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October 7, 1986

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ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR JOHN M. POINDEXTER

THROUGH: JACK F. MATLOCK *JFM*

FROM: R. SCOTT DEAN

SUBJECT: Geneva Meeting Records

The edited records of the meetings in Geneva between the President and Gorbachev are at Tabs A through I.

A Memorandum to the President is at Tab I in case you wish to forward these memoranda for his review.

RECOMMENDATION:

That you sign the Memorandum at Tab I forwarding the Geneva Memcons to the President.

Approve _____

Disapprove _____

Attachments:

- Tab I Memo to the President
- Tab A Memcon - First Private Meeting, Nov. 19
- Tab B Memcon - First Plenary Meeting, Nov. 19
- Tab C Memcon - Second Plenary Meeting, Nov. 19
- Tab D Memcon - Second Private Meeting, Nov. 19
- Tab E Memcon - Dinner by the Gorbachev's, Nov. 19
- Tab F Memcon - Third Private Meeting, Nov. 20
- Tab G Memcon - Third Plenary Meeting, Nov. 20
- Tab H Memcon - Fourth Plenary Meeting, Nov. 20
- Tab I Memcon - Dinner by Reagan's, Nov. 20

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DECLASSIFIED
White House Guidelines, August 28, 1997
By *CAS* NARA, Date *6/25/02*

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

SYSTEM II
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INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: JOHN M. POINDEXTER
SUBJECT: Geneva Meeting Records

You may wish to review the records of your meetings with General Secretary Gorbachev in Geneva to refresh your memory as to his style, techniques and the order in which he raised topics. The records are attached in chronological order.

Attachments:

Tab A	Memcon - First Private Meeting, Nov. 19
Tab B	Memcon - First Plenary Meeting, Nov. 19
Tab C	Memcon - Second Plenary Meeting, Nov. 19
Tab D	Memcon - Second Private Meeting, Nov. 19
Tab E	Memcon - Dinner by the Gorbachev's, Nov. 19
Tab F	Memcon - Third Private Meeting, Nov. 20
Tab G	Memcon - Third Plenary Meeting, Nov. 20
Tab H	Memcon - Fourth Plenary Meeting, Nov. 20
Tab I	Memcon - Dinner by Reagan's, Nov. 20

Prepared by:
Jack Matlock

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White House Guidelines, August 28, 1997
By cas NARA, Date 6/25/02

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

REAGAN-GORBACHEV MEETINGS IN GENEVA
November, 1985

First Private Meeting

DATE: November 19, 1985
TIME: 10:20 - 11:20 A.M.
PLACE: Maison Fleur d'Eau,
Geneva, Switzerland

PARTICIPANTS:

United States

President Ronald Reagan
Dimitri Zarechnak, Interpreter

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary, Central Committee,
Communist Party of the Soviet Union
Yuri D. Uspensky, Interpreter

* * * * *

After the official photographers and the rest of the staff left the room, President Reagan began the conversation by telling the General Secretary that the two of them could really talk now. The President indicated that he approached this meeting with a very deep feeling and hoped that both of them could realize its importance and the unique situation that they were in.

The President indicated that both he and the General Secretary had come from similar beginnings which were quite different from their current positions. He, Reagan, was born and began his life in a small farming community, and now the two of them were here with the fate of the world in their hands, so to speak. The U.S. and the Soviet Union were the two greatest

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BY: CS, NARA Date: 6/25/02

countries on Earth, the superpowers. They were the only ones who could start World War III, but also the only two countries that could bring peace to the world.

The President said that the two of them would talk about many things, including arms, in the main meeting, but he wondered if the primary aim between them should not be to eliminate the suspicions which each side had of the other. The resolution of other questions would follow naturally after this. To talk about arms while such suspicions exist is an empty exercise as both sides are defensive at the various negotiations because of these suspicions. Countries do not mistrust each other because of arms, but rather countries build up their arms because of the mistrust between them.

The President expressed the hope that in their meetings they could get at the sources of the suspicions which exist. The Soviet Union did not approve of the U.S. system of government, and the U.S. did not approve of the Soviet system, and each could follow its own way, but with peaceful competition.

General Secretary Gorbachev said that he would like to return to the beginning, and thank the President for receiving him. He agreed with the President that this meeting was important in itself and he was glad that it was taking place. There had been no meetings between the U.S. President and the General Secretary of the USSR for six years, and many problems had developed in U.S.-Soviet relations and in the world in that period. He would also speak of these issues at the larger meeting, but would now like to avail himself of the opportunity which such a private meeting affords. He had met with members of the U.S. Congress and representatives of the U.S. Administration, but the Soviet side recognized the importance of a meeting with the President, and he, Gorbachev, would like to talk quietly, with respect for the United States and for the President, about many issues.

Gorbachev indicated that the Soviet side had prepared many months for this meeting, and he had tried to get a better understanding of the U.S. from Soviet and American sources. He had familiarized himself with all of the President's statements, and had paid special attention to the most recent ones. The main conclusion he had come to was that he was convinced that he and the President could not ignore each other. Nothing good would happen if the two sides took a different approach. But he was convinced that he could begin to change our relations for the better. This was his main theme, and the starting point for the meeting. After he had come to this conclusion, he had reviewed it a thousand times: perhaps it was too simplistic, bearing in mind the tremendous differences between the two

countries? This was, of course, so, but on the other hand the two countries were so interrelated.

Gorbachev continued that in the Soviet Union it was considered that serious measures ought to be undertaken to improve U.S.-Soviet relations. This would demand political will at the highest levels. A veritable avalanche of information was descending upon Gorbachev and the President, both internally and from all around the world. Gorbachev was convinced that there was not only the fear of mutual destruction, although this did exist, but a realistic evaluation showed that the U.S. and the Soviet Union could cooperate, and they had done so in the past, without changing their political systems, culture or ideologies. They had cooperated in the area of economics, trade and culture while respecting the choices made by the U.S. people, and, obviously, the Soviet people as well.

Gorbachev said that there had sometimes been squalls in the bilateral relationship which had been severe, perhaps extremely so, but he could definitely state that in the USSR there was no enmity toward the United States or its people. The Soviet Union respected the U.S. and its people. The Soviet people and the leadership of the Soviet Union recognized the role of the U.S. in the world, and wished it no harm. They realized that international relations could not be built on a desire to harm American interests.

At this point Gorbachev indicated that he would like to pause to permit the President to speak, and then he would like to say a few things about the Soviet side's understanding of the present international situation and what he thought should be changed in our policies in order to have a more constructive relationship based on greater realism.

The President replied that there was no question but that the Soviet and American peoples, if they learned more about each other, would find that they had many things in common, and that friendship between them would grow. Unfortunately, it was not people but governments that created arms.

The President continued that prior to this meeting there had been a wave of good wishes from the people of the United States, primarily expressing the desire to have peace. He knew something about the Soviet Union and its concern about war because of the suffering which the country had undergone in the Second World War -- the courage, the sacrifices and the fact that 20 million people had been lost. People do not like war. Americans hate war. America is too good a place to be when there is no war.

The President continued that people did not get into trouble when they talked to each other, but rather when they talked about each other. There has been too much of the latter on both sides, and not enough of talking to each other. In the meeting with the larger group, where he and Gorbachev should soon move, the sides could explain why there is mistrust between them, but could make a beginning to try to eliminate this mistrust.

Gorbachev replied that they would discuss specific questions during their Geneva meetings, but he wished to give his evaluation of the present international situation as the Soviet side saw it, while they were still in their one-on-one meeting. He thought that a new policy was needed which would be adequate for the present international situation. The first thing that was needed was a policy aimed at resolving the central issue of the present time, that is, the question of war and peace. In the Soviet Union, in the United States, and in the whole world this was the question which was in the minds of everyone, even ordinary people, not to mention those who were more familiar with international processes.

Gorbachev continued that if the two sides reached a substantive agreement in Geneva, which would increase people's hope and would not destroy their view of the future with respect to the question of war and peace, this would be a great accomplishment. The question of ending the arms race was of critical importance in international politics, and we needed to say something to the world about this. The Soviet side is in favor of this. The U.S. side says that nuclear war cannot be permitted, and that it is for peace. We need to find a formula at this meeting which would give impetus toward moving towards resolution of the more important issues. This was the first thing.

Gorbachev continued that he would not like to seem irresponsible vis-a-vis the President, vis-a-vis his own country and vis-a-vis the world with regard to this main issue. Young people were wondering about whether they would be alive or not, and the older generation, that had suffered so much, was also thinking about this. Yes, we have a meeting in Geneva, and we need to create an impetus. If no such impetus is created, there will be great disappointment, and no statements or press announcements will justify the meeting. People will say that we are irresponsible. And the two sides should not subject themselves to such a fate.

Gorbachev said that he would like to say two brief things about what realities Soviet and U.S. foreign policy should take into account. There were many problems in the world, involving capitalist countries and socialist countries, not to mention third-world countries, where the problems were the greatest. The problems involved questions of economics, structural change, ecology, sociology, etc. All of these issues demanded our

attention and required solutions based on cooperation rather than confrontation. This was the second thing that Gorbachev wished to say.

Gorbachev continued that the third thing was that the two countries had had conflicts, both openly and privately, with regard to regional, third-world issues. But there was a great number of developing countries, and dozens of newly-created ones. They had great amounts of natural and human resources, but they were not only behind the developed countries, but the gap between them was growing greater. There was hunger, illiteracy and disease, causing a great deal of turmoil. We need to take a new political approach to these issues in order to resolve them. This was the basis for Gorbachev's approach to foreign policy, as well as that of his colleagues.

Gorbachev indicated that the issue of national interests had arisen. The Soviet Union had its national interests and the U.S. had them as well. Other countries also had their national interests. In the international context, we could not speak of advancing some of these interests at the expense of suppressing others. Without such an approach it would be difficult to act in the international arena. He had spoken sincerely about these three things. The Soviet Union was not playing a two-faced game. If it were playing such a game with regard to the United States, if it harbored secret intentions, then there could be no improvement in the relationship. He was sincere about this, and this applied to both countries.

Gorbachev apologized that he had taken so long, and said that he would be ending shortly. Perhaps the President was aware that a slogan had been used during the time of this meeting in Geneva which said that Reagan and Gorbachev should bear in mind that the world did not belong only to the two of them.

The President replied that he had not heard about such a slogan, but he wished to reply briefly to what Gorbachev had said, and then he thought it would be better for them to join with the rest of the group. He agreed that the two countries could mutually help the developing countries, but one of the things that created mistrust of the USSR by the U.S. was the realization of the Marxist idea of helping socialist revolutions throughout the world and the belief that the Marxist system should prevail. The U.S. felt, however, that the most important thing for a country was its right to self-determination. The U.S. and USSR could help these countries, given our advanced technologies. We could help them to improve their standards of living. But the U.S. felt that the Soviet Union attempted to use force to shape the developing countries to their own pattern, and that such force was often used only by a minority of

the people of the country. The U.S. believed that if the competing factions would settle their social and other differences themselves, the U.S. and USSR could then be ready to assist them in improving their economies. Both our countries should eliminate the mistrust which exists between them by discussing the causes of this mistrust. The U.S. had a very firm belief that people in all countries had the right of self-determination and the right to choose their own form of government.

The President indicated that when he and Gorbachev would go into the main meeting, he would greet the members of the Soviet Delegation, and Gorbachev should greet the members of the U.S. Delegation, after which there would be a photo opportunity next to the fireplace before they sat down at the table.

Gorbachev replied that they would continue to discuss these issues in the larger meeting, but he would like to say some more before they left the room. There had been those who considered that the American Revolution should have been crushed. The same applied to the French Revolution and to the Soviet Revolution. Over a long period of time millions of people had engaged in such struggles -- in India, Indonesia, in Algeria (where one-and-a-half million people had died in their struggle for freedom). The Soviet Union did not consider that a way of life could be imposed if a society were not ready for it. These were only empty phrases. All these things which happen in the world have their national roots. The U.S. should not think that Moscow was omnipotent and that when he, Gorbachev, woke up every day he thought about which country he would now like to arrange a revolution in. This was simply not true. Gorbachev indicated that after his interpreter had translated what he had just said, he would like to convey some confidential information to Reagan, after which they could move to the next room.

Gorbachev said that before leaving for Geneva he had received some information from the Soviet Academy of Sciences, specifically the Institute for Earth Studies, where the scientists have become convinced that there would be a major earthquake in the area of California and Nevada within the next three years. Soviet scientists had always worked with U.S. scientists on these issues, and Reagan probably had knowledge of such information already, but this information was in addition to what had already been known. The Soviet scientists considered that the probability of an earthquake of a magnitude of 7 or 7.5 on the Richter scale was two-thirds and the probability of one of 6 or 6.5 was three-fourths. The Soviet side was ready to have its scientists give all the details to U.S. scientists. They have not yet been published.

The President replied that he realized that such an earthquake was considered to be overdue. He mentioned that an entire

area along the Pacific, Asia, South America, and North America was considered to be a "ring of fire" because of the volcanoes there. This had recently been demonstrated in Colombia, before that in Mexico and in the U.S. with Mount St. Helen: these volcanoes were showing greater activity. Because of faults in the earth and shifting plates, we know that such an event is overdue. A great deal of tension has been created along the San Andreas fault, and this tension had not been released by little quakes. The President indicated that he had not heard any specific time frame mentioned of the type that Gorbachev had spoken of, but all of our scientists knew that this was overdue and could happen at any time.

Prepared by:
Dimitri Zarechnak,
Department of State

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

REAGAN-GORBACHEV MEETINGS IN GENEVA
November, 1985

First Plenary Meeting

DATE: November 19, 1985
TIME: 11:27 A.M. - 12:15 P.M.
PLACE: Maison Fleur d'Eau,
Geneva, Switzerland

PARTICIPANTS:

United States

President Ronald Reagan
George Shultz, Secretary of State
Donald T. Regan, Chief of Staff, White House
Robert C. McFarlane, Assistant to the President for National
Security Affairs
Arthur Hartman, Ambassador to the USSR
Rozanne Ridgway, Assistant Secretary of State for European and
Canadian Affairs
Jack F. Matlock, Jr., Special Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs
Robie M. Palmer, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State
Dimitri Zarechnak, Interpreter

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev
Eduard Shevardnadze, Minister of Foreign Affairs
Georgy M. Korniyenko, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
Anatoly F. Dobrynin, Ambassador to the United States
Aleksandr Yakovlev, Chief, Propaganda Department, Central
Committee, CPSU
Leonid M. Zamyatin, Chief, International Information Department,
Central Committee, CPSU
Andrey M. Aleksandrov-Agentov, Assistant to General Secretary
Gorbachev
Sergey P. Tarasenko, Assistant to Minister of Foreign Affairs
Yury D. Uspensky, Interpreter

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BY OJS, NARA, Date 6/25/02

The President and the General Secretary emerged from their private meeting and greeted each member of the others' delegation. There was then a photo opportunity. The two delegations were then seated.

The President opened the meeting by stating to the General Secretary that he was pleased that the meeting is finally underway. He noted that the two of them had been talking about how important their meetings are, and then turned the floor over to the General Secretary.

Gorbachev thanked the President. He noted that he and the President had agreed that it was important to have a constructive exchange of views at this meeting. As he had already said during their private meeting, the Soviet Union attaches a lot of importance to this meeting and to the fact that it is taking place after almost seven years since the last summit. A lot of things have changed in the world and in both of our countries. Many problems have come up which are of concern to the American people, to the Soviet people and to their leaders. We regard this meeting as a positive event, he added.

Gorbachev then returned to the question of how to proceed and at what level. He shared the view that we need to bolster confidence in our relationship. We need to think together about a mechanism for implementing this idea. This should include a political dialogue at various levels. It is not good when for extended periods our relationship is reduced to having our entire dialogue take place via the press. He understood that this was the President's idea about dialogue. The President had said that he was for talking to each other rather than about each other. The task before us is strengthening confidence. We should be looking for opportunities in various areas, for example trade and economic relations can be helpful.

Experience has shown that the Soviet Union and the United States can live without each other in the area of trade and economics. But they cannot hope that a strong peace and understanding will emerge without active links and relationships. Economic and commercial ties are important not only in themselves but also as a political link. There needs to be a material basis for the political process.

Some underestimate this fact, he continued. Sometimes these relations are used in a way which is detrimental to the process we want. This had happened in the past. He would note that the President had seen that, and had lifted the grain embargo. But, unfortunately, this action was not followed by other steps. There is interest among U.S. businessmen and in Soviet economic circles. Commercial ties can be part of the mechanism of trust.

Gorbachev said that he welcomed the President's idea for a broad based exchange of people in science, culture and other areas. He was pleased that American people are interested in a greater understanding of the Soviet people and noted that American travel to the Soviet Union was going up and had reached some 50,000 annually. He also welcomed a more lively and dynamic set of contacts between foreign ministries and embassies. High level summits should fit in with this and be the centerpiece of our mechanism for building trust.

The General Secretary said that he would build on this subject of dialogue in greater detail. He mentioned it now since he understood that it is a subject of special importance to the President.

He then returned to what he called the central point: that after many years the two leaders are meeting at a time when relations are at the lowest level ever. He did not know whether the President and his Administration find this good. The President's recent statements seemed to indicate that he wants improved relations. This is definitely the Soviet desire. They feel that despite all the existing differences and without simplifying difficulties, the two sides have to get down to steering their relations into a normal channel. He had said in their private meeting that the Soviet leadership as a whole is for this improvement, that he did not see any opposition to this view. The Soviet leadership is united in a desire to improve relations, if that is the U.S. desire. The Soviet Union is willing to accommodate the United States without preconditions. He stated this because the U.S. has set conditions for an improvement in relations. This has been unacceptable in the past, and continues to be unacceptable.

He mentioned that in Moscow he had said to Secretary Shultz and National Security Advisor McFarlane that he wanted our relations and the process of making policies to be free of delusions. There seem to be several delusions on the part of the American ruling class, to judge by some studies put out by U.S. "think tanks." These include such ideas as the contention that the Soviet economy is in a perilous state and therefore it can be subject to the pressure of an arms race to give more leverage to U.S. foreign policy. Or that the Soviet Union is lagging behind in high technology so that the United States can rush ahead and achieve military superiority. Or that the Soviet Union seeks military superiority.

He would note here what he had said to Shultz and McFarlane. The Soviet Union is often accused of causing problems for the United States in Europe and in the Third World. The two sides may have differences on concrete situations and on specific

bilateral and international matters. But the USSR proceeds from a recognition of the role and weight of the United States in international affairs. The Soviets duly appreciate American achievements in technology, service and other spheres -- the fruits of labor of the American people. The Soviets greatly respect the Americans. This is most important. Yes, there are differences: political, ideological, and in terms of values. But we have managed to stay alive for many years. And we have never been at war with each other. Let us pray to God that this never happens. The broad and fundamental approach he had described would make an improvement in relations possible .

He continued that it would be bad if instead of policy we have only public reactions and pinpricks. This can happen on occasion, but it is a different matter if this becomes the policy itself. This would make both the United States and the Soviet Union insecure. There needs to be a long-term prospect for the future of our relations. The Soviet Union holds that it is necessary to develop a new policy. Our countries should not be captive to outdated approaches. Life has changed and it is always changing.

He continued that whatever the two sides try to do in setting policies, the peoples of the world attach priority to the issue of war and peace. If the two of them are unable to tackle this issue, it is difficult to see how they can deal with others. This would devalue the whole process. They must deal with the critical, pivotal issue of peace and war. Their meeting must conclude by giving an impulse to the negotiations in Geneva. Of course they can send their negotiators back to Geneva. But if he and the President go home without giving any greater hope or impulse to the process, they will take a scolding in their countries and in the world. Isn't this precisely the issue which must be at the center of their attention?

Gorbachev continued that there are people linked to military affairs in both countries. He realized that there are people who earn their living from these matters. But studies in both countries has shown, what for example, Japan and the FRG have been able to do with little expenditure on the military. They have experienced an economic upsurge. Soviet and American scholars have shown that one job in the military sector is three times as costly as in the civilian sector. More jobs can be created if money is channeled into civilian areas. The situation is so acute that if they returned without saying anything about arms control, about the first priority issue, people will maintain that this meeting gave birth to a mouse.

The United States has economic problems and the Soviet Union has them. Each knows his own problems better. But both could do better if they could release resources to the civilian economy.

He knew what institutions like the Heritage Foundation -- which advised the Administration particularly when the President was running for office the first and second time -- were saying. Before this meeting, they had been saying that the United States should use the arms race to frustrate Gorbachev's plans, to weaken the Soviet Union. But history teaches that this was not possible earlier even when the Soviet Union was not so strong. Now that it is even stronger, this is a delusion. The Soviet Union is an enormous country which will take care of its problems.

Gorbachev continued that of course there are many problems which are particularly acute in the developing world. It makes the United States and the Soviet Union selfish to devote so much money to the military when the destiny of millions and billions of people is at stake. It should not be a surprise that there are protests against this in Latin America, Africa and elsewhere. The military is devouring huge resources. The two of them must take a realistic approach to this.

Gorbachev added that he believes there is a basis for movement to meet each other's concerns. The President had recently said that a nuclear war must never be fought. He agreed. The President had said that they should proceed on an equal basis. He agreed. The President had said he was for exchange among our peoples. The Soviet side agreed with this as well, so long as it was within a framework of respect for sovereignty and the values each society had developed. There must be a respect for the path each side has chosen.

He then said that they often hear the United States argue that there should be no agreement signed, no document signed that is not consistent with United States national interest. He would not quarrel with this, but how is one to understand national interests if there is no restraint in defining them? Can there be a right to exploit others or to impinge on the security of others in the name of one's security? He could say for himself that this is not the way to define one's interests. He recalled a conversation with Prime Minister Thatcher in which she quoted Lord Palmerston that nations have no permanent enemies only permanent interests. He agrees with this and would say that the Soviet Union is implementing its interests in the community of nations. Both of us must take the interests of others into account.

However, what is the Soviet Union to think if the United States asserts a vital interest in areas distant from it, areas which often are very near the Soviet Union? Many zones are declared vital interests of the United States. The Soviet Union fails to understand how the United States cannot take account of other countries' interests.

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Gorbachev stated that he was hopeful that when they came to the afternoon discussion, both sides could express their views about war and peace and disarmament. He would like in conclusion of his overview of the world situation to state that the Soviet Union believes that the central question is how to halt the arms race and to disarm. For its part, the Soviet Union would not put forward proposals which would be detrimental to the United States. They are for equal security. If anything detrimental to the United States was proposed, this would not be acceptable to the Soviet Union because it would not make for stability. The Soviet Union has no ulterior motives. What the President has said about equal security, no superiority and movement toward halting the arms race are the conditions for building a cooperative relationship. The United States is losing a big market in the Soviet Union; the Soviets have good economic cooperation with other countries.

Gorbachev continued that we can live in this world only together, so both must think how to put relations on a new track. If the United States thinks that by saying these things, Gorbachev is showing weakness, that the Soviet Union is more interested than the United States, then this will all come to nothing. The Soviet Union will not permit an unequal approach but if there is on the U.S. side a positive will, the United States will find the Soviets an active participant in the process.

President Reagan then began his presentation. He said that as he had noted earlier, if the two sides are to get down to the business of reducing the mountains of weapons, then both must get at the cause of the distrust which had led to building these weapons. Why does the distrust and suspicion exist? We fought together in two wars. Americans who had been bringing in supplies to help the Soviet Union in the second world war are buried near Murmansk. When that war ended, the Americans were the only ones whose industry had not been bombed and who had not sustained great losses. The Americans were the only ones who had a weapon of great devastation, the nuclear weapon. They were the only ones able to use it if they had wanted to. But they reduced their armed forces from twelve million to a million and a half and allowed their navy to go down from a thousand ships to less than half that number. And the United States began making proposals to the Soviet Union and the world about sharing nuclear technology and doing away with the weapon. Eighteen times before this meeting the United States had proposed meetings to discuss arms reduction and for twelve of those times the United States had nuclear superiority. The United States was willing to give it up. Most of these times the United States did not get cooperation from Gorbachev's predecessors.

The President stated that this is the first meeting where we have sat down to consider reducing arms. The other meetings dealt only with regulating the increase in these weapons. In

1980 he had said that he could not condone this approach, but that he would stay at the negotiating table as long as it might take to get real reductions. He recalled that the Soviet leaders had talked about a one-world communist state and had been inspiring revolutions around the world. The United States had watched the Soviet military buildup, including in nuclear weapons. This came after dozens of United States proposals. The United States has fewer nuclear weapons than in 1969, but the Soviet buildup since then has been the greatest in history. Yes, he had made a promise to refurbish the American military and this has been done, but the United States is still behind: The Soviet Union has 5.4 million men in their armed forces: The U.S. has 2.4 million men. The United States also sees an expansionist Soviet Union. It has a satellite in Cuba just 90 miles off our shores. We had problems there with nuclear missiles but this was settled. Now we see Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Angola and Yemen -- with for example 35,000 Cubans in Angola.

The President stated that he was setting out all of this to explain the basis for American concern and distrust. With regard to our military industry having a policy effect, he noted that our budget for humanitarian affairs -- for the elderly and handicapped and for other social needs -- is greater than our total military budget. Two thirds of our military spending pays for manpower; only a small percentage is spent on equipment. The total military budget is a very small percentage of our GNP; of course we would be better off without it. The basic interest of our industry is consumer products, for example the automobile and airplane industry. The United States has no economic interest in continuing a military buildup.

The President said that now the two sides have come to this meeting he had said frankly why the American people had fears. Maybe not fears of war, but that the Soviet Union could acquire such an imbalance of strength that it could deliver an ultimatum. The United States has seen violations of arms control agreements already signed. The United States is ready to try to meet the Soviet Union's concerns if the Soviet Union is ready to meet ours. But more than words are needed. We need to get on to deeds. If we just get in bargaining over the numbers of particular types of weapons we are likely go on trying to keep advantages. But deeds can relieve mistrust, if we can go on the basis of trust, then those mountains of weapons will shrink quickly as we will be confident that they are not needed.

The President continued by saying that we are the two super-powers. No other nations in the world can do what the Soviet Union and the United States can. They are the only ones which can bring about a world war. The only ones. That is a measure of their responsibility. The two must remove the causes of distrust. History since World War II has shown that if the United

States had any hostile designs it was in a position to impose its will with little danger to itself. Indeed the United States had set out to reduce its superiority.

The President then said that today he wanted to talk about one specific question. Gorbachev had said that the United States was interested in achieving a first strike capability by having an anti-missile shield which would destroy missiles before they hit the target. The United States did not know whether this would be possible. The United States had a research program. The Soviet Union had the same kind of program. The United States has some hope that it might be possible. If both sides continue their research and if one or both come up with such a system then they should sit down and make it available to everyone so no one would have a fear of a nuclear strike. A mad man might come along with a nuclear weapon. If we could come up with a shield and share it, then nobody would worry about the mad man. He didn't even want to call this a weapon; it was a defensive system.

The President said that he hoped he had made clear that it is the sincerest desire of the United States to eliminate these suspicions. When he thinks of our two great powers, and of how many areas we could cooperate in helping the world, he thinks about how we must do this with deeds. This is the best way for both of us to assure the other that they have no hostile intent.

Gorbachev asked whether there was any more time. Should they stick to their schedule?

The President responded that he thought they should stick to the schedule as it calls next for lunch.

Gorbachev said this was fine and he would respond when they resumed after lunch if the President would give him the floor.

The President said that the floor was Gorbachev's.

Gorbachev said that he understood they would get into more specific discussion in the afternoon.

The President agreed, and the meeting ended at 12:15 P.M.

Prepared by:
R. M. Palmer and
J. F. Matlock

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

REAGAN-GORBACHEV MEETINGS IN GENEVA

November, 1985

Second Plenary Meeting

DATE: November 19, 1985

TIME: 2:30 - 3:40 P.M.

PLACE: Maison Fleur d'Eau
Geneva, Switzerland

PARTICIPANTS:

United States

- President Ronald Reagan
- George Shultz, Secretary of State
- Donald T. Regan, Chief of Staff, White House
- Robert C. McFarlane, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
- Arthur Hartman, Ambassador to the USSR
- Paul Nitze, Special Advisor to the President and Secretary of State on Arms Control Matters
- Jack F. Matlock, Jr., Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
- Robert E. Linhard, Senior Director, National Security Council Staff
- William Krimer, Interpreter

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

- General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev
- Eduard Shevardnadze, Minister of Foreign Affairs
- Georgy M. Korniyenko, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
- Anatoly F. Dobrynin, Ambassador to the United States
- Aleksandr Yakovlev, Chief, Propaganda Department, Central Committee, CPSU
- Leonid M. Zamyatin, Chief, International Information Department, Central Committee, CPSU
- Andrey M. Aleksandrov-Agentov, Assistant to General Secretary Gorbachev
- Sergey P. Tarasenko, Assistant to Minister of Foreign Affairs Soviet Interpreter

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 BY: CB, NARA, Date: 4/25/02

The President offered Gorbachev the floor to comment on the President's presentation during the morning session.

Gorbachev said that they both had discussed how to conduct their meetings and during the preparations had discussed whether to focus on the causes of tensions or on solutions. Both sides had said a lot about causes. He is convinced that if they start making up a list of objections, they will not get far toward normalization, more trust and more respect -- and most importantly, toward giving some impulse to the Geneva process, which is at a crucial stage now.

He will be reasonable in what he proposes. He does not plan an extensive debate over what President said. But, as he said during the private meeting this morning, the Soviets reject a "primitive approach" toward the world around us -- that is that everything can be traced to some Soviet plan for supremacy or world domination. We have discussed this many times, and when it raises regional issues, the U.S. frequently charges the Soviet Union with expansionism -- in Afghanistan, Angola, even South Yemen.

Hotbeds of international conflict do sour international relations, Gorbachev continued, but the Soviets cannot share U.S. views of the causes of regional conflict. You say that the Soviet Union and Soviet expansionism is responsible. But that is either a mistake or a deliberate distortion. If U.S. policies are based on this mistaken view, it is difficult to see the way out of these problems. An assessment of Soviet policy in the Third World on the basis of such a misconception can lead only to undermining international security.

Let me give you our view, Gorbachev said. We take a "principled approach" to the developing countries and their problems. First, we have no monopolies in these countries which exploit their manpower and resources. We seek no commercial concessions, but rely on our own resources one hundred percent. Therefore, we have no selfish interests or expansionist aims, and desire no military bases.

Second, if you look at the developing world in an unbiased way, you will see that there is a long-term objective process which began after World War II. It is a natural one of third-world countries first pressing for political independence and then striving to gain control over their own resources and labor. This is the root cause of what is happening.

You overestimate the power of the Soviet Union, Gorbachev observed. The U.S. attributes to USSR the power and capability to upset the whole world, but we are realistic pragmatists who categorically oppose attempts to dominate other countries from

the outside. We do oppose the export of counterrevolution. Attempts have been made to crush revolutions in the past. This happened with the American revolution, with the French Revolution and with the October Revolution. But the idea that that small numbers of people from outside a country can turn it to revolution is not realistic. India, Indonesia, Korea -- these are all countries with millions of people.

The U.S. speaks of Afghanistan and Ethiopia as if it were the Soviet Union that stirred the pot there. But we first heard of revolutions there on the radio. We had good relations with Haile Selassie and were not the cause of the revolution there. It is wrong to think we are plotting; this is just not right. But people want freedom and we do support "progressive movements." We make no secret of this and it is in the Party program. But we have no secret plans for world domination.

The U.S. has its values and the Soviet Union has its own. Regional problems are caused by a social struggle evolving over many stages. Sometimes you support one faction and we another, but both of us can play a role together to solve problems, and in some areas we already do so.

In Afghanistan, the Soviet Union supports a "regularizing process" around that country, a political settlement under the United Nations, and you could help. The U.S. however does not help. You say the USSR should withdraw its troops, but actually you want them there, and the longer the better.

Gorbachev continued, saying that the Soviets are ready to promote a package solution involving a non-aligned Afghanistan, Soviet troop withdrawal, the return of refugees, and international guarantees of no outside interference. There are possibilities for a political reconciliation, he added, and said that Afghanistan is already ready to cooperate, but requires the cooperation of all groups.

He then asserted that the Soviet Union has no plan for using Afghanistan to gain access to a warm water port, to extend its influence to the Persian Gulf, or to impinge on U.S. interests in any way. It is a situation which could be used to improve our overall relationship, by fostering cooperation by the conflicting sides and abstaining from interference. It is an area we should explore, he concluded.

Gorbachev then stated that these are just examples to illustrate the Soviet policy toward the Third World. Basically the issues are internal problems for the states involved. We can continue to work on these issues with our discussions by specialists on regional matters.

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Gorbachev then noted that the President had charged that it is the Soviet Union which had been building up its arms while the U.S. acted with restraint. This is a major question. Much depends on the character of the present strategic situation and how it will develop in the future. It is the central question of our relations.

Gorbachev continued by saying that twenty years ago there was no strategic balance; U.S. had four times as many strategic delivery systems than the USSR and also forward-based systems. He then asked rhetorically what the U.S. would have done if the Soviet Union had possessed four times as much? The U.S. would have had to take steps, just as the Soviet Union did, to establish parity.

In fact, Gorbachev asserted, the U.S. has tripled the number of its nuclear weapons and has more nuclear weapons than the Soviet Union. Negotiations began as we approached parity, and the Soviets have not violated the nuclear balance and are not trying to surpass the U.S., since superiority cannot be the basis for normal relations. All institutes which study the problem, including the ISS in London, conclude that there is strategic parity. Force structures are different, but they support different strategies.

The Soviet Union wants parity at a lower level, he continued. We are for equal security and agreed to embark upon the negotiations in Geneva. We must meet each other half way if we are to find a way to reduce strategic weapons. The time has come for us both to muster the political will and realism to make progress and to end efforts to outsmart or overrun the other side. Even now, due to computer technology, one side could get ahead in space. But we can match any challenge, though you might not think so. We know that the U.S. can meet any challenge from us and we can meet any challenge from you. But why not make a step which would permit lowering the arms level?

Gorbachev then said that they, the Soviets, think SDI can lead to an arms race in space, and not just a defensive arms race but an offensive arms race with space weapons. Space weapons will be harder to verify and will feed suspicions and mistrust. Scientists say any shield can be pierced, so SDI cannot save us. So why create it? It only makes sense if it is to defend against a retaliatory strike. What would the West think if the Soviet Union was developing these weapons? You would react with horror. Weinberger has said that if the USSR had such a defense first, it would be bad. If we go first, you feel it would be bad for the world, feeding mistrust. We cannot accept the rationale which says it is good if you do it and bad if we do it.

Gorbachev then said that he knows President is attached to the program, and for that reason the Soviets have analyzed it seriously. The Soviet conclusion is that if the U.S. implements its plan, the Soviet Union will not cooperate in an effort to gain superiority over it. We will have to frustrate this plan, and we will build up in order to smash your shield.

You say the Soviet Union is doing the same, he continued, but asserted that this is not the case. Both of us do research in space of course, but Soviet research is for peaceful purposes. The U.S. in contrast has military aims, and that is an important difference. The U.S. goal violates the ABM Treaty, which is of fundamental importance. Testing is also inconsistent with the Treaty, and can only exacerbate mistrust.

If the U.S. embarks on SDI, the following will happen: (1) no reduction of offensive weapons; and (2) Soviet Union will respond. This response will not be a mirror image of your program, but a simpler, more effective system. What will happen if you put in your "seven layers" of defense in space and we put in ours? It will just destabilize the situation, generate mistrust, and waste resources. It will require automatization which will place important decisions in the hands of computers and political leaders will just be in bunkers with computers making the decisions. This could unleash an uncontrollable process. You haven't thought this through; it will be a waste of money, and also will cause more distrust and more weapons.

Gorbachev then referred to the President's remarks regarding the need for a defense against some madman in the future who might get his hands on nuclear weapons. He observed that they should remember that they will have sufficient retaliatory force for a long time to deter such use.

Gorbachev then concluded by saying that verification will not be a problem if the basic question is solved. The Soviets are prepared for full verification of a ban on space weapons. If such a ban is agreed upon, then the two countries could negotiate on their respective proposals for offensive weapons reduction. The Soviets are ready to compromise. If space weapons are banned, the situation would be completely different; it would create a new attitude on the Soviet side. The process would be different, however, if they leave Geneva without any agreements. If agreement on this point is not possible, they the Soviets would have to rethink the current situation.

The President then made the following points:

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-- Gorbachev's presentation illustrates the lack of trust between us. It is difficult for us to understand the level of suspicion which the Soviet Union holds.

-- Even when we were allies in World War II we encountered inexplicable Soviet suspicion. For example, permission was not given for U.S. bombers to land on Soviet territory in order to reduce the dangers of bombing our common enemy. We cannot understand this kind of suspicion.

-- Gorbachev spoke of parity, but there is none today. True that U.S. once had nuclear superiority, but in June, 1946, offered to place all nuclear weapons under international control. It has also made numerous other offers, and the President listed twelve such between 1953 and 1969.

-- Since SALT-I was signed, the Soviet Union has added 6,000 nuclear warheads. Since SALT-II, 3,850 have been added. Meanwhile, the U.S. removed 2400 warheads from Europe, while the Soviet Union threatened Europe with its SS-20's. Our Allies requested protection and it fell to President to implement their request when Soviets refused to conclude an agreement to remove the threat.

-- Now we are locked in a Mutual Assured Destruction policy. The U.S. does not have as many ICBM's as Soviet Union, but has enough to retaliate. But there is something uncivilized about this. Laws of war were developed over the centuries to protect civilians, but civilians are the targets of our vast arsenals today.

-- The Strategic Defense Initiative is the President's idea. History teaches that a defense is found for every offensive weapon. We don't know if strategic defensive weapons will be possible, but if they are, they should not be coupled with an offensive force. Latter must be reduced so it will not be a threat. And if strategic defenses prove possible, we would prefer to sit down and get rid of nuclear weapons, and with them, the threat of war.

-- Regarding Afghanistan: Their "leader" was supplied by the Soviet Union. Actually he was their second choice, since the first one did not work out as they wished. The Soviet invasion has created three million refugees. He made suggestion for solution at UN. Specifically, how about bringing about the mutual withdrawal of all outside forces, then forming a coalition of Islamic states to supervise the installation of a government chosen by the people of Afghanistan?

-- Regarding Cambodia: We signed an agreement with North Vietnam. It was violated and the North Vietnamese took over South

Vietnam and also Laos and Cambodia. It now rules Cambodia. We should put an end to this and together supervise establishment of a government chosen by the Cambodian people.

-- Regarding Nicaragua: The Soviets have advisers there. The Sandinistas have built a tremendous military machine, far more than they need for defense. They have declared an aim of spreading revolution elsewhere. The President then reviewed the history of Somoza's removal -- the appeal to the OAS, and the Sandinista promise of free elections and a free press. But then when Somoza was removed, the Sandinistas forced other groups out of the coalition and are trying to establish totalitarian control. The Contras are only trying to reinstate the goals of the original revolution.

-- Such things as those noted are behind our suspicion and mistrust.

-- Every military judgment has it that Soviet forces are designed for offensive operations.

-- The U.S. willing to work on an agreement to move away from mutual threats. SDI would never be used by U.S. to improve its offensive capability or to launch a first strike. SDI should not lead to an arms race; we can both decide to reduce and eliminate offensive weapons.

-- These are things we could do to remove mistrust. Our goal is not an arms race. We can return to parity in one of two ways: either we both reduce offensive weapons, or we can build them up and use defensive systems to offset them. The U.S. does not seek superiority, but will do what is necessary to protect its freedoms.

Gorbachev then asked what they should tell their negotiators in Geneva.

The President replied that they could be given guidelines to reduce nuclear weapons, say by 50%. We could negotiate on the structure of forces, since we know the structure of our forces is different.

Gorbachev asked about the U.S. goal of SDI and how this relates to our January agreement to prevent an arms race in space.

The President said that he did not see a defensive shield as an arms race in space. He then recounted a conversation between a Chinese official and Ambassador Walters, in which Walters was asked what happens when a man with a spear that can penetrate anything meets a man with a shield that is impenetrable. Walters responded that he did not know, but that he did know what happens

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when a man with no shield meets that same opponent who has the spear. Neither of us wants to be in the position of having no shield.

Gorbachev then asked whether the President considered developing SDI weapons as the militarization of space.

The President replied that he did not. If the technology was developed, it should be shared. Neither side should deploy until the other did. It should be done in combination with lowering offensive weapons so that neither could gain a first-strike advantage.

The President then invited Gorbachev to take a walk for another private conversation and the two departed at 3:40 p.m.

Prepared by:
Jack F. Matlock

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

REAGAN-GORBACHEV MEETINGS IN GENEVA
November, 1985

Second Private Meeting

DATE: November 19, 1985
TIME: 3:40 P.M. - 4:45 P.M.
PLACE: Pool House, Maison Fleur d'Eau
Geneva, Switzerland

PARTICIPANTS:

United States

President Reagan
William D. Krimer, Interpreter

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

General Secretary Gorbachev
N. Uspensky, Interpreter

* * * * *

During their brief walk from the villa at Fleur d'Eau to the pool house, the President and General Secretary Gorbachev did not discuss substance, confining their conversation to the President's old movies. In the course of that conversation the President suggested to Mr. Gorbachev that he inform Mr. Arbatov that he had made not only grade-B movies, but also a few good ones. Gorbachev mentioned that he had recently seen "Kings' Row" and had liked it very much.

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INF and SDI

Seated in front of a fireplace at the pool house the President handed Gorbachev some papers and suggested that they might contain the seed of something the two of them could agree upon. He added that he had one copy done in Russian.

Gorbachev devoted a few minutes to reading through the separate documents.

Gorbachev prefaced his reaction by saying that, of course, what he would present now was based on his first impression of what was contained in the formulations. He thought that some of the issues dealt with did contain some substance that merited serious discussion with a view to bringing the positions of the sides closer together.

With reference to space weapons he had some questions to ask and, on the basis of his first reading, some considerations and objections to state. He would first refer to something that could be left for further discussions.

The President interjected to the effect that the material set forth in these papers should be viewed as a seed for possible instructions to the arms negotiators of both sides.

Gorbachev said he understood the President's idea, but still had some objections to state.

With reference to paragraph 1 of the first paper, concerning 50 percent reductions in strategic offensive arms, that was acceptable and he was prepared here to discuss this matter in terms of seeking a mutually acceptable solution. However, he would have to note that during the meeting between Foreign Ministers in Geneva last January agreement had been reached that such reductions would be negotiated together with an agreement halting an arms race in space. In other words, arms reductions must be viewed in their interrelationship with space weapons. That idea had been agreed upon in Geneva in January, but he had to note that here it seems to have evaporated.

The President said that he did not see these defensive weapons as constituting a part of the arms race in view of what he had said just a few moments ago at the table, to the effect that if and when such arms were developed, they would be shared with everyone involved in nuclear weapons. Why could this matter not be set aside in order to see what could be agreed upon regarding the sharing of such things? This would enable the two sides to determine what policies were available that could help all of us to get rid of nuclear weapons.

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Without reacting to the President's latter remark, Gorbachev said that that was his first comment. His second comment regarding the same section of the document he had just read was to note the suggestion that a separate interim agreement be concluded limiting land-based INF missiles with a view to eventual complete elimination of such missiles. This, too, required further clarification. What weapons would be covered in such an agreement, taking into account the existence of not only U.S. but also British and French missiles of that type? This had not been made clear.

Secondly, in the paper mentioning the possible interim agreement only land-based medium-range missiles were mentioned; what about medium-range cruise missiles launched from aircraft or from aircraft carriers? One had to note immediately that under the language contained in the document some nuclear weapons would clearly remain outside limitations; nevertheless, they did exist, they could be fired and naturally should also be covered by any agreement.

Moving on to paragraph 3 of the same document concerning research conducted by each side in the area of strategic ABM defense, Gorbachev wanted to ask precisely what the President had in mind when speaking of such research. He understood that basic research in laboratories was underway (he meant scientific laboratories, of course) but would also note that such research should not include the construction of prototypes or samples, or their testing. He emphasized that it was necessary to clarify the precise meaning of that research. The reason he was asking this question was that he knew that in the President's White House today two different interpretations of the ABM Treaty's provisions were in existence. One was a narrow interpretation which had been contained in a number of documents of the U.S. Congress and of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. That narrow interpretation was always limited to research not going beyond the threshold of laboratory work. Now, however, he was also aware of a broader interpretation, under which the construction of prototypes and samples would be permitted. Under that interpretation one could in no way speak about complying with the provisions of the ABM Treaty. Thus, further clarification was needed here as well.

The President said that we did indeed have more than one interpretation of the ABM Treaty. Under one such interpretation testing would be included in order to know that in practice we did have such a weapon. Just to have a laboratory theory would not be enough. It was his thought that all this could be covered by an agreement under which we as well as others could agree that no country would have a monopoly of such weapons. They would be shared by all. The worst thing that he could imagine was for any one country to acquire a first-strike capability.

Gorbachev noted that the Soviet Union had declared for all the world to hear, and was now declaring to the United States as well, that the Soviet Union would not be the first to use nuclear weapons. Was this not sufficient if this matter were taken seriously? However, he had to note that the United States did not believe him.

The President interjected that he and Gorbachev might not always be here.

Gorbachev said that when he spoke of not being believed he meant that the United States did not believe the Soviet Union's statement he had just mentioned. In that case, why should the Soviet Union believe the President's statement about sharing results of the research in question, and that the United States would not take advantage of having developed a strategic defense?

The President replied that that was because the negotiators of both sides could set down in a specific agreement that both governments had agreed not to retain a monopoly of defensive weapons, an agreement that he and Gorbachev would sign. He would also point out that our two countries were not alone in the world. There were others, such as Qaddhafi, for example, and people of that kind, who would not at all be averse to dropping a nuclear weapon on the White House. He believed in the idea of both our governments agreeing that both conduct relevant research and that both share the results of such research; if one country produced a defensive shield before the other, it would make it available to all.

As for believing the Soviet Union's commitment not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, the President would remind Gorbachev that in Stockholm we had subscribed to the doctrine that countries must not use force against each other.

With some emotion Gorbachev appealed to the President as follows: if the two sides were indeed searching for a way to halt the arms race and to begin to deal seriously with disarmament, then what would be the purpose of deploying a weapon that is as yet unknown and unpredictable? Where was the logic of starting an arms race in a new sphere? It must clearly be understood that verification of such weapons would be totally unreliable because of their maneuverability and mobility even if they were classified as defensive. People would not be in a position to determine what it was that would be placed into space and would surely regard it as an additional threat, thereby creating crisis situations. If the goal was to get rid of nuclear weapons, why start an arms race in another sphere?

The President asked Gorbachev to remember that these were not weapons that kill people or destroy cities, these were weapons that destroy nuclear missiles. If there were agreement that

there would be no need for nuclear missiles, then one might agree that there would also be no need for defenses against them. But he would also urge Gorbachev to remember that we were talking about something that was not yet known, and that if it were known, that would still be years away. Why then should we sit here in the meanwhile with mountains of weapons on each side?

Gorbachev countered by suggesting that they announce to the world that President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev had declared firmly in official statements that both countries would refrain from research, development, testing and deployment of space weapons and that such agreement would be subject to appropriate verification. Thus they could implement the idea of open laboratories and at the same time begin the process of 50-percent reductions in offensive arms.

The President asked if Gorbachev had in mind that Soviet laboratories would be open to visits by our experts and that their experts would be free to visit our laboratories.

Gorbachev replied that the Soviet Union would agree to open its laboratories provided they were used for the purpose of verifying how the agreement on banning and non-use of space weapons was being complied with.

The President said he did not know why Gorbachev kept on speaking of space weapons. We had no idea of precisely what the nature of these weapons would be; however, we certainly had no intention of putting something into space that would threaten people on Earth. Some years ago there had been some talk about putting nuclear missiles into orbit in space, weapons that could be dropped on any point on Earth. This was not what he was talking about. He would recall that in 1925 in this city of Geneva all of the countries that had participated in World War I had met and had reached agreement not to use poison gas warfare. Nevertheless, all had kept their gas masks. What he was saying now was that we should go forward to rid the world of the threat of nuclear weapons, but at the same time retain something like that gas mask, i.e., a shield that would protect our countries should there be an unforeseeable return to nuclear missiles.

Gorbachev wanted to repeat something he had said at the plenary meeting. He had pointed out that the Soviet Government had really carefully considered everything that had been said by the President with regard to SDI, especially all his arguments in favor of SDI. To a certain extent he could understand the President on a human level; he could understand that the idea of strategic defense had captivated the President's imagination. However, as a political leader he could not possibly agree with the President with regard to this concept. He would assure the President that this was not the result of some merely capricious attitude. He was not saying this for some sort of petty reasons.

On the basis of profound analysis by scientists, Soviet as well as American, he had to conclude that if the Soviet Union were to agree to proceed along the direction of SDI, and this was confirmed by almost all authoritative people, if it were dragged into this new dimension of the arms race, the other side would be bound to lose confidence and would seek to counter SDI in any possible way, including by increasing the numbers of its offensive arms. Thus, it would not make any sense at all for the Soviet Union to help the U.S. in the development of a strategic defense. In addition, he would point out that a defense against one certain level of strategic missiles was one thing, but a defense against a much larger number of such missiles would not be reliable at all. This could only lead to the conclusion that the only possible use of a strategic defense was to defend against a weakened retaliatory strike not against a first strike. It should certainly be realized by the President as well that the great majority of people throughout the world, including scientists, were extremely concerned over the development of space weapons, whatever their avowed purpose. Among such people were a number of U.S. Secretaries of Defense and such experts as Ambassadors Smith and Warnke. Gorbachev knew what they had said about it, he had read their statements and it was clear that strategic defense would only be useful after a first strike by the side deploying such defense. This was a very serious problem today and he would ask the President to reflect on it seriously. The Soviet Union had no desire to harm him as President or to harm the United States as a country. He firmly believed it necessary to do all in his power to prevent this from happening. He would urge the President jointly with him to find a way of formulating guidelines for their negotiators with a view to stopping SDI.

The President thought they had used up a considerable amount of time at this meeting. He thought the plenary meeting was about to conclude in any event, but he would say one thing. He would ask Gorbachev to consider this matter once again. He recognized that both of them had made some strong statements and that it would be difficult for either of them to reverse direction. However, it seemed to him that in his idea of ultimately sharing the results of research there was something that might be of interest to both of them. He had to tell Gorbachev that our people overwhelmingly wanted this defense. They look at the sky and think what might happen if missiles suddenly appear and blow up everything in our country. We believe that the idea of having a defense against nuclear missiles involved a great deal of faith and belief. When he said we, he meant most of mankind.

Gorbachev pointed out that missiles were not yet flying, and whether or not they would fly would depend on how he and the President conducted their respective policies. But if SDI were actually implemented, then layer after layer of offensive weapons,

Soviet as well as U.S. weapons, would appear in outer space and only God himself would know what they were. In this connection he would note that God provides information only very selectively and rarely. He appealed to the President to recognize the true signal he was conveying to him as President and to the U.S. Administration as a whole that the Soviet Union did indeed wish to establish a new relationship with the United States and deliver our two nations from the increasing fear of nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union had conducted a deep analysis of the entire situation and had come to the conclusion that it was necessary precisely now to proceed on the basis of the actual situation; later it would be too late. This was why the Soviet Union had tabled serious and comprehensive proposals concerning strategic weapons, medium-range weapons and others. This had been the result of a thorough assessment and profound understanding of where the two countries stood today. They now had a chance which they must not fail to take advantage of. He would ask the President not to regard this as weakness on the part of Gorbachev and the Soviet leadership.

During the walk back to the villa Gorbachev noted that this would not be their last meeting. The President expressed the hope that their next meeting would take place on U.S. soil, and said that he would be pleased to accept an invitation to visit the Soviet Union in return. Gorbachev agreed and suggested that dates and modalities be worked out by their respective staffs.

Prepared by:
William D. Krimer

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

REAGAN-GORBACHEV MEETINGS IN GENEVA
November, 1985

Dinner Hosted by the Gorbachevs

DATE: November 19, 1985
TIME: 8:00 P.M. - 10:30 P.M.
PLACE: Villa at Soviet Mission,
Geneva, Switzerland

PARTICIPANTS:

United States

President Reagan
Mrs. Reagan
Secretary of State George Shultz
Chief of Staff Donald Regan
Robert C. McFarlane, Assistant to the President for National
Security
Ambassador Arthur Hartman
Mrs. E. Arensbarger, Interpreter
William Hopkins, Interpreter

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

General Secretary Gorbachev
Mrs. Gorbacheva
Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze
First Deputy Foreign Minister Georgy Korniyenko
Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin
Ambassador Andrei M. Aleksandrov-Agentov
Mr. P. Palazhchenko, Interpreter

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At the beginning of the dinner, General Secretary Gorbachev announced that he had invited President Reagan to come to the

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BY: CU, NARA, Date: 4/25/12

Soviet Union and President Reagan had extended an invitation to Gorbachev to come to the U.S.A. Both had accepted, but no definite time was set. At that point the ladies announced that they, too, had extended an invitation to each other to come to their respective countries. There was much joking to the effect that Mrs. Reagan could come alone if President Reagan could not make it.

When the caviar was served, President Reagan spoke of sturgeon in the Sacramento River and Gorbachev told Mrs. Reagan of the building of hydroelectric dams on the Volga, which had decimated much of the beluga in the Caspian Sea. They had made some mistakes, he said, but now they were rectified and the fish were thriving.

Mrs. Reagan asked Gorbachev about tourism in the Soviet Union, and he told her at length about the Soviet tourist industry, how it was being built up and expanded, and at the end joked about the fact that tourism not only builds international understanding, but brings foreign currency into the Soviet Union.

Addressing himself to Mrs. Reagan and Mr. McFarlane, Gorbachev spoke of Russian history, about the fact that Russia had acted as a buffer zone for Europe throughout the centuries. Russia itself was invaded by the Mongols of Central Asia and therefore, he said, "Scratch a Russian and find a Tartar." Because Russia had been Europe's buffer, he said, it had fallen behind. It had experienced many invasions, from the Mongols to Napoleon, not to mention two world wars. Nevertheless, Russia has always been able to recuperate from her wounds and build up her strength.

During the course of the dinner, perhaps to encourage his guests' appetite, Gorbachev quoted the Russian scientist Timiryazev, who said that food was the closest man could come to communing with nature.

Mrs. Gorbachev said that American playwrights were very popular in the Soviet Union, especially Tennessee Williams and Albee. The Gorbachevs had recently seen a Moscow production of Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolf? and argued at the table about who had given the better portrayal -- Elizabeth Taylor or the Russian actress.

Mrs. Reagan asked about the Soviet film industry and was told by Gorbachev and Korniyenko about the many film studios in various parts of the country. Three of the largest are in Moscow.

Mrs. Reagan asked about drug abuse in the Soviet Union and was told that the drug problem was very small in the Soviet Union. Gorbachev then told her that his anti-alcoholism campaign was a huge success and enjoyed great grass-roots support. Coffee shops and ice cream parlors are becoming profitable ventures because people appear to be enjoying them more than hard liquor. He said that he had thought at the beginning of the campaign that moonshine production would increase, however, they found that since the beginning of the campaign the consumption of sugar has actually gone down. He explained that large amounts of sugar were used in distilling a home brew. Apparently, such activity was not being indulged in.

Mrs. Reagan and Gorbachev spoke of their respective families and Gorbachev said it was his belief that the family was the foundation of society. He felt that there was a risk now of that foundation eroding. Too many people were living together without benefit of marriage, and there were too many single-parent families, especially among European Russians. This was not the case in Central Asia, he said, where the average family had 5-6 children and two and even three generations all live together in one house. He said that he meant to speak about family values at the next Party Congress.

IMPROMPTU TOASTS

General Secretary Gorbachev's Remarks

General Secretary Gorbachev rose and remarked that he was happy to have everyone here together, and there would certainly be no speeches at this dinner. However, he said he wanted at this table this evening, where such a good atmosphere reigned, to welcome the President and Mrs. Reagan. (Mrs. Reagan remarked to the Soviet interpreter that the General Secretary had referred to her as "Nancy.") He welcomed President Reagan and his American colleagues to the Soviet Mission, on this "little bit of the Soviet Union."

He said that everyone present knew the reason why they were in Geneva. Yet, he said the fact that they had relaxed a little bit at this dinner did not mean that they would neglect the reasons why they had come here. He added that his purpose in rising to speak was not to bring up the seriousness of the reasons why they were in Geneva. He said that first, he simply wanted to greet his guests very cordially.

He said that speaking in human terms, he was happy to get acquainted with his guests and he expressed the hope that it would be possible to achieve the kind of understanding and spirit in which it would be possible to discuss "people" problems.

He noted that one day of the meetings had passed, and only one day was left. He said he wanted to recall a line from the Bible to express the Soviet side's desire as to how the meetings should go. The Biblical quotation was to the effect that there is a time to throw stones, and there is a time to gather them; now is the time to gather stones which have been cast in the past. The seven years in which there were no meetings between the Presidents of the United States and the General Secretaries of the Soviet Union were filled with considerable changes in the world. It would be possible to describe and explain what happened in the world during that time and much could be said by way of explanation. More important than that, however, is the lesson of those times, namely, that the President and the General Secretary must meet and talk about where the two countries are, and how they view each other, and how the two countries intend to build their relations in this many-faceted world of ours. He said that the current day was waning and in a positive atmosphere at that. He noted that the participants had laid out their positions on a broad range of problems of concern to the USSR and the U.S. and to all of the nations of the world. He said he had noticed the word "responsibility" used frequently in relation to this meeting. He said both the President and he understood that the frequent use of that word in itself emphasized the responsibility they bore as world leaders.

He continued that as far as the future is concerned, it can be built, if it is built by the two countries together. That can be done despite all of the countries' differences and the depth of those differences -- that had been visible even in the discussions held today -- because the process of moving toward each other through this method of meetings had begun, and it was necessary to continue the process of moving forward.

He said that it was true that one cartoonist had sent him a cartoon which showed him and President Reagan standing on the two sides of the abyss. On one side was President Reagan and on the other side was Gorbachev. Reagan calls to Gorbachev across the abyss "Gorby, I am prepared to go my part of the way," and "Gorby" says to Reagan, "Come ahead." Joking aside, he said, if the two leaders go their part of the way together, they will not end up in the abyss finally, but rather with a higher degree of

understanding and trust that will be the basis of the long-term outlook of U.S.-Soviet relations.

He continued that there are certain questions without whose examination it would be difficult to leave Geneva, and he recalled the Nobel prize winner's letter saying that he and the President should stay in Geneva as long as necessary to resolve the questions of war and peace. (He said he thought at that rate they would be there until Christmas.) He added that, seriously, there were problems which would require thinking and an overall approach. If those questions are not addressed, it will be difficult to go on, and there will be more accusations and recrimination. It is evident that the people of the world are sick and tired of the mutual accusations and recriminations the U.S. and the USSR addressed at each other.

He said that he could not say for sure that the sides would reach agreement in the course of the current meetings, even if they worked all night. (He jokingly suggested that all the others ought to work all night.) He suggested that, jokes aside, he and the President should nevertheless continue to work to accomplish the necessary goals.

He said he wished to raise a toast to the President, to Nancy Reagan, and to the U.S. people, whom the Soviet people regard so highly; he wished to drink to the success of the current talks, to an improvement in U.S.-Soviet relations, and to the resolution of outstanding problems between the sides.

President Reagan's Response

In response to General Secretary Gorbachev's remarks, President Reagan said that the American delegation was pleased to be here in Geneva on this mission.

He said that while the General Secretary was speaking, he had been thinking of various problems being discussed at the talks. He said that previous to the General Secretary's remarks, he had been telling Foreign Minister Shevardnadze (who was seated to the President's right) that if the people of the world were to find out that there was some alien life form that was going to attack the Earth approaching on Halley's Comet, then that knowledge would unite all the peoples of the world.

Further, the President observed that General Secretary Gorbachev had cited a Biblical quotation, and the President, also alluding to the Bible, pointed out that Acts 16 refers to

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the fact that "we are all of one blood regardless of where we live on the Earth," and we should never forget that.

The President quoted Theodore Roosevelt to the effect that the true goal of nations is peace with self respect. Theodore Roosevelt loved his people as the current U.S. President and General Secretary love theirs, and Roosevelt believed in peace and security for his people, although some of his detractors would construe that to mean that there was something militaristic in his attitude. Yet despite some such negative attitudes about him, he had been the first person to win the Nobel Prize for peace, and that was specifically for his efforts devoted to ending the Russo-Japanese War.

The President pointed out that there was something else significant about this particular time and this particular occasion. It was exactly 43 years ago on this date that the Soviet Army had begin the counterattack at Stalingrad which had actually turned the war around. The President suggested that this 43rd anniversary of that event could also be the beginning of yet another turning point for all mankind -- one that would make it possible to have a world of peace and freedom.

The President raised his glass to the General Secretary and Mrs. Gorbachev, to the Soviet people, to peace, freedom, to our great nations, and to the peoples of the world -- that they may have a world of peace and freedom.

* * * * *

Gorbachev Family

The Gorbachevs have been married one year longer than the Reagans. Their daughter, a doctor, wrote her thesis in medical school on the effects of alcohol on the human system. Their son-in-law is a surgeon. Their daughter, son-in-law and granddaughter live with them. Gorbachev said that he was a man of conservative values when it came to keeping the family together. Their granddaughter, who will be six in January, knows all of the world leaders, he said. She watches the news broadcasts and periodically asks where Mrs. Thatcher is going now. Mrs. Gorbachev added that the granddaughter watches two TV programs: "Good Night, Children" and "Vremya," a news broadcast.

Gorbachev said that he and Mrs. Gorbachev had taken two, apparently private, vacations to Italy and France. They toured each country by car for 21 days.

Gorbachev told Mrs. Reagan about a vacation to the Crimea that Mrs. Gorbachev had taken with her granddaughter. They visited the palace of an ancient khan, where they learned that the khan had 200 wives. Upon her return to Moscow, the granddaughter asked Gorbachev why the khan had 200 wives and he only had one. Gorbachev replied that the khan did not have a single philosopher among his wives, and he did not know what to do with the single one he had.

Prepared by:
Eugenia Arensbarger and
William Hopkins,
Department of State

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

REAGAN-GORBACHEV MEETINGS IN GENEVA
November, 1985

Third Private Meeting

DATE: November 20, 1985
TIME: 10:15 - 11:25 A.M.
PLACE: Soviet Mission,
Geneva, Switzerland

PARTICIPANTS:

United States

President Ronald Reagan
Dimitri Zarechnak, Interpreter

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary, Central Committee,
Communist Party of the Soviet Union
Yuri D. Uspensky, Interpreter

* * * * *

After the photo opportunity in an adjoining room, General Secretary Gorbachev invited President Reagan to join him in a small room next to the main meeting room while the rest of the delegation took their seats, after which he and the President could join them.

President Reagan told the General Secretary that he wanted to talk with him privately about a subject which he knew that the Soviet side considered to be interference in its internal affairs. The President stressed that he did not want to interfere in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union, but he did want to speak with Gorbachev about human rights.

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BY CAJ, NARA, Date 6/25/02

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The President indicated that in the U.S. system of government many of the things that we would hope to accomplish with the Soviet Union would require the support of the Congress, which, in turn, is influenced by the people of the country. He could get such support if some things were done in the area of human rights. In the U.S., as Gorbachev knew, we have people from all over the world. Many of them retain a pride in their heritage, with regard to the countries where their parents and ancestors came from.

The President said that religious groups in the U.S. tend to influence Congress through lobby groups. An example of strong attachment to religious celebration occurred in the U.S. on St. Patrick's Day. This was a special holiday for the Irish, and Reagan's father had come from Ireland. Other groups in the U.S., such as Ukrainian Americans, Lithuanian Americans and Polish Americans have their organizations, customs and holidays.

The President said that he did not wish to raise this issue in the main meeting. He was also not asking to get Gorbachev's agreement to publicly announce actions which were being taken to deal with difficulties in this area, such as emigration. The recent release of several men and women who were allowed to join their spouses had made a big impact on the people in the U.S., but the President wished to be frank and said that the question then arose -- why not the rest? An example of such an issue was the desire of Soviet Jews to emigrate to Israel. There was a large Jewish community in the U.S., which had an influence on Congress.

The President told Gorbachev that if he could resolve some of these issues on his own, the President would never boast that the Soviet side had given in to the U.S. We would express our appreciation for what was done, and there would be no hint that this was done as a result of U.S. efforts. But the fact that something was done would make it easier for the President to do the type of things which the two countries could do together, such as in the area of trade, for which the President needed Congressional support.

The President said that he wished to give an example of this type of approach. In 1981, during his first year in office, the Soviet government was eager to have a new long-term grain agreement with the U.S., after the imposition of the grain embargo by Reagan's predecessor. The President had sat down with the Soviet Ambassador and had spoken with him about human rights concerns, citing the specific example of the Pentecostals who had been living for five years in the basement of the Moscow Embassy. If they had left the Embassy, they would have been taken by the police. They had come to the Embassy because they had gotten into trouble after having asked for permission to emigrate. The

President told the Ambassador that he would not speak publicly about this, but there would be a better chance to have a grain agreement, since there was opposition in the U.S. to such an agreement, if something were done to free those people. Shortly after that, they left the Embassy and emigrated to the U.S. The President never told anyone that he had done this. Those people were gratefully received in the U.S., and they did not even know that the President had spoken on their behalf. A short time later, the long-term grain agreement was concluded without difficulties in Congress, and this agreement is in place today.

The President indicated that this was the type of thing which he was seeking here and that is why he did not wish to raise these issues in the full meeting, not to make it appear that he was trying to interfere in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union. It would make it easier for us to do the type of things that we could do together if he were not constantly reminded about the restrictions imposed on Soviet people, the refusal to permit them to practice their religion, etc. The President would not tell anyone that he had raised this issue with Gorbachev.

Gorbachev replied that he considered that at some stage of U.S.-Soviet relations, the issue of human rights was being used for political purposes, not only by representatives of various political organizations which were anti-Soviet, but, and this came as a surprise, also by officials of the U.S. Administration, including the President. The Soviet side did not understand this. The President had mentioned why and how he had come to be involved in these issues. Gorbachev wished to say in all sincerity that the Soviet Union was in favor of broader contacts, exchange of people -- scientists, cultural representatives, all types of people -- with the U.S. The Soviet side felt that this was necessary, and Gorbachev thought that Reagan had said the same. The two countries depended on each other today and would in the future. We should get to know each other better and create a good atmosphere. The Soviet people have no enmity for the American people. The Soviet people have a positive attitude toward the people of the United States. If we work at this on the basis of non-interference in the internal affairs of the other country, the Soviet side would be ready to broaden its contacts with the U.S. It is truly interested in doing so. But what we need first is an atmosphere of good will between the countries. This was the fundamental question.

Gorbachev then went on to give specific examples. People from the U.S. travel to the Soviet Union and vice versa. People in the U.S. have relatives in the USSR, and they come visit the places of their origin, such as the Ukraine, the Baltic States, and so on. The Soviet Union welcomes this and is open to such visits. There are no difficulties in this regard. Lately, there

has been an increase in contacts between representatives of religious groups. The Soviet side was in favor of this. There were marriages between U.S. and Soviet citizens. This was a very natural and understandable thing, and there were no objections to this. Since the group of U.S. Senators that had met with him before this meeting in Geneva had mentioned these issues, Gorbachev had looked into them. During the past five years more than 400 marriages had taken place, and out of these, only ten people had not been permitted to emigrate. The only obstacle to emigration is involvement of the person in question with state secrets. In this case, the state has a specific responsibility, but it tries to let time pass, to let the individual do different kind of work so that his knowledge becomes outdated. His case is then returned too, and he is released. Gorbachev repeated that within the past five years restrictions had been placed only on ten of 420 to 450 people. But these were Soviet regulations, and the Soviet side asked that they be respected. This was one example.

Gorbachev continued that the President had mentioned Jews. The fate of Jewish people was of concern to the Soviet government. There are many Jews in the Soviet Union, as there are in the U.S. (which has the greatest number) and in other countries. After what the Fascists had done to the Jews, the Soviet Union had done everything it could to give them special attention, and it had not regretted doing so. Since many Jewish families had been separated, difficulties existed because of this, and the Soviet side tried to examine such cases. But when such issues are mixed in with discussion of the situation of the Jews in the Soviet Union in general, this is not right. Then the Soviet side objects and furnishes data to back up what it says. This has been the Soviet Union's approach in all cases, including in its discussions with the U.S. The Soviet Union was willing to look at specific cases, but when these things are used for political aims, they would be rebuffed. Specific cases would be examined quietly, in a humane way.

Gorbachev said that when a U.S. Congressional delegation had visited the USSR at the invitation of the Supreme Soviet, the two bodies had agreed to establish a permanent group to examine such issues, and the Soviet side was in favor of this, but would not permit this issue to be used for political aims.

The President said that with regard to Jews and other religious groups, there were restrictions in the Soviet Union on their ability to practice their religion, e.g., Jews were not permitted to teach Hebrew. In the U.S., in addition to attending the usual schools, Jewish families sent their children to their own schools to study their ancient language. Perhaps some people would not think of emigrating from the Soviet Union if they were allowed to practice their religion.

The President continued that with regard to other questions, the two countries had signed the Helsinki Accords which assured certain freedoms, such as family reunification and the right to emigrate. However, our two countries were big ones, with very large bureaucracies. It was not possible for Gorbachev or the President to know everything that went on at the lower levels, where people could make decisions which were contrary to the desires of the leadership.

The President said that Gorbachev had mentioned that only ten people had not been permitted to rejoin their spouses. But he had a much larger list of cases of separate families. He also wished to give Gorbachev one more example of a case in this category. He knew of a piano player, a young man in the Soviet Union, who wished to emigrate to Israel. Not only was he denied such permission, but he was also denied permission to play the piano with major orchestras, and his records could no longer be sold in stores. His career had been destroyed as a result of the fact that he had wished to emigrate. The bureaucracy could do many things of which Gorbachev was not aware. This man had a wife and a small child. Apparently, he and his wife had been told that they could emigrate, but the baby would have to remain. Since the child was only one year old, they certainly could not have left him behind, so they did not emigrate.'

Gorbachev said that he would like to ask the President about the following. For the Soviet leadership and for everyone in Soviet society it was clear whose side the President was on in the area of human rights. The President always spoke of the lack of human rights in socialist countries. In other countries there was democracy and everything was okay. Since people were aware of the rights situation in the Soviet Union and in other countries, and could compare the situations, why was the President taking this point of view. If other people said this, this might be understandable, but the President always said that there is a clear distinction, namely, that there are no rights in socialist countries, but they are in bloom in the democracies. This caused consternation.

Gorbachev continued that at the level of General Secretary and President one should be responsible and call things by their proper names, no matter where they occur. If things are painted only in black and white, this would only inflame the distrust between the countries. He thought that it would be better to take steps to improve the general atmosphere of our relationship, and then specific humanitarian issues could quickly be resolved. The Soviet Union was prepared to resolve them. But if questions of human rights were used for political purposes, the Soviet side would rebuff such attempts. He repeated that the Soviet Union was ready to examine specific cases, especially those mentioned by the President.

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The President replied that he was trying to clearly indicate that if such changes occurred, he would not indicate that he was the one that had persuaded Gorbachev to do this. He realized that both of them had concerns about their political image, namely, that they did not want to have it seem that they were giving in to outside influences. He wished to assure Gorbachev that he would have no such problems with the President. What happens is that various groups in the United States have relatives and families in other countries, and they get information from these people. Then organizations deliver this to the President and demand that their grievances be resolved with regard to people in the Soviet Union. These things make their way into the press, and he could not do anything about that since the U.S. has a free press. He was trying to say that we could work better together if such issues did not appear on the front pages, but rather if he spoke with Gorbachev about these things confidentially.

Gorbachev replied that he welcomed the President's decision to have such a private meeting. He had heard him out, and the President had heard him out as well, and the two of them would bear in mind what had been said.

The President indicated that he would like to make one last point. With regard to what Gorbachev had said about issues like this in the U.S., the President wished to say that in the U.S. there are laws which prohibit discrimination on the basis of religion, national origin, sex and race.

Gorbachev interjected that he was familiar with the state of things in the U.S. The President had said that there was no discrimination on the basis of sex. This was not true. According to U.S. law a woman could make 60 percent of the salary a man made for the same job. The President had spoken of equality. But so much time had passed since the American Revolution, and women still did not have the same rights as men. He knew this to be the case. He was informed. He had a legal education. The President should not think that he saw only the negative aspects of things in a primitive way. He saw things from a broad perspective, and he was responsible. He supported the rights of families. If there was a need, we should have exchanges and see what could be done about specific problems. But if we are referring to changing laws, with other interests in mind, this could not be done. The Soviet people set their laws. Any other approach shows a disrespect for the Soviet people. This must be the basic framework. The U.S. had its own system, and the Soviet Union had its own. The President would defend the United States, and he, Gorbachev, would defend the Soviet Union. Such a discussion could take a very long time.

The President replied that there were differences in our economic system and in our societies. Gorbachev had mentioned the question of women's rights. The President noted parenthetically that women own more than 50 percent of all the wealth in the United States. But the difference in the systems was that, yes, there were individuals, perhaps employers in factories, with personal prejudices about hiring women, blacks, and so on. But the law says that there can be no discrimination. So when various groups indicate that there are those who discriminate, the government must abide by the law and punish those individuals. No U.S. law permits discrimination -- quite the contrary.

The President continued that he had spoken about the bureaucracy. He wished to recall that when he was Governor, he learned from one of his assistants that the latter had taken some young black people to the State Labor office to fill out some job applications (the President explained that there was a Department of Labor in California, which helped people to find jobs). When the applicants had subsequently been questioned about whether they had filled out the applications correctly, one said that he had not. Reagan's assistant took the man back and asked to see his application. They could not find it. Then the man to whom they had been talking slowly edged over to the wastebasket and pulled the application out of it. The Governor was not the one responsible for this. It was one prejudiced clerk who had thrown the application into the wastebasket.

Gorbachev said that people in the U.S. should live as they like. If they choose something, the Soviets would not judge them. The U.S. had many achievements, and the USSR would not interfere in its internal affairs. But the U.S. should do the same with regard to the USSR.

The President said that it would be easier for him to fulfill some of the possible agreements between the two countries if he were not beset by people in the U.S. Congress and by organizations that hear of their relatives and friends and complain about the restraints which they consider should not be imposed upon them, such as with respect to the right to live in other places or the right to emigrate. So if Gorbachev would think about these things, the President would have more freedom to work together.

Gorbachev said that he had heard the President's thoughts, but he could not agree that the President was so dependent on the opinion of small groups. He knew what the President could do as a political leader when he wanted to. When he did not want to, he would talk about pressure groups, and so on. The Soviet side saw all of this. If had a realistic view of life, and asked the U.S. side to have a realistic view of the USSR.

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The President said that he realized that it was difficult for the General Secretary, within his system, to believe the President that he, Gorbachev, was wrong about the President's power. In the U.S. system, including during the time after he had become President, one part of the Congress, i.e., the House of Representatives, was dominated by the opposition party.

Gorbachev interrupted, without listening to the translation, to say that he had understood what the President had said, and that he took all of this into account. He was familiar with the American political process, and the President should not hide behind this. (U.S. Interpreter's Note: Gorbachev's indication that he had understood what the President had said without translation was unexpected, since he had never shown any indication of understanding English in previous or subsequent conversations. After the President's following remarks, Gorbachev specifically asked for interpretation and looked like he had not understood what the President had said. I think that the first time he was simply assuming that he knew what the President was saying, and was anxious to get into the plenary meeting.)

The President indicated that there were things which he was not able to get approved at the present time because of his opposition, which based its position on what was said by lobby groups.

Gorbachev said that the President had talked about certain issues and he, Gorbachev had expressed his views.

The President interjected that with regard to some cases involving individuals Gorbachev could make it easier for him with regard to the relationship between the two countries.

Gorbachev said that he was glad that they had had a private talk and that this had let them get to know each other better, and this was important. When the two of them would communicate, especially about the larger political issues, they would know what the other one looked like, and the image of the other person would be present when decisions would be made.

Prepared by:

Dimitri Zarechnak,
Department of State

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~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

REAGAN-GORBACHEV MEETINGS IN GENEVA
November, 1985

Third Plenary Meeting

DATE: November 20, 1985
TIME: 11:30 A.M. - 12:40 P.M.
PLACE: Soviet Mission,
Geneva, Switzerland

PARTICIPANTS:

United States

President Ronald Reagan
George Shultz, Secretary of State
Donald T. Regan, Chief of Staff, White House
Robert C. McFarlane, Assistant to the President for National
Security Affairs
Arthur Hartman, Ambassador to the USSR
Rozanne Ridgway, Assistant Secretary of State for European and
Canadian Affairs
Paul H. Nitze, Special Advisor to the President and Secretary of
State on Arms Control Matters
Jack F. Matlock, Jr., Special Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs
Mark Parris, Director, Office of Soviet Union Affairs, Department
of State
Dimitri Zarechnak, Interpreter

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev
Eduard Shevardnadze, Minister of Foreign Affairs
Georgy M. Korniyenko, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
Anatoly F. Dobrynin, Ambassador to the United States
Aleksandr Yakovlev, Chief, Propaganda Department, Central
Committee, CPSU
Leonid M. Zamyatin, Chief, International Information Department,
Central Committee, CPSU
Andrey M. Aleksandrov-Agentov, Assistant to General Secretary
Gorbachev
Sergey P. Tarasenko, Assistant to Minister of Foreign Affairs
Yury D. Uspensky, Interpreter

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BY: [Signature] , NARA, Date: 6/25/02

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After the press had been ushered out of the meeting room, Gorbachev invited President Reagan to lead off.

The President noted that he wished to address a number of items which there had not been time for the previous day. He would open with a few words on the Geneva arms control negotiations.

The President observed that our peoples were particularly concerned by nuclear missiles, which, if the button were pushed, could kill millions in a matter of minutes. It was important to show our people that we were concerned.

We had therefore shaped our proposal on strategic offensive systems so as to achieve deep reductions, focusing in particular on what we think are destabilizing weapons. Our proposals dealt with a number of delivery systems: ICBMs, SLBMs, etc. It built upon the fifty percent reduction concept contained in the Soviet counterproposal. It also incorporated reductions to 4,500 ballistic missile warheads and a limit on ALCMs of 1,500; the overall sum would be the 6,000 figure that the Soviets had proposed.

The U.S. had to insist, however, that the reductions be applied to the proper categories of systems. We could not agree to the Soviet's proposed definition of "strategic delivery systems" or any definition that included within a common limit a category of delivery systems on the US side while excluding it on the Soviet side. The two sides, of course, had a long negotiating history on this issue, so the President would not repeat the U.S. rationale, but rather restate its insistence on the definition agreed upon in past strategic offensive arms agreements as to the categories of systems to be included in limits on strategic offensive arms.

The aggregate result of the reductions and limits we proposed for strategic offensive arms would be a more stable world in which the number of these arms would be radically reduced to comparable levels on both sides, the threat to the retaliatory capabilities of each side would be significantly diminished, and the prospects of verification would be enhanced. The President stressed that verification was vital if we were to reduce suspicion between our two governments.

In the area of intermediate-range nuclear arms, the U.S. proposal built, in part, on Soviet ideas. The U.S. was prepared to cap US LRINF missiles in Europe at the level deployed as of December 31, 1985, in return for your agreement to reduce your LRINF missile launchers within range of NATO Europe to the same launcher number. The U.S. would be prepared to discuss with the USSR the exact mix of these systems. The U.S. proposal included

reductions in the number of SS-20 launchers located in Asia and outside range of NATO Europe. The end result, the President stressed in conclusion, would be that both sides would be limited to an equal global LRINF missile warhead number.

Before moving onto other issues, the President offered Gorbachev a chance to respond.

Gorbachev indicated that he did, in fact, have a few comments. The Soviets had carefully assessed the U.S. NST proposal. They welcomed the U.S. agreement to accept 50 percent reductions in nuclear strategic arsenals. It was of fundamental importance to note any basis for moving ahead in the search for mutually acceptable proposals which could be components of possible agreements.

But Gorbachev also had some critical observations to make regarding practically all the elements of the Soviet proposal. He did not wish to dramatize this. He believed that this approach coincided with the President's own in welcoming the basic thrust of Soviet proposals for radical reductions, while not welcoming other elements. Both sides now had proposals on the table. There was plenty to work with.

Reiterating that he did not want to dramatize differences in the two sides' approach, Gorbachev stressed that the Soviet Union truly desired a serious search for mutually acceptable proposals. He stressed that the Soviet Union was not proposing elements which would be unacceptable to the U.S., which could jeopardize U.S. security, since this would make it impossible to reach agreements in the future. But the Soviets expected the same treatment from the United States. If the U.S. advanced proposals which sought to undermine Soviet security, it would make agreement impossible and complicate future work in this area.

There were elements in the U.S. proposal, however, which clearly departed from the January 1985 U.S.-Soviet understanding on the goals and subjects of the Geneva talks. On the one hand, the President and his colleagues asserted that the U.S. had not departed from this understanding, that the U.S. was in favor of radical reductions in defensive nuclear weapons and in favor of preventing an arms race in space.

The President's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) was regarded by the U.S. as consistent with the January understanding. This was a "revelation" to the Soviets. No matter under what flag the U.S. chose to cover it, SDI amounted to placing weapons in space, to spreading the arms race to space. This view devalued the remaining elements of the U.S. proposals. What purpose could be served by radical reductions if the U.S. contemplated deploying weapons in space -- with all the attendant consequences.

When the Soviets had proposed that the two sides agree to close the door to deployments of weapons in space, it was consistent with both the U.S. and USSR's security interests. Gorbachev noted that the U.S. had claimed the Soviet Union was ahead in scientific research on space questions; if so, the U.S. should want to stop the process now. As the U.S. did not, Soviet superiority in space research did not appear to be the problem.

Gorbachev felt he had to say that he did not know what lay at the bottom of the U.S. position. How the U.S. had come to its position was not important to him, however. What was important to him was the position itself. Gorbachev was concerned that the position was fed by an illusion that the U.S. was ahead in the technology and information transfer systems on which space systems would be based, and that a possibility therefore existed to obtain military superiority over the USSR. The U.S. might even consider it possible to obtain a first-strike capability, or, under certain circumstances, to launch a first strike. The Soviet Union needed to consider worst cases in developing its policies.

Gorbachev told the President that he had recently observed to a Soviet scientist that he could see no reason why the President should be committed to SDI. Gorbachev had wondered why the President could have any interest in injecting a new element of instability into the relationship, in further exacerbating U.S.-Soviet relations. The scientist had said that she had done research into the matter and found the explanation: SDI would produce from 600 billion to a trillion dollars in new military expenditures. That was the reason.

With mounting urgency, Gorbachev said he must return again to the problem of SDI, even at the risk of injecting some tension into the discussion. He did not want to do this. But he could not ignore the importance of the problem. Gorbachev expressed regret that the U.S. appeared determined to depart from the January agreement on stopping the arms race on earth and preventing it in space. If the U.S. departed from that road, Gorbachev did not know when it would be possible for the two countries to meet on it again. Everything at the Geneva NST talks would come to a halt. For its part, the Soviet Union remained committed to the goals of the January understanding, and was prepared to do everything possible to achieve them.

The President stated that the scientist Gorbachev had referred to was dealing with a fantasy. She reminded the President of the scientists who had told President Eisenhower that ICBMs would never work.

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The President underscored that SDI was not a weapons system or a plan for conducting a war in space. It was an effort to find a more civilized means of deterring war than reliance on thousands of nuclear missiles which, if used, would kill millions on both sides. Never before in history had the possibility existed of a war which would bring about the end of civilization.

Even if the two sides reduced offensive arms by 50 percent, there would still be too many weapons. The U.S. did not see in SDI a means of obtaining military advantage over the Soviet Union. The benefits of SDI research would be for the USSR as well as the U.S. If defensive systems could be found, they would be available to all. This would end the nuclear nightmare for the U.S. people, the Soviet people, all people. The Soviet Union and the United States had the capability to move beyond simply aiming weapons at each other with the risk of ending the world as we know it. As to the argument that the U.S. sought to build an offensive arsenal, the U.S. objective was that whoever developed a feasible defensive system would share it, so that any threat to the other side would be eliminated. If there was opposition to that concept, the President speculated it might be based on the assumption that nuclear weapons might, at some point, be used. The U.S., on the other hand, was seeking a security system based on "shield," not "spears" or missiles. Under the current system of deterrence, it would be impossible to tell the winner from the loser in the event of war.

Gorbachev replied that he understood the President's arguments but found them unconvincing. They contained many emotional elements, elements which were part of one man's dream. Gorbachev did not wish to suggest that the President did not want peace. But the fact was that SDI would result in the appearance of weapons in space. They might be built as anti-missile weapons, but they would have the capability of striking earth. The USSR could never know for sure. The Soviets had agreed on 50 percent reductions in nuclear weapons. But the President was advocating a whole new class of weapons. Describing these weapons as a shield was only packaging. They would open a new arms race in space. The President would be held responsible.

Gorbachev said that there were dreams of peace and there were realities. He did not believe the President saw him as a blood-thirsty person who wanted to drag his country into conflict. The Soviet Union was for reducing the number of weapons. History would remember the President, as well as the Soviet leader, for having begun to eliminate nuclear weapons. But agreement had not yet been reached. And now SDI threatened to open a new arms race.

The President observed that, under the U.S. open laboratories concept, scientists from both sides could satisfy themselves that

SDI research was not being directed toward the development of an offensive capability. Gorbachev shot back his agreement that laboratories should be opened, but only if the development of space weapons had first been banned. The President reiterated that Soviet scientists would be able to verify by visiting U.S. laboratories whether the U.S. was building destructive weapons or a shield. The U.S. was after a shield.

This got to the point that it was necessary for the two countries to get beyond suspicions. The President asked whether he would not be justified in suspecting that, under certain circumstances, the Soviets would use their missiles against the U.S. Words could not reduce the idea of a threat from one side to another. The Soviet interpretation was that SDI would lead to the development of new offensive weapons. The U.S. was trying simply to see if there was a way to end the world's nightmare about nuclear weapons. The President emphasized that the U.S. would share its research with the Soviet Union; attempts to develop destructive weapons would be discovered.

Gorbachev asked the President with some emotion why he would not believe him when he said the Soviet Union would never attack. Before the President could respond, Gorbachev repeated the question. He again interrupted the President's answer to insist on a response.

The President stated that no individual could say to the U.S. people that they should rely on his personal faith rather than on sound defense. Gorbachev questioned the sincerity of the President's willingness to share SDI research, pointing out that the U.S. did not share its most advanced technology even with its allies.

Gorbachev called for a more realistic discussion. The Soviet Union was prepared to compromise. But the U.S. had the impression that the USSR was weak and could be painted into a corner. That was no illusion. There would soon be a disillusionment; perhaps not in the President's time, but ultimately. The President would be held responsible. SDI would open a new sphere for the arms race. Why was this necessary?

The Soviet Union had said it would agree to a separate INF agreement, to deep cuts. These had not been easy decisions. The Soviets had their concerns. But they felt that if steps were not taken in the next year to 18 months, the consequences would be grave. The President wanted to catch the "Firebird" of SDI by using the U.S. technical advantage. There would be disillusionment, but it would come too late, as the "infernal" train would already be moving.

Gorbachev observed that perhaps his remarks had grown a bit heated. He had meant only to convey to the President the depth of Soviet concern on this issue.

The President replied that, with all due respect, Gorbachev's concerns were based on a false premise. Overcoming several interruptions from Gorbachev, the President reaffirmed that the U.S. would be prepared to reduce nuclear weapons to zero and ultimately to eliminate them. The fact was, however, that they still existed. A defensive shield was therefore necessary. He compared nuclear weapons to chemical weapons. Conventions had been negotiated to ban the use of chemical weapons, but gas masks had been retained. With a defensive shield against nuclear weapons, people would have an additional guarantee against their use. The President could not see how SDI research could be interpreted as threatening to human life or targets on earth. Moreover, he repeated, the ultimate idea was to share SDI research; neither nation would be able to use it to develop a first-strike capability.

Gorbachev alleged that the U.S., under the guise of a shield, intended to introduce weapons into space. The Soviet Union must base its policies on this fact. The Soviets could not be sure what the U.S. ultimately had in mind. The fact was that to destroy weapons other weapons were necessary. The President countered that no one was sure whether SDI would work; the U.S. effort was designed only to find out if a defense was possible. Gorbachev said that this meant only that the U.S. was seeking to determine if space weapons were possible.

The President explained that his instructions to those responsible for SDI research had been to find out if there were a means to stop nuclear missiles. He had said that if such a means existed, the U.S. would share it with other countries so as to make nuclear weapons unnecessary. He was aware that SDI research dealt with systems such as lasers and particle beam devices which had weapons applications. These systems, however, were designed not to kill people, but to stop nuclear missiles from reaching their target. The President noted that the Soviet Union already had the world's most developed ABM system.

Gorbachev said he felt it inappropriate in their conversation to inject banalities more in keeping with press conferences. The Soviet ABM system was in compliance with the ABM Treaty. The Soviet Union had chosen to place its system around its capital; the U.S. had placed its near missile fields. The USSR was scrupulous in complying with treaties dealing with nuclear weapons. It was too dangerous to engage in deceptions in this area. The President agreed, noting that the U.S. had raised the question of Krasnoyarsk radar and its possible battle management role. He asked Gorbachev whether the U.S. expression of

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willingness to share its SDI research did not adequately deal with Soviet suspicions.

Gorbachev indicated that the President already had the Soviet assessment of the U.S. position. Gorbachev wanted to emphasize it because it was the key question of their meeting. It would define the future political dialogue between the two countries, the nature of the Geneva negotiations, the outcome of important decisions on domestic policy in both countries. It appeared that the President was very committed to the development, testing, and deployment of space weapons. The Soviets would have to consider and base their policy on this fact. The Soviets had heard similar views expressed by many of the President's advisers. But these were only advisers. The President had the ultimate responsibility. Gorbachev sometimes had felt that the President's advisers feared the President's prestige would suffer if he gave up SDI. Gorbachev was "500 percent" convinced that the President would in fact benefit from such a decision.

The President expressed concern that the discussion had gone too far and suggested a more reasonable approach. The two sides had agreed to a reduction in strategic offensive weapons of 50 percent. It was unfortunate that this was being frustrated because the Soviets objected to an attempt to determine if there was a defense against nuclear missiles. It would be years before this was known. We had made clear our willingness to share SDI research. There was no reason why such research should prevent us from going ahead with reductions in nuclear forces.

The President did not know whether or not Gorbachev believed in reincarnation. Perhaps the President in a previous life had been the inventor of the shield. In any case, the President believed that trust and prospects for peace would improve if both sides began to rely more on defense, with offensive weapons being reduced.

Gorbachev asked rhetorically what was the result of the Geneva talks thus far. There had been negotiations, with the objectives and subjects clearly determined: to stop the arms race on earth and prevent its spread to space. The Soviets had felt that the work done thus far in Geneva would enable the two leaders to give an impulse to the process in their own meeting. The leaders had now met and it seemed clear that the President felt that weapons could be introduced into space. Gorbachev feared the negotiations would go by the wayside in this case. What, he asked, was to be done.

The President replied that, where Gorbachev saw a threat, we saw an opportunity. We should both seek to reduce offensive arms by 50 percent and to determine if defense was possible. We could then sit down and decide if deployment was desirable. We would

share our findings. Was that not a fair deal? The Soviet Union would be aware of our arms program. We would look at the Soviets's. We were talking about several years. Would people not, the President asked, be more confident that a defense would work if both sides reduced by 50 percent.

Gorbachev asked that the President not treat the Soviets as "simple people." The President replied that he did not see how he had in any way shown disrespect or charged the Soviets with naivety. He had explored the various issues with Gorbachev as openly as possible. He could see no logical argument against going ahead with research when we have made clear that we will not have a monopoly on defense if a feasible solution is found.

Gorbachev questioned why it was necessary to conduct research when nuclear weapons were being reduced -- and by 50 percent as a first step. SDI was torpedoing the possibility of steps to reduce nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union wanted to lock the door against space weapons -- to bar it or even drive in nails -- and then begin reductions. The Soviets did not know what weapons might be developed by researchers. If the past was any guide, they would find things they had not expected to find. The Soviets had repeatedly shown in recent months their willingness to seek reasonable solutions. The U.S. approach could only lead to an expansion of the arms race on earth and in space.

The President denied this. He stressed that the U.S. was prepared to open its laboratories to demonstrate that it was not seeking a new offensive potential. Gorbachev interrupted to state that the Soviets were looking for a way out. They were serious. The President countered that the way out was to reduce and not to miss the opportunity to develop a defense because of fear that it might have an offensive potential.

Gorbachev asked if the President had money to spare. The President replied no. Gorbachev said he knew that. The President had in the past expressed the view that SDI could be used to prevent "some madman" from using a nuclear weapon. The U.S. and USSR should reduce their own weapons by 50 percent and then have other countries join them. More could be done with the NPT Treaty. Ways could be found to prevent madmen. Because of one madman, should we have an arms race in space?

The President again wondered why the Soviets should object to research. At this point, we were only talking about a theory. We were also talking about safeguards. If the problem appeared to be solvable, then we could talk. But both sides would for the moment retain nuclear weapons. Reductions would make it possible to save considerable expenditures, e.g., for modernization.

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Gorbachev expressed his regret that the two leaders would have so little positive to say on the Geneva talks. The President replied that the U.S. would have to tell people that the possibility of reducing nuclear arms by 50 percent had been destroyed by suspicion of ulterior motives. Gorbachev noted that strategic defense was the President's idea; it was hard to dispute the notion that the Geneva negotiations were based on the January understanding, which deal with two elements: stopping the arms race on earth and preventing it in space. After his discussion with the President, it was clear that the U.S. was determined to develop and introduce weapons into space.

The President said that the U.S. side would tell a different story. We would say that current effort to develop a system that would not kill people, but only stop missiles, was the cause of Soviet suspicions which had prevented reductions of nuclear weapons. An opportunity was thus being lost. The President felt that public opinion would find that difficult to understand.

Gorbachev said that this was the U.S. assessment. But it was important the leaders deal in substance not propaganda. The Soviet side had expected that, when the two leaders met, after months of preparation, it would be possible to reach solutions and to clarify what had been agreed to in January.

Noting that they had already run over the allotted time, the President urged Gorbachev to consider further the safeguards the President had mentioned. It would reassure publics in both countries if the leaders could agree on this and go forward with reductions in nuclear weapons. The President had no further elaborations other than to repeat his inability to comprehend how, in a world full of nuclear weapons, it was so horrifying to seek to develop a defense against this awful threat, how an effort to reduce nuclear weapons could break down because of such an attempt.

Gorbachev for his part, questioned how, in such a difficult situation and with the threat that the arms race would expand in the absence of restraints, one could contemplate a new arms race in space. It was not even possible to reduce armaments on earth. What could be done when weapons were orbiting the globe? How could one verify this? Gorbachev could not commit himself to developing such systems.

The President said it was necessary to give each side the freedom to look at what the other was doing. He recalled President Eisenhower's "Open Skies" proposal in expressing disappointment at the Soviet Government's one-sided approach to verification.

Gorbachev suggested that the two sides think about and analyze the thorough discussion which had taken place. It might be possible to return to the subject that afternoon. He reiterated that he saw no obstacles to movement towards a solution which might serve both sides' interests. The President urged Gorbachev to consider the verification ideas he had shared. Gorbachev indicated his willingness to do so, but stressed that what was being verified was important. The Soviets would be prepared to verify an end to nuclear testing; they would not be willing to verify a continuation of such tests. They would be similarly willing to verify a prohibition of space-strike weapons, but not a process by which such weapons would be developed, whether through open laboratories or other means. But in principle, they were open on the question.

The President again urged Gorbachev to consider whether he could not accept the idea of a shield.

Gorbachev did not respond, proposing that the meeting end and resume at 2:30 PM.

Prepared by:
Mark Parris,
Department of State

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

REAGAN-GORBACHEV MEETINGS IN GENEVA

November, 1985

Fourth Plenary Meeting

DATE: November 20, 1985

TIME: 2:45 P. M. - 3:30 P.M.

PLACE: Soviet Mission,
Geneva, Switzerland

PARTICIPANTS:

United States

President Ronald Reagan
George Shultz, Secretary of State
Donald T. Regan, Chief of Staff, White House
Robert C. McFarlane, Assistant to the President for National
Security Affairs
Arthur Hartman, Ambassador to the USSR
Paul H. Nitze, Special Advisor to the President and Secretary of
State on Arms Control Matters
Jack F. Matlock, Jr., Special Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs
Mark Parris, Director, Office of Soviet Union Affairs, Department
of State
Dimitri Zarechnak, Interpreter

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev
Eduard Shevardnadze, Minister of Foreign Affairs
Georgy M. Korniyenko, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
Anatoly F. Dobrynin, Ambassador to the United States
Aleksandr Yakovlev, Chief, Propaganda Department, Central
Committee, CPSU
Leonid M. Zamyatin, Chief, International Information Department,
Central Committee, CPSU
Andrey M. Aleksandrov-Agentov, Assistant to General Secretary
Gorbachev
Sergey P. Tarasenko, Assistant to Minister of Foreign Affairs
Soviet Interpreter

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BY CLS
NARA Date 6/25/02

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Gorbachev opened the meeting by remarking that just days before the two leaders had been moving toward Geneva. They were now moving toward the completion of their meeting. Gorbachev understood that this would be their last official session. He invited the President to start the session.

The President began by noting that he would like to summarize his discussions with Gorbachev over the previous two days. He had a few points to make and would be interested in seeing if Gorbachev could agree.

There had been two days of candid conversation on a wide range of issues. There were clear differences on such questions as nuclear weapons, on the political philosophy of the two countries. It was important to be realistic and to have no illusions regarding our differences.

But there were some common concerns as well. Both sides had expressed their commitment to deep reductions in nuclear armaments and their hope to eliminate such weapons entirely some day. Both would like to intensify discussions on how to increase strategic stability and reduce the dangers to either side.

The President repeated his conviction of a need for a shift from deterrence based on strategic arms to a greater reliance on defensive systems. If our research was borne out it would be necessary to discuss how to introduce defensive systems. There was also a need for greater mutual trust through compliance with obligations under bilateral and multilateral agreements from arms control to the Helsinki Final Act.

In addition to creating a safer strategic environment, it was necessary to end tragic regional conflicts. The two sides differed on the causes of regional tensions, but the President believed both saw the need to intensify the consultative process on local conflicts. As he had said in his October UNGA speech, the United States was prepared to associate itself with bold initiatives to resolve conflicts which had damaged U.S.-Soviet relations and aggravated international tensions. This was behind our proposals for military disengagement and to end outside involvement in regional struggles. The people of the various regions must be able to solve their own problems.

There were a number of bilateral questions which could be resolved if the necessary political will was there. The two sides should be able to agree to a fundamental expansion of exchanges in the areas of culture, science, and athletics as a means of promoting greater mutual understanding.

The President described his discussions with Gorbachev as rich and constructive. He was pleased that the two leaders would

continue the process by visiting each others' countries. He looked forward to the pleasure of Gorbachev's visit to the U.S. in 1986, and to his own visit to Moscow in 1987. The results of the Geneva meetings would be clear only in the months and years ahead.

The President then read the following statement on the Nuclear and Space Talks (NST) for the Soviets' consideration as a joint statement of what might be accomplished in those discussions:

"The President and the General Secretary discussed the negotiations on nuclear and space arms. They agreed that work on these negotiations should be accelerated with a view to accomplishing the tasks assigned in the Joint US-Soviet Agreement of January 8, 1985, specifically to prevent an arms race in outer space and to terminate it on earth, to limit and reduce nuclear arms and enhance strategic stability. Offensive nuclear arms will be significantly reduced applying the general concept of 50% reductions to equal ceilings on specific, comparable categories. There will be a separate interim agreement resulting in reductions and limitations on land-based, intermediate-range nuclear missile systems as a step toward the total elimination of this class of missiles. To insure effective verification of compliance, meaningful measures to this end will be negotiated concurrently with limits on weaponry and incorporated in all agreements resulting from these negotiations."

After first confirming that the President was finished, Gorbachev indicated that he would like to sum up the meeting from the Soviet perspective.

Gorbachev felt that the very fact of the meeting should be considered a positive development, since it demonstrated a joint understanding of the significance of U.S.-Soviet relations and of the two sides' responsibilities and role in the world. He agreed with the President that the meeting had taken place in an atmosphere of frankness, which permitted the two leaders to outline in detail their positions on the full range of bilateral and international questions.

Gorbachev concurred further that the discussions had revealed deep differences in the two sides' assessments of the causes of certain bilateral and international differences. The talks had allowed both sides to understand one another better; this was of some importance, even major importance. Gorbachev felt, however, that the discussion had shown that the two sides were unable to build a joint concept for dealing with the broad range of bilateral and international questions. Nonetheless, they had agreed to continue their political dialogue. It was in this context that the two leaders had agreed on an exchange of visits at a time to be arranged.

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For its part the Soviet side would have to say in describing the meeting that questions of war and peace had been at the center of the meeting in one way or another both during private discussions and in plenary sessions. He felt that the people of both countries, as well as the world as a whole, were concerned by the number of nuclear weapons and the need to stop the arms race and to proceed to disarmament. Unfortunately, it was impossible to report to our peoples and to the world that there had been a rapprochement of positions.

The Soviet side had tried in the meetings to make an extra effort to explain its views. Discussions had been held, but it would be a distortion of the truth to say that there had been progress. Such progress as had been achieved was limited to a detailed discussion and exchange of positions. Gorbachev hoped that this was not the last word. Both sides would take into account the frank discussions which had taken place. Joint efforts should be continued.

The Soviet Union was in favor of continuing negotiations on the basis of the January 1985 Joint Statement on stopping the arms race on earth and preventing it in space. Serious work lay ahead. Gorbachev felt that movement was possible. The Soviet Union was committed to the spirit of the January 1985 understandings and prepared to act in accord with them, on the clear understanding that it was against the arms race on earth. The USSR was prepared as a first step to seek to implement the idea of a 50% reduction of offensive nuclear forces on the basis of both sides' proposals. But this was based on the understanding that neither side would take steps which would open up an arms race in space. On the basis of this understanding the Soviet Union was open to further movement toward deep reductions in nuclear arms.

Gorbachev agreed that it was possible to intensify bilateral relations. This would contribute to greater trust between the two countries. The USSR would be ready to work to expand exchanges in the economic, cultural and scientific fields.

On regional problems (which he at first forgot to mention), Gorbachev acknowledged that both sides attached importance to the problem and shared a desire to seek political settlements of regional disputes to relieve tensions on the basis of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries. He agreed that bilateral regional expert consultations should be continued.

Noting that the President had raised the possibility of a statement summarizing the results of their discussions, Gorbachev asked if this would be justified. The President indicated that we had hoped to get to the subject, and called on Secretary Shultz to outline the options as we saw them. Gorbachev commented that the Soviets did not insist that there be a statement. If there

was nothing to report, it was better to say so. The President felt nonetheless that it would be useful to share views on how to handle the question of reporting the results of their meetings.

Secretary Shultz outlined a number of options, noting that one could envision an outcome involving all, some, or none.

-- First, there could be a written compilation of all items which had been agreed during the leaders' meetings or in the preparations for their meetings. There were quite a number of these, of varying importance. There was a possibility of developing joint language on certain arms control questions: e.g., on the Stockholm conference and chemical weapons proliferation. Agreed language existed on nuclear non-proliferation. The President in the statement he read had raised the possibility that NST might be treated, although that morning's conversation had shown the depth of differences on that set of issues. There could also be agreement on a range of regional and bilateral questions, and on a process for the future. In this connection the Secretary had been struck by Gorbachev's references the day before to a mechanism for regulating U.S.-Soviet relations. Thus, it might prove feasible to develop a package which would register areas of agreement reached in Geneva. Disagreements would not be registered except to acknowledge that they existed.

-- A second possibility would be to sign some sort of document. The general exchanges agreement was already agreed at the technical level and could be signed if the leaders wished.

-- A third element would be separate statements by leaders at a common site. While each leader would say what he wished, the U.S. felt there should be some coordination to avoid surprises. The Secretary speculated that statements could refer to differences but could also include parallel language where appropriate. For example, on NST there were issues on which U.S. and Soviet views coincided, and others where they did not. The kind of statement he had in mind would make clear both areas of agreement and disagreement.

- A fourth option would be to release a short joint report saying, essentially, that the leaders had met and agreed to meet again. Both sides could then issue statements of their own.

- Finally, the two sides could make individual statements at different sites. The Secretary speculated that both leaders would, in any case, be reporting publicly to their peoples in their meetings.

The Secretary concluded by noting that the U.S. would be willing to consider some sort of joint ceremony on the next morning, but was prepared to go in a variety of ways. He was aware of the

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great responsibility each leader had before their own people and the world to report on their discussions. A dignified ceremony at which areas of agreement could be reported and differences laid out in a modulated fashion would seem to be an appropriate way to proceed. In such a context, the President's statement on NST could be either included in a joint statement or used unilaterally.

Gorbachev, noting that the issue required some thought, indicated that he was nonetheless prepared to respond. If he understood correctly, both sides wanted to continue the dialogue that was begun in preparations for the Geneva meeting, which had been expanded in Geneva, and which would be continued in the future. Even if one were subjectively against such dialogue, objectively it was necessary to continue contacts and exchanges, and to deepen the process of searching for solutions in the interests of U.S. and Soviet peoples and of the people of the whole world. The Soviet Union, therefore, welcomed Secretary Shultz's expression of willingness to continue work in the future.

On how to document the Geneva meeting, Gorbachev indicated that the Soviet Union would be prepared to accommodate a U.S. desire for a joint document, whether a communique or simple statement. Noting that the Soviet Union had originally advocated a communique, but had dropped the idea when it appeared the U.S. was not interested, he outlined his assessment of how to proceed. If a communique incorporated the fundamental results of the meeting, there would be no need for separate statements. If such a communique were impossible, the Geneva program should end with the present meeting.

Gorbachev felt that it would be inappropriate to seek simply to list minor agreements in a joint document. This would not be understood in our two countries or internationally. A more substantive statement would be necessary. Gorbachev wondered whether the two leaders should reassess the problem and perhaps deputize senior members of their staffs to propose a solution. He joked that he and the President might take a walk, leaving Secretary Shultz and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze to work on the problem.

More seriously, Gorbachev recalled that the Soviets had always been prepared for a communique; indeed at one point they had thought the U.S. had agreed to such a document. He felt that there was still time to work out an acceptable document if both sides were willing. He repeated his suggestion that the Foreign Ministers should study the problem and present their findings to the leaders.

The President observed that he might have been to blame for any confusion the Soviets had felt with respect to a communique. In considering the question before the Geneva meeting, the

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President had been concerned about how a prearranged communique might be perceived. He had been similarly uncomfortable early in his presidency with the practice at the OECD summit meeting of having one leader read a pre-cooked document on behalf of the others. His concern for Geneva was that a document emphasize that the meeting was part of an ongoing process. In this context, a document might be worthwhile. The President felt, however, that such a document should include bilateral issues already worked out.

Gorbachev said he shared the President's view. After seven years without a U.S.-Soviet summit, the President was probably right in being somewhat apprehensive about how the meeting would develop. Now that the meeting had taken place, it might be possible to compile "a joint approach in a fundamental way." Gorbachev again suggested that the Secretary and Shevardnadze consult and report to the leaders.

The Secretary commented that U.S. and Soviet representatives had been at work since 11:30 that morning to explore possibilities of developing acceptable joint language. It would be necessary to check with them before he and Shevardnadze could begin work. Gorbachev agreed. He proposed a break and quipped that the most important task facing the Foreign Ministers now was to find their subordinates.

Secretary Shultz confessed jocularly that he and Shevardnadze had agreed in a September dinner conversation that they should let their leaders carry as much of the burden in Geneva as possible. Until Gorbachev had given the Foreign Ministers their current assignment, they thought they had succeeded. Gorbachev suggested that the Secretary was simply trying to turn his joke about a walk around on him. The Secretary told him not to worry, that he (the Secretary) had a thick skin.

The President and Gorbachev agreed to adjourn the meeting and, after a ten minute conversation in the Mission reception room, retired to a separate area for an extended private conversation.

Prepared by:
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~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

REAGAN-GORBACHEV MEETINGS IN GENEVA
November, 1985

Dinner Hosted by President and Mrs. Reagan

DATE: November 20, 1985
TIME: 8:00 P.M. - 10:30 P.M.
PLACE: Maison de Saussure,
Geneva, Switzerland

PARTICIPANTS:

United States

President Reagan
Mrs. Reagan
Secretary of State George Shultz
Chief of Staff Donald Regan
Robert C. McFarlane, Assistant to the President for National
Security
Ambassador Arthur Hartman
Mrs. E. Arensburger, Interpreter
William Hopkins, Interpreter

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

General Secretary Gorbachev
Mrs. Gorbacheva
Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze
First Deputy Foreign Minister Georgy Korniyenko
Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin
Ambassador Andrei M. Aleksandrov-Agentov
Mr. P. Palashchenko, Interpreter

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The conversation began by continuing a topic touched upon at last night's dinner about the fact that people are marrying and having children younger now in the Soviet Union. Gorbachev said that, on the other hand, youth is becoming less responsible,

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which is illustrated by a saying which the older generation now has; we must see our grandchildren through until they reach pension age.

Gorbachev again lovingly talked about his granddaughter. President Reagan told of a letter he received from a little girl who told him exactly what she wanted him to do and at the end said "Now go into the Oval Office and get to work."

Mrs. Gorbachev then told of a letter Gorbachev received which wished him success, expressed full agreement with his anti-alcohol campaign and said that the author kept Gorbachev's picture next to her icon. The author said she was 83 years old, prayed every day, and gave her telephone number. She then said to call only early in the morning; she was busy all other times. She lived in Kostroma. President Reagan asked whether Gorbachev called. The other replied that he would report as soon as he got back from Geneva.

Secretary Shultz asked about a revival of religion in the Soviet Union. Gorbachev replied that this question should be addressed to Mrs. Gorbachev, who taught a course on the topic; however, her course was on atheism rather than theology. Gorbachev said that many find the ritual, ceremonial part of religion attractive. However, true believers are dying out with the older generation. Still, one third of the population marry and baptize their children in the church. The Islamic religion, however, seems to have deeper roots. Shevardnadze confirmed that traditions survive in the Islamic religion. Gorbachev said that he was speaking of the Russian orthodox Church, which is preparing to celebrate the 1,000th anniversary of the Christianization of Russia. The church has even petitioned the government to return to a monastery for church use. Mrs. Gorbachev said there were also many sects in Russia, including the Baptists, Pentecostalists and "Tresuny."

Secretary Shultz asked whether Khomeini had had an influence on the Islamic population of the Soviet Union. Gorbachev answered, "No." He also said that right after the revolution there were many slogans for renouncing all of the past, as if doing away with everything which took place before the revolution. This was wrong, he said. But such were the times. He remembered that at that time even wearing a tie would brand one as a member of the bourgeoisie.

As for Khomeini, President Reagan said, he felt that both countries -- the U.S. and the USSR -- born of revolution, ought to keep an eye on another revolution: an attempt to bring about a fundamentalist Islamic revolution, where the revolution would become the government, and which teaches that the way to heaven is to kill a non-believer.

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Gorbachev said that as we end this summit, he felt that he and President Reagan had truly made a start. It would have been unrealistic to expect great progress right away. But the whole world was very concerned, and it was a good thing that they had made this start. Donald Regan said that the President had said the same thing to him.

At this point President Reagan said that in one of the U.S.'s oldest towns, Philadelphia, a toast to the living is always given sitting down. Only a toast for the dead is given standing up. So he wanted to continue in this tradition because what the two sides were dealing with here definitely concerned the living. This is a beginning, he said. No matter what it was we failed to agree on, the important thing was that the two of them would continue to meet. Each of them had accepted an invitation to come to the other's country and continue these meetings. Even though the two of them had not agreed on many things, they had not closed the door. They would continue to meet.

One of the early leaders of the American Revolution, Thomas Payne, in those dark days when they did not know whether the revolution would succeed, said, "We have it in our power to start the world over again." Something of that is present in what we are doing today, because the problems we are trying to solve have plagued mankind for a long time.

We have started something, President Reagan said, and he felt that these meetings expressed the will and desire of both sides to find answers that would benefit not only all the people of the world now living, but also the yet unborn. His toast, therefore, and his devout prayer was that we could deliver something better than in the past. We will continue meeting, he said, and continue to work for those clauses which had brought the sides together here in Geneva.

Gorbachev answered, saying that he was confident tonight that the two of them had started something. After a very long interval between summit meetings, he shared the President's view that it would be wrong to give a false signal from Geneva. He said that Soviet side would very carefully assess the results of this meeting, fully cognizant of a mutual sense of responsibility. Every beginning is difficult. If now we have laid the first few bricks, he said, we have made a new start, a new phase has begun. This in itself is very important. The major differences are ahead, he said, but he wanted to invite the U.S. side to move ahead on the appointed road together with the Soviet side, with mutual understanding and a sense of responsibility. We will do our part on that road, he said. We will not change our positions, our values, or our thinking, but we expect that with patience and wisdom we will find ways toward solutions. We have had the opportunity to speak privately, he said, and he

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attributed great importance to those talks. Without them it would have been difficult to arrive at this result. Let us then move toward each other with an understanding of our responsibility before all the countries of the world. Gorbachev's toast was for better dialogue and cooperation, for which the Soviet Union was prepared and hoped for reciprocity from the United States.

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AFTER-DINNER CONVERSATION

Having moved into the study after dinner, Secretary Shultz said he wanted to make a suggestion to both of the leaders about each of them making individual statements at the ceremony there would be tomorrow. He said in his personal opinion, he thought the people of the U.S. and USSR and the people of all the world really wanted to feel the presence of both of the world leaders at such a ceremony. If these leaders were simply present and went through the business of signing documents, it would not be the same thing as having them actually speak.

Gorbachev responded that in the first place he thought a joint statement or communique would represent the embodiment of the significance of such a document. Therefore, he said, he thought that a communique was of primary significance. Its presence would show that the current meetings had led to common judgments, common results and common motives in matters of principal importance. The Soviet side feels that such a document would demonstrate to the U.S. and Soviet peoples and to the world that the leaders of the two most powerful countries, despite their deep differences, are exercising their responsibility, and the document would show and convince the people of the world that the leaders were demonstrating their commitment to their principles. A joint document then would be a basis for further statements on the problems involved, both to each of the countries' allies and in the legislative bodies of both countries.

However, said Gorbachev, he thought if the leaders started to give commentaries, most especially short ones, on any document that they signed, it could very well detract from the significance of the document, because there might even be an unfortunate phrase which would detract from the weight and significance of the document. He said he hoped to save any possible document from that fate.

President Reagan responded that he begged to disagree with the General Secretary. He said that a full statement would be an honest, frank and open document about what had and had not

been achieved, and about the fact that these meetings between them would be continuing. He suggested that what Secretary Shultz had been speaking about concerned the world press and the European press. He said that if he and General Secretary Gorbachev were there at a ceremony, they would not have to comment on the specifics of any document. However, hope in the world had grown as a result of this summit meeting, and people should not be disappointed in this respect.

General Secretary Gorbachev agreed to a statement of one to three minutes' duration by each of the leaders. President Reagan concurred and added that it had been his idea not to go into detail.

Gorbachev noted that one other thing bothered him, namely, that having produced a document, the sides do not believe in themselves; commenting on it, even briefly and generally, would only serve to strengthen and reaffirm the content of that document. The President responded that instead of being silent, it would be better for the people who have placed so much hope in the outcome of these meetings to hear that he and Gorbachev are going to continue to meet despite the fact that they have not solved all of the problems connected with the communique. He said that the tone and the need here were simply not to leave this meeting and have people disappointed that there had been no progress, and thus have the hopes of so many people dashed.

Gorbachev responded that both leaders' statements ought to be in support of the document, and the statement would not last longer than two to three minutes. Moreover, the statements should not concentrate on differences, but on areas where there was agreement. He said there was no need for rose-colored glasses. Both leaders could be frank about the result reflected in the document: meanwhile, the process of their meeting would be continuing.

President Reagan said it would be necessary to decide when and where the leaders would make their statements.

When some of those present suggested it might be a good idea to have the leaders' statements at 10:30 or 11:00 AM, President Reagan explained that he preferred 10 AM, because precisely 17 hours later he would be appearing on U.S. television and giving his report about this meeting to the U.S. Congress and the American people, so the upcoming day would certainly be one of the longest working days.

Secretary Shultz said he wanted to add one thing. He had just received information about the joint understanding, and apparently the work on it was going backward. He noted that

U.S. aides had been instructed to stay up all night and work to get a document out, and he expressed the hope that the Soviet leader would give his people similar instructions. Shultz said the statements would be made in the Geneva International Conference Center at 10 AM.

Korniyenko asked, "Is there anything to announce?" Shultz responded there could be -- agreement had been reached about certain things; however, the Soviets were now beginning to go backward on some of what had been agreed.

Shevardnadze interjected that he had a question of principle. He said that it should be agreed not to detail differences but just make the statements in a general form.

Gorbachev said that he thought that the people involved were clever enough not to have the tail wag the fox, however, there are two foxes and two tails involved here. He said the sides ought not to come out with an empty document. Indeed, it would be better to have no document than an anemic one.

Secretary Shultz pointed out that the Soviet side was now beginning to link civil aviation and the cultural agreement. Korniyenko responded that it was Shultz who had always wanted to make those two things a package.

Shultz said that if it came to that, everything could be linked -- bilateral issues and regional issues. But it would be a mistake to make everything into such a package and link everything. Korniyenko said that it would be possible to say that the sides have completed working out details on exchanges but this should not be linked to other documents.

Gorbachev said that in conclusion it can be said that the Soviet side will give its people instructions to wind up and the U.S. side can give its people instructions to wind up, and they will, even if they have to be there all night.

Shultz said yes, all night, even if they have to be there without food. He said the U.S. was glad to a civil aviation agreement with the USSR, but there had to be in it commercial terms to make the route financially attractive to PanAm, otherwise the company would simply not fly the route and there was no reason for Aeroflot to have a monopoly on that market.

Korniyenko said that yesterday the Soviet side had compromised on that issue and then the U.S. had advanced 30 points which had knocked everything out of kilter.

To Gorbachev's suggestion that everyone continue working, Shultz said that it was good and the U.S. side would work all

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night and that would be great if agreement could be achieved and if that were not possible, then there just would not be agreement.

Gorbachev said he thought he did not completely understand all the differences with all of the documents, but in any event he spoke to his people to the effect that he wanted everyone to get his act together and somehow iron out these last minute difficulties in regard to these issues.

President Reagan said that he and Gorbachev were meeting for the first time at this level. They had little practice, since they had never done it before. Nevertheless, having read the history of previous summit meetings he had concluded that those earlier leaders had not done very much. Therefore, he suggested that he and Gorbachev say, "To hell with the past," we'll do it our way and get something done.

Gorbachev concurred. The conversation broke up at 10:30 P.M.

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