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PRIME MINISTER

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The Prime Minister
This codifies the ideas
which been batted about
over the past 6 months.
It is not intended as an
"initiative" but as guidance for
those who discuss these matters
with the
US & other Allies.

Geneva Arms Control Talks: Western Strategy

1. My Private Secretary has written separately in response to the request in your Private Secretary's letter of 31 July for a draft message which you might send to President Reagan on the handling of the November Summit. *COP*
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2. As explained in that letter, the prospects of concrete arms control agreements emerging from the November Summit are not at present good. I therefore believe that we should be cautious about pressing specific ideas about the arms control negotiations on the US Administration at this stage. But, as you yourself told Secretary Weinberger in Washington last July, we must still look to the Summit to provide the Geneva negotiations with a fresh impetus. At the least, the Summit may produce agreement on further high-level meetings designed to advance the Geneva talks. It is therefore in my view none too soon to consider how we can best influence the process in a direction helpful to our interests, and how to make the best of our on-going exchanges with the Americans on this subject.
3. Against this background, I asked officials to work up some ideas which might be developed in the course of Alliance consultations about the Geneva negotiations. The attached paper, which has been prepared in consultation with MOD officials, and with whose thrust I understand Michael Heseltine to be generally content, builds upon thinking which was initially reflected in the briefing prepared for your visits to Washington in December and February and later elaborated in further contacts with the Americans. It is not a blueprint for a US/Soviet agreement,

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rather a quarry of negotiating possibilities which can be drawn upon in briefing for future exchanges over the coming months. The suggestions made in the paper, if pursued by the Americans, would certainly help to impel the negotiations in the direction of the longer-term strategy we hope to see them develop.

4. The paper does not address the separate chemical weapons ban negotiations in Geneva. Officials have as instructed been discussing with the Americans the major problem of the contentious Article X of the US draft Treaty. Resistance on the part of the US Department of Defence to any amendment to the present US concept of "no refusal" inspection has meant little progress has been made. I may need to consult you at a later stage if the impasse, which has blocked possible progress at Geneva, continues. But at this stage I do not believe a specific reference to this point in your message to the President is merited.

5. I am sending a copy of this minute to Michael Heseltine and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

(GEOFFREY HOWE)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
6 September 1985

GENEVA ARMS CONTROL TALKS : WESTERN STRATEGY

Introduction

1. This paper addresses the state-of-play in the current Geneva talks, and suggests an approach over the coming months which would be consistent with Western interests and could assist the negotiations to make progress. It reflects and tries to elaborate upon ideas which have already been addressed in bilateral contacts with the Americans, both at Ministerial and official level. There is an obvious limit to the extent to which even the closest Allies can exert a decisive influence over US strategy. Nonetheless, the following points are put forward as a starting-point for further consultations with them, and perhaps other close Allies.

CURRENT POSITION

2. The strategic balance has altered since the SALT I agreement was signed. The shift has been in favour of the Soviet Union, although the US continues to lead in some significant areas. The extent of this change should not be exaggerated. The Scowcroft Report of 1983 recognised, and President Reagan agreed, that there was no immediate danger to strategic stability, and concern about the vulnerability of US ICBM forces was alleviated by the fact that the Soviet Union could not eliminate US ICBM fields, submarines and bomber bases simultaneously. The Report recognised at the same time the importance of modernisation programmes, in order to strengthen all three legs of the US strategic triad.

3. New and complex issues have been introduced into the strategic equation in recent years, notably the long-range cruise missile (particularly when based on submarine platforms) and the mobile ICBM. Both will need addressing in the new round of strategic arms talks. Nonetheless, while in 1983 the positions of the two super-powers in a START negotiation were ostensibly far apart, possible avenues of accommodation between them could even then be identified. Recent developments suggest that there remain real chances for progress in this area. In the field of intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF), such relative optimism would not be easily justified. The Soviet Union apparently remains wedded to the principle that they will not accept the stationing of

new US missiles of this type in Europe.

4. The renewed emphasis on ballistic missile defences as a factor in the strategic equation, engendered by the SDI and concern about Soviet research, has imposed a qualitative change on the traditional debate, and added a special complication. Although radical restructuring of the forces on either side would take many years, the notion of sharp cuts in current offensive forces is now accepted at least in principle by both sides. But it is most unlikely that either would accept such cuts so long as the future of strategic defences is allowed to run free. And US insistence on deep offensive reductions is matched by their present determination to accept no long-term constraints on SDI research.

5. A wider and more basic problem is the enduring difference between US and Soviet perceptions. The US continue to see a need to redress the long-standing Soviet advantage in a particular type of strategic forces (ICBMs), while seeking to avoid tight constraints on new technologies in which they still lead over the Soviet Union. On the other hand, having made strenuous and largely successful efforts to catch up with the Americans over the past two decades, the basic Soviet interest could now be said to be the maintenance of the status quo in terms of the strategic balance.

6. There is a further aspect to this difference between US and Soviet perceptions. Their time-scales for decision-making on procurement of new weapons systems have never been identical and continue to be out of step. It has become progressively harder to identify a moment at which successful talks could codify a de facto balance, especially when the factors relevant to any agreement have increased in complexity and sensitivity. Each side perceives itself as about to be overtaken by the other, and as a result sets in motion a series of procurement decisions whose results only become evident in a number of years. Such decisions are generally irrevocable, but in the meantime they serve as an impetus to the other side to take another step down the modernisation track.

SOVIET/US VIEWS

7. Currently the Soviet leaders appear dedicated to two main objectives: the constraint of the US technological potential to develop strategic defences, and limits on new US offensive forces. At this stage the Russians show no signs of having decided to negotiate seriously. For the time being they probably see sufficient potential to undermine US positions by playing on weaknesses in Alliance unity and by mobilising public pressure both from Europeans and within the US through a mixture of public negotiating "initiatives" and attacks on US policy. An eye-catching move in connection with the November Summit, which could include elements of genuine attraction to the US, cannot be excluded; but this is likely to stop short of providing a real breakthrough at Geneva. Soviet thinking will continue to reflect security over-insurance and conservative military assumptions. They will want to ensure that any steps towards the US taken in order to achieve constraints on SDI will not seriously jeopardise key elements in their offensive weapons modernisation programme.

8. In Washington the Administration and the President remain firmly committed to pursuing the arms control track. Nonetheless, recent evidence of what the Americans perceive as Soviet non-compliance with their arms control obligations gives them cause for serious concern, not least because of the apparent Soviet unwillingness to address Western anxieties seriously (although there have been some signs of readiness to justify how they abide by the rules through limited discussion in the SCC). The issue has been elevated into a debate within Washington about the future of arms control, with some wishing to use the debate to destroy the whole process, especially as it applies to the ABM Treaty and the SALT agreements. The President's decision on 10 June to stay within current constraints does not mean the end of the battle, which is likely to flare up again just before the Summit in November. Any attempt to impose firm constraints on future US offensive deployments and, more sensitive, the further evolution of strategic defences will meet with stern opposition. The Administration have stated that they will not accept a Soviet veto on such programmes, although this is not the same as refusing an agreed series of constraints; and of course the attitude of future US Administrations cannot reliably be

forecast. So long as the Russians show few signs of interest in substantive discussions, however, there will be little US disposition to grapple with the tough issues which a more flexible negotiating position for Geneva would involve.

PROSPECTS

9. Against this background the present prospects for success at Geneva are not encouraging. There has until now been no reason to argue for the US to give thought to new negotiating positions, let alone to launch new US initiatives. Public pressure remains at a low level, and a significant shift in negotiating positions would have been inappropriate. The immediate priority ^{has} ^{been} to maintain Alliance cohesion in the face of Soviet propaganda tactics. They should not be allowed to force constraints on the West away from the negotiating table.

10. Nonetheless, a new negotiating concept takes time to develop. If the US is to be able to move swiftly when the moment is ripe with the prospect of full Allied support, then it is no longer premature to start injecting into US thinking some more detailed ideas for ways in which the negotiations could usefully develop. Such an approach has to recognise that the US alone is at the negotiating table: but that the outcome of the negotiations will profoundly affect the strategic interests of the Allies.

h But we shd. not apparently suggest this to the President!

11. The answer may lie in a deliberate effort

- (i) to limit the duration of arms control agreements,
- (ii) expand the scope of agreements in terms of weapons and of forces covered; but
- (iii) to avoid linkage between agreements unless demonstrably essential and/or advantageous to the West.

Some of these are obvious, while others do this.

The arms control process has always struggled to catch up with technological developments, which continually overtake agreements and render them increasingly irrelevant. To recognise that arms control and technology must interact is both realistic and may point a useful way ahead. If such an approach is adopted (and it has already been hinted as the most fruitful approach by some senior US

officials) it could be composed of the following elements.

NEGOTIATING POSSIBILITIES

12. An interim regime could be constructed to incorporate further constraints on offensive forces, beyond those already imposed by the present SALT agreements. Such a core agreement might last for perhaps the next decade. It would be based on a compromise between the US requirement for reductions in throwweight and numbers of warheads, and the original Soviet insistence on limiting only launchers. Signs of Soviet and US flexibility on such a compromise are beginning to emerge. The agreement would also need to:

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general
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- address future modernisation programmes (perhaps through one of the variations on the approach known as "build-down", where old systems are replaced by fewer but better systems);
 - establish acceptable conditions for ICBM mobility;
 - address the long-range cruise missile problem;
 - achieve reduced levels of LRINF forces on each side.

Such an agreement could be represented as establishing "an interim framework of truly mutual restraint on strategic offensive arms" the terms in which President Reagan defined near-term US aims in his 10 June statement on SALT limits.

13. The existing regime of restraints should be maintained over the same period. This would need to contain some important sub-elements:

- (a) a continuing commitment would be needed to maintain the SALT regime and its accompanying limitations, coupled with a vigorous effort to resolve compliance issues through co-operation within the US/Soviet bilateral Special Consultative Committee (SCC). The US readiness to follow this path until now is most welcome and should be encouraged;

(b) Particular care should be taken to keep under review one item of special military significance - the mobile ICBM (exemplified in the case of the Soviet Union by the SS-X 25 and of the US by the proposed Midgetman). The timetable for the introduction of both systems may conceivably make it possible to accommodate them within future reductions, although the more advanced Soviet development of the SS-X-25 will make a direct balance hard to negotiate. The effect upon the strategic balance and upon strategic stability of mobile systems (which reduce the threat to each side of a successful first strike by the other) needs to be weighed against the military disadvantages of the targetting difficulties to which such systems give rise;

✓(c) the ABM Treaty should continue to be given full political support and its erosion prevented. This would involve in particular a clarification of the borderline between research and development (in terms of the Treaty); and the meaning of critical but ambiguous terms such as "an ABM component", "an ABM sub-component" and "testing in an ABM mode". Further understandings might also be necessary on the potential ABM applications of surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) or anti-tactical ballistic missiles (ATBMs). The purpose of this activity would be on the one hand to constrain a Soviet potential for the rapid extension of conventional ABM systems; and to establish on the other the basis for a clear distinction between the research and development phases of both the SDI and the equivalent Soviet programme.

(d) A further and useful elaboration of this concept would involve commitments not to enter particular phases of defensive programmes before certain specified dates. An extension to 5 years of the period of notice required to withdraw from the Treaty has been canvassed as a means of reaffirming the stability of the Treaty regime. This seems likely to run into determined opposition in Washington. Nonetheless, if agreed arrangements were reached to govern offensive and defensive developments over a significant period of time, it should not prove impossible to secure at least informal agreement on such

an extension.

14. In summary, the aim would be to establish an element of predictability, in terms of possible defensive developments, against which offensive force deployments and programme decisions must be matched over the next decade. The key point here is not to try to establish any form of formal constraint which would foreclose US options to proceed further with defensive developments within their own timescales, ie the mid-1990s onwards; but to achieve sufficient inhibitions to allow room for offensive reductions to take place in the meantime against the background of the predictable shape and scope of future defences. The net result would be to allow research to continue on both sides on defensive possibilities, while establishing an equitable balance of offensive forces over the next decade; in other words, to achieve the objective the US Administration proclaims: preservation of stable deterrence based on a mix of offensive force reductions now and the possibility of defensive deployments in the longer-term future.

15. Finally, a further attempt should be made to reach some sort of negotiated agreement on the testing and deployment of anti-satellite (ASAT) systems, and in particular a ban on high level ASATs. Earlier studies by UK officials concluded that there could well be advantage to the West in the sort of time-limited agreements covering certain elements of anti-satellite activity which could complement a broader regime covering both offensive and strategic defensive forces. Their continued development puts at risk the present key strategic assets (in the form of communications and surveillance satellites) on which the security of both sides rests. There is admittedly a difficulty in ASAT constraints, in that there is a degree of complementarity between ASAT and BMD systems. Nonetheless, the relevant time-scales for deployment differ sufficiently to allow for an interim measure of constraint on the former without jeopardising the prospects for developing the latter. ASATs are already deployed by the Soviet Union; and likely to be shortly deployed by the US. An agreement which limited

both sides to the present or predicted deployments over a time-scale of the next decade and banned the testing or deployment of high-level ASATs over a similar, extendable period, would introduce an element of both stability and predictability, which could only be helpful to the preservation of stable deterrence.

Foreign Policy. "East West Relations" Pt 5



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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

10 September 1985

GENEVA ARMS CONTROL TALKS:
WESTERN STRATEGY

The Prime Minister has noted without comment the Foreign Secretary's minute of 6 September on this subject.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

(CHARLES POWELL)

L.V. Appleyard, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office..

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OFFICIAL TEXT

August 21, 1985

UNITED STATES INFORMATION SERVICE, U.S. EMBASSY, 55/56 UPPER BROOK STREET, LONDON W1A 2LH

CHANGE IN SOVIET APPROACH NEEDED FOR ARMS CONTROL PROGRESS

(Text: McFarlane on US-Soviet Relations)

Santa Barbara -- Without a radical change in the Soviet approach to security issues, President Reagan's national security affairs adviser says, it will be difficult to reach "even incremental improvements" in relations with Moscow.

Robert McFarlane, addressing two civic clubs in Santa Barbara, California, August 19, declared that President Reagan "has committed himself to meet the Soviet Union halfway in developing responsible solutions to outstanding problems." But he warned that without a change in Soviet thinking, whatever improvements are made "will be much less likely to gather momentum, to build on each other." Reagan is vacationing at his ranch near Santa Barbara.

McFarlane told the clubs that Moscow's attitude on regional matters such as the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Kremlin support for terrorist nations such as Libya, and Moscow's backing of Cuba raises questions about Soviet motivation. "It makes improvements in other areas" of the relationship, he said, "more difficult. It all but guarantees that any small steps forward we may be able to take will be isolated, hard to preserve, and perhaps devalued in advance by both sides."

Following is the text of McFarlane's remarks:

Before long President Reagan will meet in Geneva with the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mr. Gorbachev.

The meeting comes at an historic moment as measured by the enormity of change that has taken place in the West and the apparent potential for change in the East. In the past four years here in the United States, and more broadly in the west, we have experienced a political, economic and social renewal of historic proportion.

Four years ago we seemed paralyzed by the moral and institutional aftermath of Vietnam and Watergate; our economic problems seemed beyond our comprehension with solutions nowhere in site; the military balance had shifted dramatically against us and its effects were reflected in growing Soviet influence from Angola to Ethiopia to Indochina, Afghanistan and Nicaragua. Our alliances were severely shaken and leaders from London to Paris to Moscow were asking whether the United States had lost its way, and whether we could regain our ability to play a positive role of leadership in international affairs.

Today the picture is dramatically different. President Reagan has set our economy solidly on the road to recovery. Our foundation of strength is being restored. Soviet expansion has been checked and even rolled back on a tiny island in the Caribbean. In sum, America has regained its moorings; she is leading and peace is more secure.

On the Soviet side of the ledger, the picture is less clear; but surely the possibility for a more promising future exists. A new Soviet leader is in place -- a man unencumbered by the vicissitudes of primary elections and campaigns; and therefore a man who may endure through the turn of the century.

Here in the United States -- a nation of optimists led by the greatest optimist in our history -- we hope for the best. We are sobered by the knowledge that seldom has our optimism been vindicated. And yet it endures. But as we set out on what we hope will be a more promising period, we should proceed forthrightly, honestly stating both our purposes and our misgivings, hiding neither our hopes nor our fears.

This is a time of considerable flux and introspection in the Kremlin. They deserve to know from whence we are coming if they are to reach coherent decisions. Perhaps by stating some of our frustrations we can shape their thinking. That is my purpose today.

It's often said that the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union is close to immutable, and that our job is not to end it but merely to keep it under control. Some say that since 1945 there's been only one way to end it, and that it's too terrible to contemplate. But for many others, the inevitability of competition is not caused simply by the gruesome facts of the nuclear age. It has much deeper, older and -- as some see it -- even more ineradicable causes. For some, de Tocqueville's famous predictions 150 years ago have taken on a folkloric, if not intellectual legitimacy.

Anyone who works on the concrete issues dividing these countries knows that practical policy decisions are never made on the assumption that a fundamental change in Soviet-American relations is anywhere in sight. To the contrary, we have to take competition as a given and do the best that we can. But this should not become an excuse for not thinking about what is at the heart of our disagreements. I have studied, reflected and worked on international affairs for many years, and no one has ever convinced me that there is some law of nature requiring two populous and powerful nations halfway around the world from each other to be locked in permanent hostility. If they are hostile, it's probably for reasons other than their two-ness, their populousness, their powerfulness, or their distance from each other.

I think the real forces of conflict are things that can -- and do -- change. If there is a military rivalry between two great countries, it's caused less by the arms themselves than by the way the two sides think about military security. If there is a geopolitical rivalry, it's not caused by the facts of geography but by the way the two sides define their political security and their other interests. If there is a clash of ideas -- well, not even ideologies are permanent. Some political ideologies are a source of mere boundless energy and creativity, but others are true prisons, confining not only those who believe in them but many who don't. Nothing can hinder human energy and creativity like a bad idea. But, as I have said, it is our good fortune that ideas are not immortal. They are subject to what is sometimes called "reality therapy" -- the test of time and experience. Sometimes, with any luck, they can be cast off. Mental prison walls do come down. As rare as it seems in this century of institutionalized fanaticisms, people do change their mind.

We know from the statements of Soviet leaders that these days, many existing policies are getting especially close scrutiny. Certainly the test of time and experience has been a very harsh one. General Secretary Gorbachev himself recently called for "a fresh look at all the shortcomings, negative phenomena, all sorts of blunders." He made clear that reevaluation has been long deferred. In the future, in his words, "more order will be required, more scientific inquiry, more major important decisions, and so forth. Overall, it will require immense mobilization of creative forces, and the ability to restructure and conduct matters in the country in a new way, not only in the economy but also in the social sphere, and that of culture, ideology, and all spheres."

These seem like hopeful words, but perhaps you will agree that those of us in the West, on the outside, have a hard time knowing how to interpret them. We cannot know whether a process of comprehensive change is underway or not. In the past, the appearance of change has been no more than a mask behind which systemic rigidities endure. Each new leader -- however strongly he might favor change -- has found that having risen by following the rules of the system, he becomes captive to it. If such a process is beginning, it will be difficult to discern, we may or may not be able to make a contribution to it, and we cannot predict its outcome. But inasmuch as it does greatly affect us, it is certainly appropriate for us to suggest the kinds of questions that we will be asking about it -- the questions whose answers will make a large difference in our own policy. I assume that Soviet officials would also like to know our thinking as to what kinds of change would do the most to make Soviet-American relations more stable. We sometimes hear the Soviet complaints that they don't know what we're after, so let us be clear.

Let me begin with military issues. I have said that the wheels of military rivalry are not set in motion by arms themselves but by the thinking that governs the arms, by the political doctrines, decisions and interests that are reflected in the organization, shape and size of a military machine. In recent years many Soviet decisions have been quite troubling to us, suggesting an outlook on security issues that is very different from our own. By this I don't mean simply that Soviet military spending is so high -- although it is. But, that isn't what concerns me here. I want to call your attention to something different -- to decisions that resume or initiate competition in an area where there hadn't been any at all.

Take the case of chemical weapons. In this century, these weapons have created a revulsion and horror in western publics, second only to nuclear weapons. It was a horror, moreover, that our governments were able to act on quite successfully. The Geneva protocol of 1925 was for many years one of the most widely supported and observed arms control agreements on record. As a result, our own capabilities, stocks and training experienced a long decline. We haven't produced chemical weapons in 15 years. Unfortunately, this was not paralleled on the Soviet side, whose major efforts became impossible to ignore. For this reason, we have now proposed to modernize our own CW program. We'd rather not do this, and Congress also would rather not, and we've tried to head it off. In April 1984 President Reagan sent Vice President Bush to Geneva with proposals to negotiate a complete ban on chemical weapons, but since then the talks have not made progress.

This record suggests a specific question: what has the Soviet side gained from reviving this competition? Particularly now, as

chemical weapons are being made (cheaply) and used (lethally) by small countries, isn't it imperative that we find the verifiable controls?

I wish this were an isolated case. But we see the same pattern in the issue that dominated Soviet-American arms control talks, as well as public controversy, during the president's first term -- medium-range nuclear missiles. Again, a bit of history may be useful. You may know that over many years the United States scaled back its medium-range missile capabilities in Europe; the Soviets did not. During the fifties and sixties, many plans were developed within the Western alliance to counter the Soviet edge, but they were abandoned one after another, for a series of different reasons. A sense of urgency about the problem began to subside with the emergence of detente in the late 1960s. And the specifically military worry created by enlarged Soviet missile advantage was softened over time: The Soviet Union seemed to be letting its large, medium-range missiles grow old.

But then an odd thing happened. The Soviets began instead to add to their force, introducing the SS-20, one of the most formidable weapons ever fielded by the East. To make a long story short, the result was a NATO decision that, after all, these new Soviet deployments had to be answered. In 1983, after two fruitless years of trying to negotiate a solution to the INF problem, the West began to put its own missiles in place.

INF isn't in the headlines much these days, and there may be an analytical advantage in this. We now have a little distance on this sequence of events, and a responsibility to judge them critically. What happened? An East-West dispute took shape on an issue that some thought had gone away. Two questions come to mind that I still find hard to answer: What can the Soviet Union imagine that it got out of re-igniting this competition? What did it get out of several years of one-sided negotiating positions, premised on an expectation of Western disunity?

Finally, let me take up the military question that is in the headlines -- the relation between offensive and defensive strategic systems. As you may know, in 1972, the United States and Soviet Union agreed that neither side should build a defense against ballistic missiles. The Soviet Union has since built and maintained the defensive system around its capital allowed by the agreement; the United States has not. Both sides have pursued research, as the treaty permits; the Soviet research effort has been extremely large.

Now, while keeping strictly within the limits of the ABM Treaty, President Reagan has proposed the Strategic Defense Initiative, to re-investigate the feasibility of defenses. Two reasons above all others produced this decision -- first, the past decade's enormous Soviet offensive buildup, which has put the survivability of our forces in question, and secondly, the president's desire to see whether the fragility of the nuclear balance can be reduced by moving us away from a morally unsatisfactory doctrine of nuclear retaliation. As the president has said many times, this is one of the most hopeful possibilities of our time. We believe it could contribute to both sides' security, especially if we make progress in the Geneva arms talks. We have hopes in these talks to explore each side's thinking on how to stress strategic stability. But what has been the Soviet response? Soviet public statements, with which many of you will be familiar, simply propose something we believe is non-negotiable and non-verifiable -- a ban on research even as they pursue the largest research program on earth. And in a masterpiece ofchutzpah

they insist repeatedly that ours is a program designed to acquire a first-strike capability.

In short, we're having a lot of trouble establishing a real dialogue. And bearing in mind the other examples I've cited, we have to face some disturbing questions. Will the Soviet Union start to approach this matter as a potentially cooperative one or approach everything on a zero-sum basis? The other instances -- chemical and INF -- suggest that these all-or-nothing tactics don't serve the Soviets well.

Obviously, a great deal hangs on the answers to these questions. The president has committed himself to meet the Soviet Union halfway in developing responsible solutions to outstanding problems. I can restate that commitment today. But without some change in the Soviet approach to security issues, in fact in the thinking that underlies it, I fear that even incremental improvements will be extremely hard to reach. And they will be much less likely to gather momentum, to build on each other.

The issues of Soviet-American rivalry, of course, go beyond military matters. There is the critical question of how each side defines its interest in the world. Many in the West are looking for signs of change in the Soviet Union's thinking on international political issues. Some students of the problem argue that it is now what they call a "mature" power; that it is not guided by Lenin's old dictum, "The worse, the better;" that it is not so deeply driven by an ideological animus against the West; and that it need not leap at every opportunity to hamstring American policy for its own sake.

These would obviously be important changes. How should we decide whether they are true? Obviously, by practical measures. As these matters come to be discussed in Moscow, the Soviet leadership should know that we have practical measures like Afghanistan, Cuba and Libya in mind.

Take Afghanistan. Today 120,000 Soviet soldiers there are waging the most brutal war now underway on the face of the Earth. For what? It's not so easy to say. Some in the West believe that the Soviet Union instigated the 1978 communist coup that preceded the 1979 invasion. As you may know, Soviet officials and commentators always disassociate themselves from this, and explain that they had nothing to do with it. We can't know, but we can ask questions about Soviet policy to clarify its objectives.

If the Soviets truly propose to disassociate themselves from it, to indicate that they have no interest in fomenting such events, then why are 120,000 troops in Afghanistan protecting the small number of people who made that coup from the opposition of the Afghan people? Soviet officials say that they need a friendly Afghanistan on their border. We can perhaps understand this desire, but how was friendship to be built? Our proposition to the Soviet leadership is that their present policy is only increasing the Afghan people's hatred. Does the Soviet side have a non-military strategy for dealing with that problem? If so, they will find us ready to help put it in place.

Or take Libya. There are few, if any, governments today whose policy as a whole could be better described as, "the worse, the better." Colonel Qaddafi is an heir to that tradition of seeking to provoke or benefit from trouble and instability. That being the case, Americans have to ask some serious questions about Soviet support for him. A small example will suffice: With all the problems of terrorism in that part of the world, what good is served by providing Soviet submarines to Qaddafi? Or, given the war in the Persian Gulf,

troubled so far

which seems to drag on endlessly, what good is served by giving missiles to Colonel Qaddafi which then find their way to Iran and finally land in downtown Baghdad, the capital of a country that has a friendship treaty with the Soviet Union? Is this what friendship treaties mean? Americans are entitled to ask with utmost seriousness: If Soviet policy is not, "the worse, the better," then shouldn't the Soviet Union's relationship with Colonel Qaddafi be very different?

Finally, take Cuba. The price tag of Soviet support for Cuba is calculated by our experts as something like 5,000 million dollars a year. As a benchmark of sorts, that's about as much as we provide to Egypt and Israel combined -- and together their population is five times that of Cuba. This must be, in other words, a massively important commitment of Soviet policy. But what is it a commitment to? To us, frankly, it seems that the principal benefit is in the offensive purposes to which Cuba -- Cuban troops, Cuban advisors, Cuban bases -- can be put.

The record of Cuban policy in the past 10 years is an extraordinary one, and it is all the more extraordinary because it did not have to be this way. For the first 10 years or so after the missile crisis of 1962 Cuba was not a major irritant in Soviet-American relations. Now it is. Its military personnel are in the thick of wars on two continents, and despite international pressures from many directions, show no signs of returning home. The pattern is something like what I sketched in talking about chemical weapons, or missiles in Europe. The Soviet Union has reignited a source of conflict. Has it benefited by doing so? We hope this question is being asked in Moscow.

There should be no doubt about the ability of the United States to deal with these difficulties when they are placed in our way. That's not the issue. Naturally, we have to pay more attention to the security of Pakistan than we did some years ago, but we can do it. Similarly, we now have to pay more attention to the security of El Salvador than we used to, but we can manage that, too. And we don't look the other way at the problems that Libya creates for neighboring countries, among them some good friends of the United States.

The question that remains, however, concerns the broader impact of all this on Soviet-American relations and whether this is the impact that the Soviet side wants. It certainly sends us loud messages that can't be ignored about the motivations of Soviet policy. It makes improvements in other areas more difficult. It all but guarantees that any small steps forward that we may be able to take will be isolated, hard to preserve, and perhaps be valued in advance by both sides.

None of this, I might add, is much changed by hearing from the Soviet side of their responsibility to help other "socialist" countries. For us, of course, that comes down to helping other governments oppress their people. We believe that Soviet-style socialism has brought hardship to and restricted the potential of many great nations. That is our deeply held view. No doubt the Soviet leadership disagrees, but let's not leave the matter there. I hope they will at least ponder a different question. That is, whether such Soviet involvements can be justified even in their own terms. Here in the West, for example, we remember General Secretary Andropov's comments about the difference between building socialism and merely proclaiming it.

We hope that such skepticism can be a source of doubt about whether the Soviet policies I've been describing have really served their interests.

So far, I have dealt with the political-military issues that trouble our relations. They almost always dominate the agenda of problems between us. They are what our negotiators focus on. There are many more issues I could touch on -- from Poland to nuclear proliferation. But, as important as all these are, they are not the area in which the most momentous changes could take place. Frankly, the most durable and far-reaching kind of improvement in Soviet-American relations -- and probably in the Soviet Union's relations with almost every country of the world -- would be created by events inside the Soviet Union.

When Americans raise the issue of human rights with Soviet officials, they know what to expect. It is the Soviet position that we are treading on, quote, "internal matters." The Soviet side, by now, is also quite accustomed to what we usually say in return -- that many of these matters involve commitments made in the Helsinki Final Act. We're talking about obligations that the Soviet Union freely assumed.

This is an important point. Treaties signed have to be taken seriously. But it's not the main reason Americans take an interest in human rights and democracy. And the reason isn't just that we believe in morality in politics. Or that our hearts go out to Soviet Jews who wish to emigrate, and can't. No -- it's that real progress in that direction would have a fundamental effect on the international system, on the way we do business with each other.

When President Reagan was in China in April 1984, he gave a speech that must surely rank as one of the most candid ever made by a leader visiting a country with a different political system. He put his message simply: "Trust the people." For us, the meaning of a phrase like that is obvious, but many of the ideologies of the 20th century rest on suspicion of the people, on the conviction that they cannot handle their own affairs. Since that's the case, let me say briefly what trusting the people means in practical terms. Let's leave aside sentiments and turn to some specifics. What can the people do if they are trusted?

First, only the people can revolutionize agricultural productivity. All other approaches are hopelessly irrelevant. Over 20 years ago, the communist party of the Soviet Union accused the Chinese party of believing that "if a people walks in rope sandals and eats watery soup out of a common bowl -- that is communism." No such sarcastic accusation could be made today. In the past seven years, agricultural productivity in China has actually doubled. And Prime Minister Gandhi, during his recent visit here, spoke to us of the gains made in Indian agriculture through increased incentives. Today India is a net exporter of grain. How? The people have done it.

Second, only the people can lead the scientific-technological revolution. They are leading it in those countries enjoying the most rapid economic growth today. No ministry of central planning can lead it. In the United States, the watchword of change in the structure of our economy is decentralization -- the spectacular growth of new companies offering new products in a field like information technology. In the speech in China that I just quoted, President Reagan said, "Make no mistake: those who ignore this vital truth will condemn their countries to fall farther and farther behind..."

Finally, only the people can invigorate national culture. I mean culture in both the low- and the high-brow sense. I mean, as it happens, both the entertainment and the enlightenment that are captured by the term "Chautauqua." I mean arts and letters, music and

film. Only the people can build national self-heightened esteem and self-heightened expression out of malaise. No ministry of culture can do it.

Now every people will perform these tasks in its own way. Cultures come out differently. For all the changes underway, China remains distinctly Chinese and recognizably socialist. But, in every case, to succeed at the tasks I've mentioned, the people have the same basic needs. They need to make more of their own decisions, they need to act on their own brainstorm, they need to be able to learn from each other, they need to know the basic facts of their own economic and social life. They need to shake off an institutionalized secrecy that the rest of the world finds absurd and self-defeating. They need to know simple things, like the size of last year's wheat harvest, and big things, like what's going on in the world at large. They need to be able to leave, if they want. If they are denied all these, they cannot do very much at all.

To the Soviet leadership, I would say that these things are not our romantic ideals. Rather, they are the practical requirements of some of your own goals. And of one of our goals as well, for they are the key to transforming East-West relations.

In conclusion, let me return to the practical perspective with which I began: we don't plan policy in the expectation of transforming East-West relations. We seek incremental improvements, and we don't dismiss their value. The Soviet leadership should know that President Reagan is ready -- patiently, methodically -- to take small steps forward, and that we will respond in proportion to what we see from them.

But at this time of questioning in the Soviet Union, it seems to me that we should ask more of ourselves and of the Soviet side as well. We should recognize that those who seek only small improvements often end up with none. We know cosmetic improvements when we see them, and we know the meaning and the value of major change. We should ask those questions and insist on the answers that point the way.
