

**January 31, 1983**

**Information on the Results of the Second Round of  
Soviet-American Negotiations on the Limitation and  
Reduction of Strategic Armaments**

**Citation:**

"Information on the Results of the Second Round of Soviet-American Negotiations on the Limitation and Reduction of Strategic Armaments", January 31, 1983, Wilson Center Digital Archive, CWIHP Archives. <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/118828>

**Summary:**

Report on negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States for the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) to reduce the number of intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) launchers, submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and heavy bombers used by each side.

**Credits:**

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

**Original Language:**

Russian

**Contents:**

Translation - English

Confidential

## INFORMATION

on the results of the second round of Soviet-American negotiations  
on the limitation and reduction of strategic armaments

The Soviet side, operating on the basis of the socialist states' principled, agreed policy on the strengthening of international security and aversion of the threat of the outbreak of nuclear war, continued to work toward the achievement of a mutually-acceptable understanding which would effectively resolve the issue of limiting and reducing strategic arms, assist the halting of the [arms] race, reduce the level of nuclear confrontation between the USSR and the US, and at the same time ensure the strengthening of strategic stability, and create the preconditions for overcoming the present dangerous tension in the world.

First. The Soviet side continued actively to base and develop the proposals which it had introduced, which are founded on an over-all [kompleksnyi] approach stipulating limitations and reductions of all kinds of strategic arms without any exceptions and are in full keeping with the principle of parity [ravenstvo] and equal security, which is the only realistic basis for possible agreement.

The Soviet side continued to advocate that, moreover, everything positive that was worked out in the course of the foregoing negotiations on strategic arms, including the relevant clauses of the SALT-2 treaty, be used. We also speak in favor of going further than SALT-2 and establishing even stricter limitations on strategic arms, right up to a full ban on certain kinds [of arms].

The essence of the Soviet proposals consists of reducing the aggregate number of intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) launchers and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), as well as heavy bombers to 1800 on each side by 1990, that is 25 percent lower than the initial level which was stipulated in the START-2 treaty.

At the same time, the general number of nuclear warheads [zariady] with which these strategic weapons are equipped would be reduced to an agreed-upon equal level. It is proposed that the deployment of cruise missiles with a range of over 600 km of all forms be prohibited; "air to ground" missiles of the same range would be prohibited. In keeping with the Soviet side's approach, the modernization of strategic arms would be maximally limited within agreed confines.

With the aim of increasing strategic stability, a proposal has been introduced by us to undertake a set of measures to limit the regions of operation of aircraft carriers and flights of heavy bombers, the creation of zones of security for missile-carrying submarines, in which any anti-submarine activity by either side would be prohibited. With the same aims, a system of information about relevant missile launches, about mass take-offs of heavy bombers, and about forward-based planes is envisaged.

Necessary measures to ensure the verification of the prepared understanding are provided for in the Soviet proposals: [verification] would be realized on the basis of national technical monitoring means, and where it was required according to the character of the clauses that had been worked out, measures on the basis of cooperation could be agreed upon which would assist an increase in the effectiveness of monitoring by national technical means.

Trying to lend the present discussions a concrete and purposeful character, the Soviet side at the very beginning of the second round introduced a draft [document:] "Basis for understanding between the USSR and the US on limiting and reducing strategic arms," for examination. In this document, in consideration of the discussions which took place in the course of the first round, the clauses which could constitute the skeleton for a future agreement, in the case of a desire for agreement on the part of the American side, are laid out in a concise form.

We paid special attention to the need to take the factor of the American side's forward-based nuclear forces, which consist of many hundreds of nuclear weapons delivery vehicles into account in the strategic relations between the USSR and US. After all, it is obvious that the role and significance of these nuclear forces in the Soviet-American strategic balance would sharply increase in proportion to the Soviet Union's reduction of its ICBMs, SLBMs, and heavy bombers.

Stating the Soviet side's readiness to carry out deeper cuts in the future, we emphasized that the realization of such measures would depend on how the issue of the US's forward-based nuclear forces was resolved.

In the course of the discussion, the Soviet side again insistently drew attention to the importance of realizing our proposals to freeze armaments of a strategic designation in order to put an end to the arms race at once and create more favorable conditions for resolving the problem of OSSV.

Second. The US delegation kept to a notorious, openly one-sided approach directed at obtaining military advantage for the United States that was formulated by President R. Reagan in a speech on May 9 and was confirmed by him in a statement on the television on November 22, 1982. At the same time, the Americans, without putting forward any arguments, refused a businesslike discussion of our proposals and in a series of cases made their position even more intransigent [tverdolobaia].

The discussions which took place showed even more graphically that the American approach cannot be the basis for the achievement of a mutual understanding. The true goal of the American side, which practically insists on the reduction of ballistic missiles alone, and, first and foremost, Soviet ICBMs alone, consists not of agreeing on equal circumstances for both sides from the point of view of their security interests, but of laying down, so to speak, a "basis in treaty" [dogovornaia baza] for the broad and large-scale program being carried out in the US of further building up strategic arms, and simultaneously trying to oblige the Soviet Union to restructure the entire structure of its strategic forces, which would result in the practical demolition of our strategic power - land-based ICBMs. In essence, the whole American approach - both in its chief elements and in its details, is directed toward this.

If one were to assume that all of the limitations relating to land-based ICBMs as proposed by the American side, both in the first and the second stage of reductions which the US delegation is taking about, were accepted by the Soviet side, then of the aggregate number of 1398 ICBMs possessed by the USSR at present, we could retain only 100 modern ICBMs, and would have to destroy the rest of them while engaging in a forced deployment and modernization of heavy bombers and submarines with ballistic missiles in order not to fall behind the US. In other words, they are trying to foist on us an arms race on conditions which are clearly more beneficial to the US: first, they say, you in the USSR scrap your ICBMs, because for this or that reason Washington does not like them, and they build your strategic forces anew in a form which benefits the US. Whatever arguments are used to camouflage this kind of approach, its unacceptable character and open one-sidedness which hits you between the eyes is obvious.

And so, for the USSR, the American approach signifies the destruction of an overwhelming number - more than 90 percent - on Soviet ICBMs. For the US, something quite different is stipulated. As a result of the realization of the American scheme of "deep cuts" in strategic weapons trumpeted in Washington's propaganda, the US would get the chance to build significantly the number of warheads on its ICBMs in comparison to the current level. It sounds paradoxical, but is a fact which furnishes yet another bit of evidence of the one-sidedness of the American approach, and its flagrant contradiction of the principle of parity and equal security.

In the course of the negotiations, the USSR delegation, with facts in hand, showed the true character of the US's approach, which in words calling for "deep cuts" actually attains the continuation of the arms race along lines where it [i.e. the US] hopes to achieve special advantages for itself. This is evidenced, for instance, by the US's refusal to agree to prohibit the development of long-range cruise missiles. In fact, on the one hand, the US proposes a reduction of the number of warheads on ICBMs and SLBMs from the current 7500 to 500 units; while on the other hand, it plans to deploy about 4000 cruise missiles with nuclear charges on bombers alone. As a result, not a reduction, but rather an increase in the number of nuclear warheads in the US's strategic arsenal would take place. This is how the US's position really looks, if its propagandistic crust is removed.

The fact that the US stubbornly refuses any limitations on the deployment of new and the improvement of existing missile-carrying submarines and their armaments, also bears witness to the fact that the American proposals are not at all aimed at ending the arms race.

While hiding behind conversations about "radical cuts," the US in practice is working toward the enlargement of its strategic potential by, in particular, developing and deploying weapons such as the new "MX" ICBM and the "Trident-2" SLBM, which the Americans themselves consider a first-strike weapon. They carry a larger number of warheads than do existing weapons of this type, and have greater power and accuracy.

The Americans were told with all firmness by our side that the administration's announcement of a means of "dense packing" ["plotnoe bazirovanie"] of "MX" ICBMs contradicts the sides' obligations according to the START-1 and START-2 agreements not to construct additional stationary launchers (i.e. silos) for ICBMs and that the realization of this plan could not but have a most negative influence on the negotiations on the problems of OSSV [ogranichenie something strategicheskikh voruzheniia]. The Americans had no convincing counter-arguments. These simply do not exist.

Third. The USSR's delegation put forward factual arguments that criticized the "ideology" of the American approach, which is founded on an especially developed false reference to the effect that the Soviet ICBMs represent the main source of instability in the strategic situation and so, allegedly, [must] undergo the initial and deepest cuts.

After all, the issue is that parity be present throughout the whole complex of strategic armaments, in the framework of which the US furthermore has superiority in the aggregate number of nuclear charges on strategic delivery vehicles. And the fact that the USSR has greatly relied on the development of its ICBM forces has an objective basis connected with the different geographical position, paths of technical development, and so on, of the USSR and the US. Of course, the USSR will not agree to decisions which would ignore all of this and would undermine the principle of parity and equal security of both sides.

The American side also make references to the somewhat greater throw weight of

Soviet ICBMs. But if the overall structure of the sides' strategic armaments is taken into account, this does not give us strategic advantages. After all, it is known that the US commands significant superiority in heavy bombers, and that with this great carrying capacity they are able to deliver thousands of nuclear warheads to their targets. However, the American side stubbornly keeps silent about this, when they raise the issue of throw-weight.

As for ICBMs' time of flight to target - about 30 minutes, it is also not a basis for placing these weapons in the "especially destabilizing" category, as does the American side. The time of warning about nuclear attack is of decisive significance here. And this is precisely what the US is trying to reduce to a minimum, placing emphasis on the development of the "Trident" SLBM, which is capable of reaching USSR territory in a much shorter time than ICBMs at the relevant akvatoria; cruise missiles, which are capable of hidden flight to their targets, "stealth" bombers, and so on. And can one really forget that the "Pershing-2" missiles, whose basing in Western Europe the United States insistently works toward, could fly to regions inside USSR territory in only 5-6 minutes[?]

If one were to talk about accuracy, the American "Trident-2" SLBM and long-range cruise missiles not only are not behind ICBMs, but are superior to them in this respect.

All of this bears witness to the fact that ICBMs do not at all belong to some sort of special category of strategic weapons, which [should] be cut in the first instance. All strategic arms in their totality should be limited and cut, since they can all be used to take part in a first strike and they are all dangerous to an equal degree. But this is precisely what the Americans do not want, since such an approach disrupts their scheme to demolish strategic equality and move out into first place in a military capacity.

Fourth. Recently in the American press, much has been written about the US delegation's introduction of proposals for measures designed to increase trust. In fact, at the end of the previous round of negotiations, the US delegation introduced some proposals approximately in the same spirit of those spoken about by R. Reagan in his address of November 22 of this year. By and large, they boil down to timely information about ballistic missile launches.

What can be said on this count? Above all, these proposals are not in any way connected with the reduction of strategic arms. More precisely, they are directed at somehow replacing measures toward real limitations and reductions of strategic armaments and at masking the US's lack of desire to search for mutually acceptable agreement on the essence of this problem. Can it really be said to evince a businesslike approach when the American side, advertising its proposals, at the same time essentially, without putting forward any arguments, declines the far-reaching proposals put forward by the Soviet delegation in this area, as discussed above[?]

Fifth. In summary, it is worth noting that the absence of progress in the negotiations on OSSV can only be explained by the fact that the present policy in Washington is not designed to achieve agreement. The US has another design - to continue the arms race with the goal of trying to come out ahead in the strategic arena by any means possible.

Of course, the Soviet Union cannot permit and will not permit such a turn of events, and if necessary will take necessary counter-measures. As a result, the balance of forces will be maintained, but on a still higher level.

However, we are convinced that this path cannot assist a strengthening of security

and a reduction of the military threat. We will continue to do everything in our power [vse ot nas zavisiashchee] to resolve this task with the help of negotiations directed at attaining a mutually acceptable, effective agreement. Of course, we see that the US approaches the negotiations in another way and will practically deadlock them. At the same time, it should not be considered that the conduct of negotiations to which the US was forced to agree in spite of itself, is shuffling the cards of the American militarist circles to a well-known degree, and permits us to show who really advocates a resolution of the problems of limiting and reducing strategic arms, and who is sabotaging its resolution.

In the conduct of the negotiations we intend to operate on the basis of our principled position in the future as well, and to strive to attain a just understanding. At the same time, we will even more resolutely expose the US's policy of using the negotiations as cover for the continuation of the arms race. In the current circumstances this goal, in our view, is taking on a particularly important significance.