deploy its LRINF missiles as planned and on schedule. Any delay at this time would undercut the proposals for such an agreement.

Sincerely,

/s/

Ron