

OP  
Subject on Defence, SECRET  
INF, Pt 4

PRIME MINISTER'S  
PERSONAL MESSAGE  
SERIAL No. T 192<sup>1</sup>/83

Dear Margaret,

As you know, the Soviet Union has recently suggested in Geneva that, if the US were to propose equal reductions of 572 on each side, the Soviet Union would accept such a proposal. Now the Soviet Union has begun saying that the US negotiator, rather than their own, put forward these suggestions. This is a total fabrication.

The fact is that the Soviet negotiator approached Ambassador Nitze on instructions last Sunday with the suggestion that the US advance a proposal for "Equal Reductions" which would result in zero US deployments while leaving about 120 SS-20 missiles targetted on Europe. Ambassador Nitze, although agreeing to forward Ambassador Kvitsinsky's suggestions to Washington, made clear that he thought it certain Washington would not convert a Soviet proposal into a US proposal.

Indeed, the Soviet suggestions are unacceptable. They do not change the consistent Soviet demand for a monopoly in longer-range land-based INF missiles. Under the proposals, the Soviet Union would retain at least 360 warheads targetted on Europe and an approximately equal number targetted on Asia. The US would have zero.

Also, although the Soviets have indicated that under their suggestion no specific mention would be made of British and French systems, in fact they are seeking compensation. First, they have demanded de facto compensation in the form of their monopoly of 360 warheads targetted on Europe. Second, they are seeking to include UK and French systems - also in some other arms control forum.

I greatly appreciate and value the close consultations which have developed within the Alliance in handling the INF issue. The Alliance has demonstrated a truly extraordinary depth of understanding and cohesion in difficult circumstances. As you know, I believe that the latest proposals we have advanced provide a sound basis for an agreement. The solidarity for the Alliance has provided the essential foundation for the negotiating effort from the beginning. On this basis, we are continuing our search for an equitable and verifiable outcome in Geneva.

Sincerely,

/s/

Ron

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