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GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE
STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Letter dated 27 April 1983 from the Permanent Representative of
the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you the text of an interview given by
Y. V. Andropov, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party
of the Soviet Union, to the West German magazine Der Spiegel.

I request you, Sir, to have the text of this interview circulated as an
official document of the General Assembly under items 62 and 66 of the preliminary
list.

(Signed) O. TROYANOVSKY

* A/38/50.

INTERVIEW GIVEN BY YURI ANDROPOV, GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE
CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET
UNION, TO THE MAGAZINE DER SPIEGEL

QUESTION: There is clearly no observable progress at the Geneva talks on medium-range weapons in Europe. The American proposal, which contains the "zero option" and more recently the "interim variant", appears to be incompatible with the Soviet Union's proposal to reduce the number of its missiles to the number of West European medium-range missiles. What, in your view, is the essence of the differences, and do you consider a compromise possible?

ANSWER: We understand the concern over the failure to solve the problems of limiting medium-range nuclear arms in Europe which are being discussed at the talks in Geneva. Those talks, to put it bluntly, are deadlocked.

For what purpose were the talks started? The Soviet side proposed the talks and began them with a resolve to bring about a reduction of the existing medium-range nuclear weapons of the USSR and the NATO countries in that area, a radical mutual reduction of the level of nuclear confrontation. The purpose of the United States at the Geneva talks, it has become clear, is to add new powerful armaments to the already existing vast nuclear arsenal of NATO at all costs, and it is only Soviet missiles that it wants to reduce.

As you see, two opposite lines - I would say two fundamentally different approaches - are facing each other in Geneva. We encountered this line of the Americans even before Geneva. The United States, as is known, derailed the SALT-II Treaty and withdrew from numerous talks which were picking up speed or approaching a successful conclusion. I can remind you that the United States has suspended - and is avoiding to this day the resumption of - talks on the general and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, on anti-satellite systems, on limitation of the deliveries and sale of conventional armaments, and on the limitation of military activity in the Indian Ocean. I will add to this the treaties with the Soviet Union on the limitation of underground nuclear-weapon tests and on nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, which still have not been ratified by the United States. All this speaks for itself. And even the Geneva talks, as everyone knows, are something the present United States Administration has entered with great reluctance.

To us the attainment of agreement between contracting parties means reaching accord on questions to their mutual satisfaction. But the American Administration is behaving as though the centuries-old history of international relations and the practice relating to agreements and treaties did not exist. Washington's recent alteration of its proposal which was wrongly called the "zero option" and was known to be unacceptable to the USSR does not change anything. The United States Administration continues to hold its old one-sided positions and is not showing the slightest desire to take into account the legitimate interests of the other side and reach an honest agreement acceptable to both. Each time the United States makes a proposal it strives - and this is what it considers most important - first and foremost to damage the security of the Soviet Union and to tilt the existing balance of forces in its own favour.

This is the main reason for the failures of the talks in Geneva. In reply to our clear-cut and fair proposals the Reagan Administration comes up first with the "zero option" and then with the "interim-zero" variant. Both are unrealistic and do nothing to make it easier to reach agreement. Why? Because the intent is to disarm us and to arm NATO even more. We will not accept this.

Lately in the United States and in some other NATO countries there has been talk about the "inflexibility" of the Soviet side. But in what should we, in fact, be flexible? We are called upon to conclude an agreement relating only to missiles - to the existing Soviet medium-range missiles and to the American ones that are to be deployed in Europe. The Americans simply refuse to come to an agreement on the other components of medium-range nuclear weaponry. They declare that they refuse to hold talks on this, and that is all there is to it.

They want us to pretend that we do not notice the more than 400 warheads on the British and French sea-based and land-based missiles which are aimed at the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. The Americans, and following their example, the representatives of other NATO countries as well, describe the British and French missiles as a "deterrent" force. I am willing to concede that this is so. But then the question arises: why, if they recognize the right of France and Britain to deterrence, do they deny us the right to have our own deterrent force - exactly equal in size to that of the French and the British?

It is also said that the nuclear arms of France and Britain should not be counted because they have some kind of "independent status". But have these countries ceased to be members of the North Atlantic Alliance? And do they make any secret of the fact that their nuclear weapons are directed against the Soviet Union? And is it not symptomatic that the French Government not only has not dissociated itself from the plans for deploying American nuclear missiles in Western Europe but, on the contrary, is zealously supporting them? What kind of "independent status" is this! On the one hand, a known NATO decision is depicted as a sort of mandate to the United States from all members of that alliance, but on the other hand, when one begins to count NATO's armaments, it turns out that the British and French missiles have nothing to do with them - they are "independent", you see. There is no logic in this.

Try to look at the situation from the viewpoint of the Soviet Union and its legitimate interests: on what grounds, by what right do they want us to be left disarmed in the face of those British and French nuclear missiles aimed at our country?

It is clear that we cannot agree and never will agree to this. The Soviet people has the same right to security as the peoples of America, Britain, France and other countries.

We are also asked to ignore the fact that if we were to accept the proposals of the Americans, they would retain their air forces intact in the European zone at airfields and on board aircraft carriers - forward-based systems for the delivery of nuclear weapons capable of reaching the territory of the Soviet Union. And we are speaking here of fully hundreds of delivery vehicles and thousands of nuclear warheads.

The violation of generally accepted norms of negotiation and the refusal to work for the attainment of a mutually acceptable accord are also manifested in the attempts of the United States Administration to disarm us unilaterally not only in the West, in Europe, but also in the East, in Asia. Washington would like to dictate its terms to us - that we should not deploy our medium-range missiles in the Asian part of the Soviet Union. This, of course, is entirely beyond the framework of the Geneva talks. And the Americans do not mention that they have concentrated a large force of nuclear weapons against us in Asia, in the Pacific and Indian Oceans and in the Far East. Incidentally, there are occasional reports in the American and British press to the effect that the United States intends to station its medium-range missiles in Alaska. Were that to happen, it would not go unnoticed by our side. I mention this now as a confirmation of the conclusion that the American side is demanding from the Soviet Union something which it evidently does not itself intend to observe.

So the question is: which side has more reason to be concerned about its security?

Asking the question in this manner is all the more justifiable because the Soviet Union, as is known, has undertaken not to be the first to use nuclear arms, whereas the NATO nuclear countries are, to this day, flatly refusing to assume such an obligation.

QUESTION: The West and the East accuse each other of striving for military superiority. The Americans even contend that the Soviet representatives at the Geneva talks seek to perpetuate the USSR's superiority in medium-range missiles on the European continent. What should an approximate balance look like?

ANSWER: We know about those contentions. American military and political leaders are particularly assiduous about this, although some other politicians in the West are not far behind them. There is not a grain of truth in such contentions. One must stand on the facts. In recent times alone, the Soviet Union, wishing to move the talks off dead centre, has presented numerous proposals of a clearly constructive nature for consideration by the United States and the other NATO countries.

We need merely to recall our proposals at the aforementioned Geneva talks on the limitation of medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe. At present each side has about a thousand medium-range nuclear-weapon delivery vehicles in Europe, plus several thousand tactical nuclear warheads each. If our most far-reaching proposal were accepted - and incidentally, in the West they prefer to maintain a decorous silence about this proposal - there would remain on the European continent no nuclear weapons of any kind intended to hit targets in Europe, either medium-range or tactical. Will Europe, will European security, win or lose if this proposal is implemented? The answer is clear and unequivocal.

The same applies to another proposal we have made. If it were implemented, there would be a radical reduction: each side would have the number of its medium-range weapons cut by two thirds. In other words, we would have gone two thirds of the way towards completely freeing Europe from these weapons.

Lastly, if the West accepted the variant proposed by us last December, the USSR and the NATO countries would retain 162 missiles each - that is, exactly the number of British and French missiles on the NATO side today. Each side would also retain 138 medium-range aircraft. I would like to stress that even these figures are not absolute. They could be reduced on a reciprocal basis if NATO were willing.

All these proposals of the Soviet Union remain open. They fully ensure genuine equality and a real balance of forces.

Where is there in this any striving by the USSR for military superiority? The difficulty and danger of the present situation lie in the fact that the arms race imposed by the West is outstripping the talks. To avoid this, to create favourable conditions for holding talks, common sense tells us, we must freeze the nuclear arsenals of the two sides. It would be most sensible to do this until other solutions can be found. We have proposed freezing medium-range weapons in the same way as strategic arms. In our opinion, this would be only the first step. An objection is raised to this: why freeze when what we must talk about is reductions? This sounds fine, but the trouble is that while they are saying this, they are also building up their armaments. The result is that we have no freeze and no reduction.

The contrast is just as sharp when we compare the approaches of the USSR and the United States to other problems of arms limitation and reduction.

I have already mentioned our commitment not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. If the United States and other NATO members possessing nuclear weapons made an analogous statement, people throughout the world would heave a sigh of relief. Why not do this? But our initiative is encountering a wall of silence.

Here is another example. What can justify the failure of the West, to this day, to react to the honest proposal made with the best of intentions by the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries to conclude between the countries of the Warsaw Treaty and NATO a treaty on the non-use of military force and the maintenance of peaceful relations? It is hard to find a sensible explanation for this.

Or let us take a look at how the two sides behave at the strategic-arms talks. Let us compare the two positions. We propose reducing the total number of strategic carrier vehicles substantially, by more than a quarter, without any exceptions whatsoever. The number of nuclear warheads on them would also be reduced to equal levels. But what is the United States insisting on? It only talks about reductions, while in reality it is working for a substantial, indeed "radical", build-up of its strategic arms. It is planning to increase the number of deployed long-range cruise missiles alone by more than 12,000. I quote the latest news from Washington: yet another plan has been placed on the President's desk - to deploy an additional large number of new-type intercontinental ballistic missiles in the next few years.

This is an unbridled arms race. There is no other word for it. And it is no secret that the United States is also stockpiling and planning to use such terrible

means of mass destruction as chemical weapons. These weapons are already being shipped to Europe, and new, even more baneful types of chemical weapons are being intensively developed in the United States. We, on the other hand, propose banning the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and destroying them altogether. It would seem that in this case there isn't and there can't be anything to argue about. Yet there are people both in the United States and in Western Europe who praise the "usefulness" of such weapons.

I cannot refrain from saying a few words about the problem of verification of arms reduction. It is said that the Soviet Union is against verification and that for this reason it is difficult to reach agreement with it. To use a picturesque German expression, this is an "old hat", a threadbare thesis. For us verification is as important as for others, if not more so. We approach questions of verification concretely and not in terms of general declarations. This approach of ours has found its embodiment in the agreements on the limitation of strategic arms. Our policy on questions of verification is a far-reaching one - up to and including the establishment of general and complete verification when matters reach the point of general and complete disarmament. We are against turning the problem of verification into a stumbling block at the talks.

This is the true picture. I have cited only a few facts. The list could be continued, but even from what I have already said it is evident what are the positions held by the Soviet Union on questions of disarmament and what are the positions held by the United States.

Now judge for yourself which side seeks military superiority and which side seeks parity and a reduction of the level of military confrontation.

QUESTION: During the period between now and 1987 President Reagan of the United States intends to boost spending on armaments to the gigantic sum of 1.6 trillion dollars. He has plans for the creation of the MX intercontinental missile, the Pershing-2 missile, cruise missiles and even an anti-ballistic missile system deployed in space that is to make the United States invulnerable. What do you intend to set up against that?

ANSWER: It has recently become the fashion with members of the Reagan Administration to act offended when their militaristic, aggressive ambitions are exposed. Such a pose might perhaps impress some people who are not well versed in politics, and that appears to be its intent. But in such cases it is best to turn to the facts. And the facts show that the United States has embarked on a course of unleashing an unprecedented arms race along all lines and is stepping up international tension to the limit.

I am referring specifically, among these facts, to Washington's announced plans for developing a large-scale and highly effective anti-ballistic missile defence. The adventurism and danger of this entire idea is that it emphasizes impunity, the delivery of a first nuclear strike in the belief that they can protect themselves from a counter-strike. From that point it is not far to the temptation to reach for the firing button. This is the main danger of the new American military concept. It can only bring the world closer to the nuclear precipice. The fact is that while they speak of defence, they are in reality planting a mine under the entire process of strategic-arms limitation.

Authoritative scientists of the world are saying that this is so. We make an offer to the United States Government: let Soviet and American scientists, specialists in this field, meet and discuss the possible consequences of creating a large-scale anti-missile defence system. Let science have its weighty say.

It is becoming increasingly evident that the development of cosmic instruments of warfare is a component part of American military preparations. They want to go into outer space with arms and to threaten mankind from there. This must not be allowed to happen. Outer space must remain peaceful. We have proposed concluding an international treaty on the non-deployment of any weapons in space. We are convinced that it is necessary to go even further: to reach agreement on the total prohibition of both the use of force in outer space and its use from outer space against the earth.

Not to start the arms race where it has not existed and to stop it where it now exists - this is the essence of our position, and this is our guiding principle at the talks.

The Soviet Union will continue consistently to search for and strive to find a common language we can speak with the American side. Our earlier proposals remain open. Should the American Administration come up with proposals on any specific problem which are aimed at solving it in a spirit of equal security, we shall certainly give them favourable consideration.

QUESTION: Federal Chancellor Helmut Kohl is planning to visit Moscow soon. What is your opinion of the prospects for relations between the USSR and the Federal Republic of Germany, and do you see possibilities for co-operation if the Kohl Government implements the so-called NATO rearmament plans?

ANSWER: Peaceful and business-like co-operation between the USSR and the Federal Republic is an essential factor for stability in Europe and in international life in general. I think it is in the interests of both the Federal Republic of Germany and the Soviet Union to preserve this. A basis for this exists, a good basis. It consists of the Moscow Treaty and numerous other agreements concluded by our countries in the 1970s and of the jointly accumulated experience of practical co-operation in various fields.

We are looking forward in the Soviet Union to Chancellor Helmut Kohl's visit, on which agreement in principle has been reached. We hope that during the visit we shall succeed in consolidating the positive elements that exist in relations between our countries and outlining prospects for the future.

At the same time, in evaluating the prospects for our relations, we naturally cannot fail to take into account the plans for deploying new American nuclear missiles in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Judge for yourself how much those relations would be harmed if the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany were turned into a base for delivering a nuclear strike against the USSR and its allies. If this happened, it would have the gravest consequences for the Federal Republic of Germany itself.

But I repeat, the Soviet Union is firmly opposed to such a turn of events. We propose a different way out of the present situation, a way that would strengthen the security both of the Federal Republic of Germany and of the Soviet Union and enable our two countries to co-operate successfully in the interests of consolidating European and world peace.

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Rudolf Augstein: I am very happy to have an opportunity to meet and talk with the highest leader of the Soviet Union. We have already prepared some questions which you have answered in writing. I must say that before our meeting I had already studied the text of your answers. I do not know whether you will now hand it over to me officially or whether it can be considered to have been already handed over to us.

Yuri Andropov: I am prepared to hand you this text. I think this is the most reasonable and convenient way. Does that suit you?

Rudolf Augstein: Yes, of course. Thank you. But since no text can be exhaustive, I would like your permission to ask you some additional questions at this point.

Yuri Andropov: Please.

Rudolf Augstein: One often hears it said in the West that during a certain period, when the United States was not arming itself at the rate it is doing and planning to do now, the Soviet Union actively built up its armaments. As a result, according to these contentions, Soviet armaments increased during the 1970s, while American armaments actually decreased.

Yuri Andropov: These contentions are not new. They are being disseminated especially actively by the Americans, but they are also being helped by their NATO allies. I did not prepare specially to answer this question, but it is easy to prove that the contentions you quote are at variance with reality. If one is to start from the beginning, allow me to remind you that it was not the Soviet Union that invented atomic weapons and was the first to include them in its arsenal. There was, after all, a rather long period when we had no such weapons at all, while the Americans had them and tried to blackmail us, and in fact the whole world. We had to catch up with them. Several years passed, and the Soviet Union too produced its atomic weapons. We were forced to do that. That is how it all happened.

Rudolf Augstein: But didn't the top Soviet leadership itself admit in 1977 that there was rough parity in armaments between the two sides?

Yuri Andropov: Precisely so. But I have not yet finished answering your question. If we trace subsequent developments through a number of stages, they were as follows. The United States began an intensive process of improving its nuclear weaponry. They advanced from single to cluster warheads; then we had to do so too. Next the Americans adopted multiple independently targetable re-entry

vehicles; we had to do the same in response. Then the United States began to install MIRVed missiles in its submarines, which we did not have at the time; so we had to respond in kind in that case as well.

There is an approximate balance of forces, we continue to believe so today - there is rough parity.

So the fact was always that we merely followed the Americans in the arms build-up, not vice versa. Moreover, while catching up with the United States, we have always suggested that this race should be ended, that the levels of armaments of both sides should be frozen and subsequently reduced. Regrettably, we have not received agreement from the American side to this proposal.

If we now discuss the present situation, we can, of course, assess it in different ways, using different methods and approaches. The United States, for instance, believed that its nuclear weapons would be more invulnerable if it installed them in submarines, and it did so. This is understandable because the United States is a sea power. We are a land power, and most of our nuclear weapons were deployed on land. Now the Americans suggest reductions in land-based nuclear weapons, leaving sea-based missiles aside. We naturally take exception to this approach. For our part, we take account of all the types of nuclear weapons possessed by both sides and suggest uniform reductions in them on both sides, until ultimately they are completely eliminated.

As for detailed data on the balance of forces between the two sides, our Defence Minister Dmitry Ustinov recently made a public statement on this subject and supplied detailed facts and figures. You can easily have a look at those figures and see the truth of what I have been telling you here.

Rudolf Augstein: Many West Europeans think that they are particularly threatened by Soviet SS-20 missiles, which are a new and very effective type of weapon.

Yuri Andropov: As a matter of fact, this subject has been covered in the text of my answers to the questions received from you. But I can add the following. I can understand that the peoples of Europe feel concerned, and even anxious. We favour removing the causes of this anxiety. We have suggested different options. We have proposed the total removal of both medium-range and tactical weapons from Europe. The United States has not even replied to this proposal of ours. It has continued stubbornly to press its so-called "zero option", which is not even worth dwelling upon here. We have demonstrated many times just what it really means. So you and we do not differ as regards concern about the existing situation. But the United States would like to deploy its nuclear missiles in the territory of Western Europe, to make you, the West Germans, and the Belgians, and the Dutch its hostages. We are against this. We have proposed various ways out of the situation, ways that could either remove the mutual threat altogether or considerably ease the existing tension.

Rudolf Augstein: The Soviet Union has stated that if the Geneva talks do not lead to positive results and American missiles are deployed in Europe in spite of all efforts, then the USSR will deploy its missiles at roughly the same distance from the territory of the United States. I would like to ask you, Mr. General Secretary: do you really intend to do this and if you do, in what parts of the world could your missiles be deployed?

Yuri Andropov: I will not tell you this even in confidence, for obvious reasons. But if we are talking about the essence of the matter, I want to reaffirm that we will find ways to counter the Americans' actions both with regard to United States territory directly and with regard to Europe. Nuclear-arms talks are not a game of poker, in which if you lose heavily, you can have hopes of somehow making your loss good afterwards. These talks involve literally life-and-death questions for the peoples of the Soviet Union and the United States, the Warsaw Treaty countries and the NATO countries. We cannot view lightly the prospect of having more than 500 nuclear missiles deployed near our borders in addition to those French and British missiles which are already targeted on us. Our measures in response will be fully justified from any standpoint, including that of the highest moral standards.

Rudolf Augstein: You have referred here to the French missiles, and this prompts me to recall another issue. The Soviet Union has had very good relations with France. And now a Government of socialists, in which communists participate, has demanded that some 50 Soviet diplomats and other officials should leave France. How do you assess this development?

Yuri Andropov: What can I say on this score? First and foremost, I would not like to see the blame for this crude provocative move against Soviet citizens placed on the French socialists, and still less on the communists. We are well aware of the fact that behind this action there are forces which do not want to see good relations between France and the Soviet Union. And perhaps these forces exist not only in France itself but outside France as well. This action hardly seems to be in France's national interests. It is an act of arbitrariness, with no legal justification. Any allegations that Soviet citizens engaged in prohibited activities are mere inventions.

I would also like to point out another fact. Among the Soviet citizens told to leave France there were officials who had not worked in France for the past half-year and had returned to the Soviet Union, while others had worked less than two weeks in France. Isn't this absurd?

We are told only one thing: that the Soviet officials engaged in collecting information. But, as I understand it, the functions of the diplomatic and other services of any country, of any embassy, include collecting information about the host country and transmitting it to their Government. Is this kind of activity prohibited? It is provided for in international diplomatic conventions.

This action of the French authorities cannot be regarded otherwise than as deliberately aimed at worsening Soviet-French relations.

Some press organs in France assert that our failure to take reprisals against French officials in Moscow is an indirect admission by the Soviet Union of its "guilt". This is nonsense. If someone interprets our actions in this manner, he shows his lack of understanding of Soviet foreign policy. To take reprisals against French citizens working in the USSR would be the easiest thing to do. In exercising restraint, we are guided by the broad interests of Soviet-French relations, which we hold dear and which have evolved over a long period of time, by the interests of preserving détente in Europe.

This does not mean, however, that we shall tolerate arbitrary action against Soviet diplomats and other officials working in our missions abroad, wherever it may be.

Rudolf Augstein: Yes, one can say that in this case you acted in accordance with the Bible's recommendation that if someone hits you on one cheek, you should turn the other.

Yuri Andropov: Not quite. We bear little likeness to biblical characters. We were guided by sober political discretion and the desire to prevent a deterioration of Soviet-French relations, and we took a broader view of things than that of this narrow local conflict.

Rudolf Augstein: Since we have already referred to biblical themes, I would like to say this. President Reagan, addressing a religious gathering, declared the Soviet Union to be the "centre of evil". In your answer to that statement, you gave your assessment of it. But I would like to ask: are reasonable and successful negotiations possible at all in such an atmosphere?

Yuri Andropov: We are realistic enough not to pay attention to rhetoric. If Reagan, besides making his accusations, adopted at least one of our concrete proposals on questions of arms reduction, or himself put forward at least one reasonable and suitable proposal, we would forgive him his - how shall I put it mildly? - groundless statement. The French are probably right when they say that each person speaks the language he knows.

Rudolf Augstein: It rarely happens that all evil and all blame lie with one side only, even if it seems so to the East with respect to the West, or to the West with respect to the East. In this connection, I must ask: do people in the Soviet Union realize how badly the question of Afghanistan spoils the international atmosphere - and are there any plans for clearing up this situation?

Yuri Andropov: In answering the first part of your question I shall say: Yes, of course they realize it. Our plans for a political settlement of the Afghan problem are no secret. We have stated them publicly many times. Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev spoke about that. Our position is that as soon as outside interference in the affairs of Afghanistan ceases and non-resumption of such interference is guaranteed, we shall withdraw our troops. Our troops are in that country at the request of the lawful Afghan Government - the Government which was in power at the time - and they remain there at the request of the lawful Government headed by Babrak Karmal. We are not seeking anything for ourselves

there. We responded to the request for assistance from a friendly neighbouring country. But naturally, it is far from being a matter of indifference to us what happens directly on our Southern border. Washington even goes as far as arrogating to itself the right to decide what kind of government there should be in Nicaragua, since that allegedly affects the vital interests of the United States. But Nicaragua is over a thousand kilometres from the United States, whereas we have a long common border with Afghanistan. And so, in assisting our friends, we are at the same time looking to our own security interests.

Political negotiations aimed at settling the problems connected with Afghanistan are now under way. True, these negotiations are going ahead with difficulty, since the Pakistanis are, one might say, being held by the sleeve by their overseas friends. But we still believe that these negotiations, which are being pursued with the assistance of a representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, have some prospects.

Rudolf Augstein: I would like to turn once again to the question of medium-range missiles. If the Americans do deploy them in the Federal Republic of Germany, will you continue the talks with the United States on nuclear arms in Europe?

Yuri Andropov: It has been stressed on the Soviet side more than once that such a course of events would mean an abrupt worsening of the situation not only in Europe but on the global scene as well. Accordingly, we would have to take the necessary decisions.

Rudolf Augstein: There is yet another issue which is a matter of concern to a great many people in the Federal Republic of Germany. It is known that the foreign indebtedness of some of the socialist countries has now assumed extremely dangerous proportions. What way out is possible here in order to avoid aggravating the crisis? After all, we in Europe all depend on one another.

Yuri Andropov: Since we are speaking about sovereign States, I can only say that looking for ways out of the problems that arise is the sovereign concern of each particular country. If the question is what the Federal Republic of Germany could do for its part, then I can only offer this piece of advice: carry on trade, develop economic relations, and do not engage in "sanctions".
