

PRIME MINISTERCDP
r/hARMS CONTROL: MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT REAGAN

The Foreign Office have now come forward with a draft message to President Reagan supported by a paper on arms control issues at the next US/Soviet Summit. You may like to read it this weekend (and perhaps discuss some of these issues with Lord Carrington at lunch on Sunday).

We can't possibly send this letter. It has virtually nothing to say.

Percy Cradock and I have both been through the documents and have reservations about both of them. We find the letter to President Reagan excessively ponderous and far from clear. It needs to be recast in something much closer to the style of the message you sent him last autumn (which clearly had a considerable impact on his thinking). We find that the paper is not very well presented. We have become so concerned to identify "legitimate Soviet concerns" that we appear on more than one occasion to be acting as Soviet apologists.

Particularly on the economy: we are not in the business of shoring up the Soviet economy; and the Americans are unlikely to react kindly to suggestions that we are. As to the substance, the ideas in the paper are sound but do not break any new ground. They are in essence simply an expansion of the points in the brief note which you gave to President Reagan last October in New York. It may be that there are not any better ideas. But we should not give up too easily.

Percy Cradock and I would like, if possible, to discuss these papers with you next week. One possibility is a meeting with two or three outside experts in this field: Michael Howard and Lawrence Freedman, for example, to see whether we can get some new perspective.

If you agree, I will seek some time in the diary next week for a meeting with Percy and me.

CDP

Agreed mt

Charles Powell31 January 1986

SECRET

MR POWELL

CDR 341

31 January 1986SDI: MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT REAGAN

1. The following are preliminary comments on Len Appleyard's letter of 30 January and its enclosures.
2. I think it right to send a message to the President now (though a further message may be needed nearer the Summit). I think this should cover not only Geneva and SDI but also compliance and unacceptable features of the latest Gorbachev proposals, (no increase, no transfer). We shall also probably have to deal with the dangers of undue stress on removal of nuclear weapons, bringing the argument back to the more realistic approach of seeking stability and balance at lower levels of forces, nuclear and conventional.
3. As regards the central issue of SDI, for reasons covered in our discussion with the Prime Minister on 20 December, I think we should persevere in our task of finding ways towards a possible US/Soviet understanding, which would not inhibit US research, or eventually, subject to certain conditions, US deployment. The way favoured in the Foreign Office draft is predictability. Not a new idea - we have advocated it before - so have the Americans - but I cannot think of anything better and in pursuing it we should at least be consistent.
4. So far so good. The draft message, however, needs much tightening and page 2, instead of referring simply to the attached paper, should set out more clearly what the main thrust of the paper is. Otherwise the President, who may not get beyond the letter, may never discover what we are driving at.

SECRET

5. As for the attached paper, the intellectual content is sound, but the presentation less so. We have become so concerned to identify 'legitimate Soviet concerns' that we appear on more than one occasion to be acting as Soviet apologists. Particularly on the economy; we are not in the business of shoring up the Soviet economy; and the Americans are unlikely to react kindly to suggestions that we are.

6. We might discuss further when the Prime Minister has had time to read the papers.

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PERCY CRADOCK



APR 11 1986



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

30 January 1986

CDP
1/2.

Dear Charles,

SDI and US Strategy at Geneva:
Message to President Reagan

See DEFENCE: SDI: Part 4.

In your letter of 11 December you commissioned a paper in which UK views on future US strategy, including the handling of the SDI, could be conveyed to the President (as requested by Secretary Shultz during his meeting with the Prime Minister on 10 December).

I now enclose a draft paper along these lines, with a draft covering letter from the Prime Minister to the President. The Foreign Secretary believes strongly that such a letter would be the best means of conveying our views on this all-important issue, and of ensuring that they are taken seriously at the highest level in Washington. Only a personal message from the Prime Minister, with all the authority that will convey, will give the necessary status to the paper. The message would also be the best medium to get across to the President the unacceptable nature of the latest Gorbachev proposals as they relate to the UK national deterrent.

The paper itself is drawn from the minute and enclosure which the Foreign Secretary sent to the Prime Minister on 6 September 1985; and the informal note which you produced after the New York pre-Summit meeting on 24 October and provided to the President's party. It also takes account of recent bilateral discussions with the Americans (notably the Prime Minister's talks with Mr McFarlane, Secretary Shultz and Secretary Weinberger), and exchanges in the NATO Council. It has been prepared in consultation with MOD officials. The covering message from the Prime Minister to the President picks up a number of non-SDI issues which it seems appropriate to mention in the context of the US-Soviet dialogue between now and the next Summit. For ease of reference I enclose a copy of the Prime Minister's message to the President in September last year.

The draft letter and paper both contain references to the new Gorbachev proposals, on which I provided a substantive assessment in my letter of 24 January. HM Ambassador Washington

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has underlined the need to re-emphasise to the President the unacceptable nature of the new Soviet conditions for an INF agreement (no increase, no transfer) of particular relevance to UK security interests. Equally important, the lack of movement in the Soviet position on START and SDI underlines the difficulty of closing the gap with the current US position, especially on the latter. The key SDI point remains the potential linkage between Soviet readiness to negotiate offensive arms reductions and their insistence on SDI research being cancelled. We do not want to put ourselves in the position of insisting to Washington (where there will be a number of sceptics, for one reason or another) that only by handling the twin problems in the way we propose will the dilemma be resolved. The Foreign Secretary takes the view that, for that reason, the (most unlikely) possibility that a deal can be arrived at on nuclear forces without any account being taken of Soviet arguments about SDI being assuaged should be left open. But the point should also be made that, if this does not happen in the near future, the President may wish to consider our alternative (and probably more fruitful) scenario.

In her previous talks with the President and Gorbachev, the Prime Minister has emphasised the dangers of the uncontrolled development of strategic defences on either or both sides. This could lead to further spirals in the arms race stimulated by mutual fears of technology advances, consequent instabilities, and the need to redress perceived imbalances. This fundamental point appears to have been taken in Washington and (less clearly) in Moscow. Nonetheless, another basic difficulty remains: the theoretical attraction of the prospect that technology may be able to provide the ultimate fix to the nuclear threat. This can be expressed in strategic terms as defences eliminating the value and therefore the need for offences; or in moral terms as defences (the shield) being inherently preferable to offences (the sword). In neither case, however, does the Foreign Secretary believe that the premise is sustainable.

There is no reason to be confident that in strategic terms defences will be developed to such an extent that offences will become obsolete; in other words, that both sides will be driven inevitably down rather than up the arms race spiral. Furthermore, the shield/sword analogy is inaccurate, given the nature of nuclear weapons which mean that very small imperfections in the shield cause devastating damage by the sword. There might be

/ something



something in the moral argument, were it possible to distinguish absolutely between defensive and offensive capabilities of given systems. You will recall that Mr Shultz told the Prime Minister in December that the President wanted to establish whether such a distinction could be drawn, for the purposes of a new agreement. US officials have been working on the problem, but we understand in confidence that so far they have concluded that a distinction is not possible. Defensive systems on which they are doing research (unlike traditional defensive elements such as radars) have been found to retain an inherent offensive capability; lasers etc, when capable of destroying many individual targets for defensive purposes, will be able to inflict significant damage in what would traditionally be called the offensive role.

In addition to these broad strategic considerations, Sir Geoffrey Howe attaches much importance to the specific problems which the SDI and equivalent Soviet research raise for our own (and the French) national deterrents. The further the Russians move away from present ABM Treaty constraints and towards some form of effective albeit limited defence against our forces (if not those of the US), the harder it will be to maintain in political and military terms the credibility of those forces. In addition, the US offer to share the SDI technology with the Russians, if implemented, would not only add to our problems. It would in effect exclude any possibility of one of our fundamental conditions for involvement in nuclear arms control - no significant increase in Soviet defensive capability - being met. As has long been recognised, we and the French therefore share an interest in preserving the Treaty and preventing such a Soviet "break-out"; the recent exchanges at Lille, and those we shall be having with the French over the next three weeks, will provide a good basis for developing this important dialogue.

The Foreign Secretary has considered the timing of a substantial message to President Reagan. The risk of irritating those who will in any case be unreceptive to the ideas in the paper is no greater now than at any other time. Meantime, there is little sign, following Mr McFarlane's departure, that any very serious preparation for the 1986 Summit has started. In these circumstances, we should take an early opportunity to contribute what influence we can to the formation of US policy over the next few months.

The line taken in the paper is consistent with the UK approach over the past six months, including the Prime Minister's

/ personal



personal contacts with the President. To that extent it should not be unfamiliar to him and his advisers (although unwelcome to some). Mr Shultz, when he asked for advice on behalf of the President, must have had a reasonable idea of what would be provided. His request therefore suggests that, for his part and perhaps for others, counsel along these lines is expected to be helpful.

Sir Geoffrey Howe concludes that the message and paper should be despatched now, with the aim of influencing the President and strengthening the hand of those among his advisers who want to prepare for a concrete and substantive outcome to the next Summit (which still looks like being around July, though it may be as late as the autumn). A further message from the Prime Minister will almost certainly be desirable, at some point much closer to the date of the Summit.

The draft message to the President refers to the Prime Minister's wish to see the US continue to adhere to its arms control agreements. This is relevant to the timing of despatch. The debate in Washington over continued US compliance is becoming vigorous once more, as the President moves towards another decision on Pentagon recommendations to breach certain elements of the SALT agreements in retaliation for alleged Soviet breaches. We understand that such a decision may be reached in the next few weeks. We have received indications from the State Department that Allied contributions to the debate, particularly from close Allies, would be welcome. You will recall the Prime Minister's key role in securing the right result when the issue was first debated last June. Sir Oliver Wright has suggested the need to be ready to weigh in again. To that extent early despatch of the message, apart from serving our interests with regard to Geneva, could be valuable in a narrower but most important context.

Should however the Prime Minister decide not to despatch a substantive message now on Geneva and SDI, it will still be necessary to impress on the President in some other format the key points about US compliance with earlier agreements and the unacceptable nature of the Gorbachev proposals which relate to the UK national deterrent.

I am sending copies of this letter to Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence) and to Michael Stark (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,
Len Appleyard
 (L V Appleyard)
 Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
 10 Downing Street

DSR 11 (Revised)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM: Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO: President Reagan

Your Reference

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

Following the success of your Geneva meeting with General-Secretary Gorbachev, George Shultz said when he was here in December that you would be interested in my views on how to handle the Geneva issues, and particularly the link with the SDI, ahead of the next meeting.

CAVEAT.....

One key⁷ to the Geneva success, in addition to your skill in dealing with Gorbachev, was Alliance unity in support of your policies. We must preserve that solidarity in the run-up to the next meeting. You can rely on British help. The admirable Alliance consultation which the United States conducted throughout last year will be as necessary as ever.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

It will be right, in dealing with Gorbachev, to insist on balance[?] between the arms control issues and the other important matters - human rights and the main regional problems. Public attention will nonetheless continue to centre on the nuclear issues; Gorbachev's latest proposals show that he is determined to exploit this fact. The Russians will try to constrain both the SDI and the development of US offensive forces. They will do their utmost to split the Alliance. Skilful handling of the space/defence issue will be essential

in order to frustrate them. ?

My own detailed ideas on how best to do this are explained in the enclosed paper. I hope it may contribute to your strategy for the meeting this year. I know you will be working to bring about visible evidence of progress. It will be right to offer reassurance where there are genuine Soviet concerns about the offensive potential of SDI; and to show clearly that strategic stability and balance are prime American concerns. I doubt whether, at least until there is much more mutual trust, the Russians can be persuaded that the offer to share SDI technology provides them with a sufficient basis for their long-term planning purposes.

Deep cuts in the most threatening offensive nuclear weapons must remain a key objective for both strategic and public reasons. There is already common ground between the proposals on strategic force reductions. If the Russians can be driven off their indefensible concept of "strategic", progress may be possible.

I continue to think that to achieve these results the Russians will need to be given a greater sense of reassurance [?] about the likely shape, scope and time-scale of possible defensive developments. And I believe it could be done without restricting SDI research or prejudicing the eventual decision to deploy defences if they are deemed to meet the criteria you have set. The strengthening of the ABM Treaty might provide the key, as part of the dialogue on offensive and defensive forces which you have urged on the Russians; I certainly hope they will treat this dialogue seriously. My paper suggests possible ways of developing this, and also how to handle the Alliance. Timing will be important, avoiding premature offers but not missing

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we can't know

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opportunities if, as I rather believe, Gorbachev will want real progress once his Party Congress is over.

I am confirmed in this belief by the general thrust of his latest proposals. Of course there is an element of propaganda about them. His immobility on both strategic and defensive issues remains clear for all to see. Nonetheless, in the INF area at least, he seems to have made a genuine concession in dropping the demand for "equal security", in the form of "compensation" for British and French forces. In other areas as well there may be new scope for progress. Your initial response seemed to me exactly right. It is necessary to explore, carefully and seriously, any new flexibility in the Soviet negotiating position. I hope that your negotiators in Geneva, and George Shultz when he sees Shevardnadze, will be able to extract further movement from the Russians.

One point I must underline, as I know you ^{would} expect me to do. The new pre-conditions applied to us and the French (no increase, no transfer) would be seriously damaging to national and Alliance security. I am confident that you will continue to reject them as wholly unacceptable, in the same forthright manner as in the past.

We must of course not lose sight of the superficial attraction to Western public opinion of the Gorbachev vision whereby the nuclear threat is eliminated in short order and by ostensibly simple steps. We (and he) know that is not going to happen. Nuclear weapons will continue to serve an essential Western interest, as the key element in our agreed strategy of deterrence and flexible response. But we have to structure our own policies and presentation so to strike the right balance between realism and public /expectations.

expectations. For that reason we cannot too often emphasise the Western dedication, evidenced by your own personal commitment, to the process of negotiated arms control. So often in the past the West has stated our determination to achieve enhanced stability and better balance at lower levels of forces; you and I reaffirmed these ideas at Camp David a little over a year ago. In the face of competing attractions such as those now being touted by Gorbachev, we cannot now be thought to be losing faith in our own arguments for a more realistic approach.

In addition to these key Geneva issues, I hope you will be able to persuade Gorbachev to negotiate seriously in the other arms control fields. Chemical weapons is one where we must press him particularly hard for a complete ban. The draft Treaty George Bush tabled in 1984 remains a sound basis if we can get the verification right: Geoffrey Howe is in touch with George Shultz. Meanwhile, we have recaptured the initiative in MBFR; and prospects are fair in CDE.

In all these areas Treaty compliance and adequate verification remain very important. I recognise your grave concerns about the Soviet record. We will continue to help in pressing them to resolve the doubts which cast a shadow over the future of arms control. Meanwhile you know the importance I attach to our side adhering to agreements. Your decision last June to adhere to SALT restraints was a significant act of statesmanship. The key point is that any Soviet violations must not become the occasion, or the excuse, for violations by the West. My own legal background has always convinced me that agreements must be observed. Our determination to do so is

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a fundamental part of the challenge we pose to the Russians, the challenge which the Western allies must continue to pose if we are to remain true to our own concept of our international role.

In all these matters I have entire confidence that you will continue to bear our standard successfully.

THE GENEVA NEGOTIATIONS AND SDI IN 1986

INTRODUCTION

1. For the first time in a number of years there is a real prospect of significant arms control being achieved. This is a tribute to the Western negotiating stance in the past and to the steadiness of the Alliance nerve. Support for US positions at Geneva will continue to be crucial. The first priority must remain the achievement of radical reductions in offensive nuclear forces.

2. The points of possible guidance to the negotiators in Geneva, which President Reagan provided Gorbachev during their meeting, are a solid basis for progress: the acceleration of the negotiations; work for an appropriately applied 50% reduction in offensive weapons; search for an interim and de-linked agreement on INF; an undertaking that defensive research programmes were and would remain within the limits of the ABM Treaty; and agreement to negotiate concurrently on verification measures.

3. The approach in this paper is based upon an assumption that the Soviet leaders are interested in reaching an agreement within the life-time of the present US Administration. If this assumption is correct - and in any case it needs to be tested - the two key issues over the year ahead are: how to handle the Russians both

in the Geneva negotiations and at the highest level; and how to handle Western public opinion.

HANDLING THE RUSSIANS

4. If an agreement is to be struck, it will be necessary both to take account of justifiable Soviet concerns, and firmly to reject their unjustifiable demands. At present the latter include:

- their definition of "strategic" systems;
- their proposed constraints on nuclear forces of third countries;
- their definition of impermissible modernisation;
- their search for unilateral advantage in their proposals for cruise-missile limitations;
- and their attempt to equate ICBM and SLBM warheads with, for example, freefall air-launched weapons.

5. In addition to these problems, they have expressed concern about the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) research programme. Despite the line Gorbachev took during the Geneva discussions proper, he has subsequently been at pains to emphasize that ending the SDI remains a condition for strategic nuclear force reductions. Although, at least privately, the Soviet leaders may accept that their own long-standing research will continue to be matched by a US research programme, they are still far from accepting the US rationale for the SDI. How then to reconcile such nuclear reductions, and Soviet acceptance of them, with the preservation of the

current research programme in the US?

SOVIET CONCERNS AND COUNTER-ARGUMENTS

6. Three main concerns about the SDI - under the following headings - seem to be genuinely held in Moscow, and not simply advanced for propaganda or negotiating purposes:

- (i) the economic implications;
- (ii) the "offensive nature" of the SDI;
- (iii) the consequences for strategic stability and balance, when considered in conjunction with modernisation of offensive forces on both sides.

7. On the economic side there are indications of Soviet concern at the medium- and long-term resource problems of trying to match US technological advances. At the other end of the spectrum, even the recourse to an increase in offensive forces in order to overwhelm the prospective defence, if they assessed this as a cheaper option, would still have some adverse implications for the economic future of the Soviet Union. The Soviet response is more likely to be a mix of increased offences and accelerated work on defences. Whichever option they chose, the results would be damaging to the rest of their economy.

8. Soviet economic concerns may provide the West with useful leverage in the Geneva negotiations; provided that they can feel more confident within a secure environment,

the economic factor provides a real incentive to agree to constraints and reductions. But this leverage should not be over-estimated. Economic factors do not impinge on Soviet decision-making in the defence area to the same degree as they do in the West. The Soviet Union will continue to devote to their national security what the leadership assess^{es} to be necessary, whatever the impact on other areas. And, in their decisions on defence budgets, the leadership will not have to face the same political pressures that, in the struggles over resource allocation, are imposed on Western governments.

9. It is possible that due account might be taken of this Soviet concern by a re-emphasis and expansion of the commitment President Reagan has already made, to share the results of US efforts with the Soviet Union in due course. It remains however open to doubt whether in practice the Soviet leadership now or in the future will be prepared to base their future military and economic planning on the total confidence that this commitment will be carried through by President Reagan's successors. The Western need to be cautious in the transfer of the most sensitive technology (which would inevitably be involved in the prospective defence programmes) would cast further doubt on the prospects for sharing of Western technology.

10. Soviet objections to the alleged offensive nature of the SDI are apparently based upon three arguments:-

- (i) that the research will lead to the creation of what will be directly offensive systems, capable of destroying a range of targets other than ballistic missiles;
- (ii) that even strictly defensive systems will have offensive consequences. The argument runs that, taken with modernised offences, they can persuade a potential aggressor that a first-strike is safer and therefore a more viable option, since the aggressor will be confident that such systems will provide protection against a ragged retaliatory second-strike. President Reagan acknowledged the possible problem when in his March 1983 speech which launched the SDI he said: "I clearly recognise that defensive systems ... if paired with offensive systems can be viewed as fostering an aggressive policy, and no-one wants that".
- (iii) that the research will improve the overall quality of the US and other Western weaponry, leading to a greater capability to wage and win a military conflict.

11. Over the past months the following arguments have been deployed in response to these Soviet claims. They may need further elaboration and strengthening if the Soviet leadership is to be persuaded to collaborate in a new and far-reaching arms control agreement.

- (a) President Reagan is determined that the current research should be geared towards weapons systems of a purely defensive nature; he has also insisted that they be non-nuclear. The US are looking at their current research programme in the light of these objectives, and to ensure that Soviet concerns in this area are not justified. As a result of this type of study, and of a broader dialogue on the offence/defence relationship, it may be possible to convince the Russians on this score.
- (b) The first-strike argument would only carry real force so long as one or both sides possessed a range and numbers of weapons systems capable of performing such a task. In principle, the process of radical reductions in offensive forces which should complement the current research programmes would in itself be responsible for removing the Soviet concern on this score. Provided that hard-target capable systems were cut back in the way the US have proposed, the danger of defences exacerbating first-strike fears should be diminished. However, as the President's earlier comments indicated, the relationship between offensive and defensive forces may not in practice be so neatly categorized; nor the Russians so easily convinced. Moscow may require more than the promise of radical offensive cuts over an extended period if their concern on this score is to be met.

(c) Little can be said to counter the argument about the improving technology of the West. This is an inevitable, and not necessarily undesirable, result of technology advances across the board, including the development of defensive systems which by its nature will affect a wider range of military activities.

12. Perhaps the most significant Soviet concerns are those that address the potential instabilities in the strategic balance which they may perceive arising from the SDI. These concerns may find expression in such polemical terms as "the expansion of the arms race" or "the US search for nuclear superiority". But behind the rhetoric could lie a real anxiety about the effect of a major development of defences.

13. The first counter-argument is that the US is not trying to establish superiority over the Soviet Union, but to enhance the balance between the two powers. This point has already been expressed as part of the agreement between President Reagan and the Prime Minister at Camp David, and subsequently included in the Geneva Summit communique. Secondly, fears about potential instabilities in the future can be allayed by creating a greater element of confidence about that future.

14. The key question is how to provide the Soviet leaders with adequate confidence that a shift,

from overwhelming dependence upon offensive forces as the basis for strategic stability to a greater mix between offensive and defensive forces, could be managed by both sides in a way which would protect and enhance their own security interests. Without such reassurance, based upon an ability to predict and have confidence in strategic developments over the next decade or so, neither side may be able to enjoy the mutual confidence which will allow further arms control agreements to be reached, either in the near future or at later stages.

A WAY FORWARD

15. The United States have already tried to engage the Soviet Union in a discussion of ways in which such a transition might be managed, beginning with a dialogue on the basic relationship between offensive and defensive forces. This dialogue could create the conditions for a more stable and co-operative relationship, a spring-board from which a new agreement could be launched. As such, it could perhaps act as the key to unlock the present impasse. Soviet resistance to become engaged in such a dialogue, and its implications, has blocked progress. That does not demonstrate that the concept is mistaken. But Soviet resistance may indicate that a greater element of substance needs to be injected if it is to succeed in its far-reaching objective.

16. The basic aim should be to establish a degree of reassurance on both sides, in terms of the shape, scope

and time-scale of possible defensive developments against which offensive force deployments and programme decisions can and should be considered over the next decade.

Formal constraints which would foreclose US options to proceed further with defensive developments within their own timescale, ie the mid-1990s onwards, will be precluded: as President Reagan has said, the US will not accept a Soviet veto. However, that need not exclude an agreed framework which will allow scope for offensive reductions to take place over a measured period against the background of predictable future defences. Thus research into defensive possibilities could continue while an equitable balance of offensive forces at lower levels was established over the next decade. In other words, the achievement of the current US objective: preservation of stable deterrence based on a mix of offensive force reductions now and the possibility of defensive deployments by both sides in the longer-term future.

17. As suggested in the fourth point proposed by President Reagan to Gorbachev at Geneva, the ABM Treaty will continue to play a key role. In order to constrain the Soviet potential for a rapid extension of their current ABM system, and to give both sides confidence that there will be no unpredictable break-out via advanced technologies, the following steps might usefully be taken: --

(a) a political reaffirmation of the commitment by both

sides to the ABM Treaty, and to consultations on steps beyond current research programmes;

(b) the strengthening of the Treaty by clarifying present ambiguities, including:

(i) the dividing line between research and development/testing in a way consistent with President Reagan's decision on the restrictive interpretation of US legal obligations;

(ii) definitions of concepts such as components and sub-components, in such a way as to preserve current research programmes but to remove suspicions of an intention to avoid obligations under the Treaty;
and

(iii) the relationship between ABM systems proper, and other systems which may turn out to have ABM capabilities.

(c) A commitment not to enter particular phases of defensive programmes before certain specified dates related, where appropriate, to the process of reductions in offensive forces.

(d) An extension of the period of notice required for unilateral withdrawal from the present Treaty.

18. It may be objected that the Soviet leaders, including

Gorbachev, have refused to accept in joint statements such as the Geneva Communique Treaty-related language which could imply their acceptance that the current US research programme is compatible with the present ABM Treaty. They may fear such an acceptance would legitimise US research and still leave open the possibility of US abrogation of current legal obligations. They may also be reluctant to concede such acceptance in the belief that it represents their best card, which they will not wish to play until later in the negotiations. Nonetheless, research on both sides will clearly continue. The US cannot be expected to allow the Soviet Union a monopoly in this area. Such research is permitted under the ABM Treaty; it is therefore clear that substantial progress will be impossible if the Russians stick to their present, indefensible position.

19. Although the ABM Treaty will have a central role to play in a deeper dialogue, other factors can also be influential. The US proposal on "Open Labs" can be exploited to provide new reassurance. It could be extended in order to provide a new potential for verification capabilities, the requirement for which was indicated in President Reagan's fifth point to Gorbachev. By demonstrating the extent of US intentions and activities, and those on the Soviet side, mutual confidence and a common sense of predictability could be enhanced. The US proposal for collaboration on fusion research can play a similar role, accustoming the Soviet side to the concept and practice of co-operation with the

US (and perhaps other Western countries) in an area of advanced technology which may eventually lead to far-reaching benefits for all.

20. This paper has tried to address ways in which genuine Soviet concerns can be taken into account in ways that correspond with Western interests and objectives: and in particular with the promotion of a mutually acceptable agreement on offensive force reductions. Logically, the Russians should have an interest in constraining offensive modernisation on both sides. But it is far from certain that they will be prepared to negotiate limits in this area alone if they are unable to achieve the necessary degree of reassurance on the defensive side based on a sense of confidence about the future. During the current round in Geneva, and despite the omens of their latest proposals, their position may shift to suggest that they will drop the linkage. However, if their position does not alter in the near term, then the strategy outlined in the above paragraphs may provide a sounder basis for progress towards the fundamental Western objectives in arms control.

HANDLING PUBLIC OPINION

21. An Alliance consensus has formed around the Four Points agreed between President Reagan and the Prime Minister at Camp David in December 1984. These should continue to serve as the basis for the Western approach. The fuller State Department policy statement of 4 June,

reflecting private decisions by the President, underlined the consistency of the US approach.

22. Against this background, the following elements might now be incorporated into the public treatment of the SDI by the Western Allies:

(a) Research continues at a steady pace. The current US programme will last a long time - perhaps a decade - before substantive decisions on the next steps have to be made. Early or dramatic results should not be expected, especially in areas where the limits of technology are being explored.

(b) It would be premature to try to predict the results at this stage. Nor would it be appropriate to attempt to base new strategies on what they might be.

(c) The US research is designed to create systems of a purely defensive and non-nuclear character. It will be kept within these guidelines.

(d) Research will continue to be compliant with obligations under the ABM Treaty. Programmes will be regularly reviewed in order to ensure compliance.

(e) The formation of defence strategy will remain the responsibility of policy-makers. Progress in technology will contribute to the process, but will not

automatically dictate policy changes.

(f) Whatever the results of research, nuclear weapons will not be eliminated in the foreseeable future. There will continue to be a requirement for credible nuclear deterrent forces in the hands of the West.

(g) Given the key role of nuclear weapons in the defence of the West, nuclear disarmament will have to be matched by the establishment of a balance in conventional forces, preferably at lower levels than now obtain.

DEFENCE

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