

COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT

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LETTER DATED 23 AUGUST 1983 ADDRESSED TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT TRANSMITTING AN EXCERPT FROM THE TASS COMMUNIQUE CONCERNING THE MEETING OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION AND CHAIRMAN OF THE PRESIDUM OF THE SUPREME SOVIET OF THE USSR, MR. Y.V. ANDROPOV, WITH A GROUP OF AMERICAN SENATORS

I am sending you herewith an excerpt from the TASS communiqué concerning the meeting between Mr. Y.V. Andropov, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and a group of American senators. The communiqué sets forth the position of the USSR on a number of questions which are on the agenda of the Committee on Disarmament.

I would ask you kindly to distribute this text as an official document of the Committee on Disarmament.

(Signed)

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Representative of the USSR to
the Committee on Disarmament

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YURI ANDROPOV RECEIVES UNITED STATES SENATORS

On 18 August Yuri Andropov, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, received in the Kremlin the United States senators Claiborne Pell, Russell Long, Paul Sarbanes, Dale Bumpers, Patrick Leahy, James Sasser, Donald Riegle, Howard Metzenbaum and Dennis DeConcini, who arrived in the Soviet Union at the invitation of the Parliamentary group of the USSR.

Talking with them, Yuri Andropov characterized the present-day state of relations between the USSR and the United States as tense virtually in every field. They have become such not because the Soviet side has chosen so. The Soviet Union would like to have with the United States a level of concord ensuring normal, stable and good relations in the mutual interests of both sides and to the great benefit of world peace.

If, nonetheless, someone hopes to attain superiority over the USSR amidst tensions, in a game without rules, this is a dangerous miscalculation.

Dwelling upon the issue of nuclear arms in Europe, Yuri Andropov emphasized that very much, including the future development of Soviet-United States relations, depended on whether a mutually acceptable solution of that issue would be found at the Geneva negotiations, whether it would be possible to stop a lethally dangerous new round of the arms race in that region. The stationing in Europe of United States "Pershing" and cruise missiles will have far-reaching consequences which will inevitably affect the United States as well. The Americans will also feel the difference between the situation which existed before deployment and that which will take shape after it.

Summing up the essence of a number of constructive proposals put forward by the Soviet Union at the Geneva talks on the limitation of nuclear arms in Europe, Yuri Andropov said that if those proposals were translated into practice, the aggregate number of medium-range nuclear systems in Europe would be cut by approximately two thirds both on the Soviet Union's and on NATO's side. Moreover, NATO would only reduce its air force whereas the Soviet Union would also cut back its missiles, including a large number of modern SS-20 missiles. As a result, the Soviet Union would be left with far fewer missiles and warheads on them than it had in 1976, when no one in the West talked about the Soviet Union's superiority in weaponry of this type.

It was stressed that the success of the Geneva talks on the limitation of nuclear arms in Europe was still possible if the United States showed an interest in an honest agreement on an equal basis. However, we do not advise anyone to count on the Soviet Union's making unilateral concessions to the prejudice of its own security.

As the limitation of strategic weapons was discussed, the senators were told that it was absolutely unrealistic to try, as the United States administration was doing, to convince or compel the other side to break down the structure of its strategic forces and to reduce their basic components, while keeping for oneself a completely free hand. This question, too, can only be resolved on the basis of parity. The lack of such a solution would mean the continuation of the strategic arms race and the escalation of the threat of nuclear war. The USSR is against this.

The senators' attention was also drawn to the Soviet proposal to "freeze" the strategic nuclear arsenals of the Soviet Union and the United States. We suggest, Yuri Andropov said, that not only should the number of the existing missiles not be raised but that the development and testing of new types and varieties of strategic arms should be renounced and that the modernization of the existing systems should be limited to the utmost. We would agree to an even broader option, namely, a freeze on all the components of the nuclear arsenals of the USSR and the United States. This could set an example to other countries. The freeze agreement could immediately halt the dangerous process of the runaway nuclear arms race, thus meeting the dreams of all the peoples. An entirely different political atmosphere would emerge, in which it would be easier to seek agreement on reductions in the stockpiles of such weaponry.

Yuri Andropov placed special emphasis on an issue of paramount significance, the serious and real threat of the arms race spreading to outer space. Recalling the idea he had expressed earlier concerning the prohibition of the use of force in general, both in space and from space with respect to the earth, he set forth new major initiatives of the USSR in that field.

First of all, Yuri Andropov said, the Soviet Union deems it necessary to come to terms on a complete prohibition of the testing and deployment of any space-based weapons for hitting targets on earth, in the air or in outer space.

Further, the USSR is prepared to solve radically the issue of anti-satellite weapons - to agree on the elimination of the existing anti-satellite systems and the prohibition of the development of new ones.

The Soviet Union will submit detailed proposals on that issue for consideration at the forthcoming session of the United Nations General Assembly.

In addition to these proposals, Yuri Andropov said, the Soviet leadership has taken an exceptionally important decision: the USSR assumes the commitment not to be the first to put into outer space any type of anti-satellite weapon, that is, it imposes a unilateral moratorium on such launchings for the entire period during which other countries, including the United States, refrain from stationing anti-satellite weapons of any type in outer space.

That decision is a fresh concrete demonstration of the Soviet Union's goodwill and its determination to work in practice for stronger peace and security for the peoples. It is to be hoped that the United States will follow this example.

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