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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 14, 1985

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

I met today with the senior American negotiators at the Geneva Nuclear and Space Arms Talks, Ambassadors Max Kampelman, John Tower and Maynard Glitman. The meeting provided an opportunity for our chief negotiators to brief me on the just concluded round of negotiations in Geneva and on their perspectives for future developments in the talks.

This past round in Geneva, the third in the negotiations which began this past March, has been useful. It was marked by the Soviet presentation, in late September, of a counterproposal to the concrete reductions offers which the U.S. had put forward at the outset of the talks. Drawing on the counsel of our negotiating team, and of our experts in Washington, we analyzed this Soviet counteroffer very carefully, making clear both its positive elements and the areas in which it fell seriously short of the criteria which we have established for an effective and equitable arms reduction agreement. As I have emphasized before, these necessary criteria are: deep cuts; no first strike advantages; research on defense, because defense is much safer than offense; and, no cheating--that is to say, full compliance.

Building upon these criteria, as well as the positive seeds in the Soviet counterproposal, I instructed, on November 1, our negotiators to table a new set of proposals in Geneva. These new U.S. proposals cover all three areas of the negotiations: strategic nuclear arms, intermediate nuclear forces, and defense and space arms.

These new developments in the Geneva negotiations demonstrate that a serious give-and-take process can now take place. We welcome this, and we are determined to do our part to bring about the real nuclear reductions that the world desires--and deserves. If there is equal determination and flexibility on the Soviet part, this can be done. I therefore hope that my coming meeting with General Secretary Gorbachev will give further momentum to this process.

Finally, I expressed the gratitude of all Americans to Ambassadors Kampelman, Tower and Glitman for their highly professional and very patient negotiating efforts in Geneva, and my own appreciation for the wise counsel they have provided to me. Their continued efforts and advice will be vital in the days and months ahead, as we strive for radical, equitable and verifiable cuts in nuclear arms.

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