

May 28, 1983

**CC CPSU on Withdrawal from Strategic Arms
Reduction Negotiations (1)**

Citation:

"CC CPSU on Withdrawal from Strategic Arms Reduction Negotiations (1)", May 28, 1983, Wilson Center Digital Archive, TsKhSD.
<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/119014>

Summary:

The CC CPSU announces that it is breaking off negotiations with the US and NATO on Strategic Arms Reduction.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

Confidential

□ Respected comrades!

□ The CC CPSU, in messages sent to your party earlier in this year, as well as in an address to the XVIth congress of the socialist international, stated its serious alarm as to the dangerous evolution of circumstances in Europe and in the world as a whole.

□ The events of the recent past fully confirm the well-founded character of this alarm. They are prompting the CC CPSU once again to address you. The appearance of American "Persings" and cruise missiles on the European continent is becoming a fait accompli. In this way, the negotiations in Geneva have been unilaterally broken off by the United States.

□ The Soviet Union's principled position and an assessment of all of these events is contained in the Statement by the General Secretary of the CC CPSU, the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Yu. V. Andropov, published on November 25 of this year.

□ By placing American missiles on the European continent (in addition to those medium-range nuclear weapons already possessed by NATO), the US and NATO on the whole would like fundamentally to change the existing balance of forces in Europe in their favor, which would worsen the over-all military-strategic situation and would increase the danger of nuclear war.

□ For almost forty years - longer than any time in history - Europe is living in conditions of peace. That has become possible thanks to the consistently peace-loving policy of the countries of the socialist commonwealth, the efforts of peace-loving forces on the continent, and also to the realistic position of sensible politicians in the West. The existing approximate balance of military forces in Europe, including of nuclear [forces], between the states of the North Atlantic alliance and the governments of the Warsaw Pact, have objectively served the cause of European security and stability.

□ Now the US and NATO as a whole are taking a step directed at tipping the scales in their direction. The nuclear missiles which are deployed near the borders of the Soviet Union and the other countries of the socialist commonwealth are not at all designated for the defense of Western Europe - no one is threatening it. With the placement of American missiles on European soil, the real danger that the US will bring a catastrophe on the peoples of Europe is growing, rather than the security of Europe.

□ In Washington, they would like to think that in deploying their medium-range missiles in Europe and in creating by the same token an additional nuclear threat for the socialist countries, they will manage to direct the counter-strike [otvetnyi udar] away from their home. As for the security of the West European allies of the US, it, so it would seem, interests the American leaders only insofar as the West Europeans with their lives and their cities can reduce the retribution directed at the United States itself if Washington succumbs to the temptation to unleash nuclear war in the illusory hope of winning it.

□ Responsibility for the situation which has arisen rests with the US government. It is shared by the governments of those countries of NATO which agreed to receive the American missiles. They gave up the national interests of their peoples and their sovereignty: after all, the question of whether to use the weapons is up to Washington.

□Assessing all of this, the Soviet Union and the other countries of the socialist commonwealth cannot close their eyes to the fact that Washington has declared a "crusade" against socialism as a social system and that those who have now given command over the deployment of new nuclear arms on our threshold are now building their practical policy on this reckless errand.

□The Soviet Union has done everything within its power to find a way out at the negotiating table. The sum total of our proposals gave a constructive, realistic basis for an honorable, mutually acceptable compromise on the issue of medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe. This has been recognized by many prominent personages in the West, including in the ranks of social democracy.

□We offered the West a fair option - a large cut (almost to 1300 units) of medium-range nuclear weapons by both sides. The West European leaders more than once said that if the USSR cut its missiles to the levels of 1977-1978, "rearmament" ["dovooruzhenie"] would be unnecessary. We proposed even more significant reductions - to a level lower than in 1976, when no one was talking about Soviet predominance in this area.

□On the other hand, the US from the very beginning did not want to attain a mutually acceptable agreement on nuclear weapons in Europe and did everything at the negotiations in Geneva and outside of them to assure that there would be no such agreement. The course of events confirms that: Washington is not concerned with the preservation of parity, but with ensuring itself military-strategic advantages; not in the reduction of Soviet missiles, but in the deployment of American missiles; it is concerned not with the "threat from the East," but with trying to create a "threat to the East."

□The US and its allies are now trying to convince the populace that the deployment of American missiles does not change anything and in the final analysis will even assist negotiations with the Soviet Union. That is a crude deception. The subject of the negotiations in Geneva was the limitation of nuclear arms in Europe. The placement of nuclear weapons [in Europe] at root undermines the very object of the negotiations and deprives them of content.

□We have tried more than once to save the negotiations and to create maximally favorable conditions for the achievement of a positive result, including through unilateral steps. In spring of 1982, we announced a unilateral moratorium on the placement of new missiles on the European part of our territory, and in addition on the part of our Asian territory whence they could reach Western Europe. And despite the entirely unfounded assertions of the US administration, this moratorium was observed impeccably [neukosnitel'no]. Moreover, we cut many dozens of our medium-range missiles in Europe, including all of our SS-5 missiles.

□We were ready - and stated as such - if the US renounced the placement of its missiles in Europe in the stated period and by the same token allowed the possibility of continuing the negotiations in search of mutually acceptable resolutions - to move on now to the removal of our SS-4 missiles and to complete their liquidation in the course of 1984-1985.

□Did these steps influence the position of the US and NATO? You know that they did not. The US and NATO managed only one response to all of our proposals - the Soviet Union's unilateral disarmament and the attainment of military superiority for themselves.

□Now, after the beginning of the deployment of American missiles has become a fact, the Soviet Union and other countries of the Warsaw Pact are obliged to take

measures to neutralize the military threat brought into being by Washington's actions, measures about which we have already issued many warnings. Washington's officials must understand that they cannot dictate their terms to the world without punishment, that they cannot frighten the Soviet Union and the countries of the Warsaw Pact with their nuclear weapons, that they will not manage to commit nuclear blackmail.

□First. Insofar as the US has through its actions destroyed the chance to achieve a mutually acceptable agreement in the negotiations on limiting nuclear arms in Europe, and as their continuation in these conditions would only be a cover for the actions by the US and a series of other NATO countries aimed at undermining European and international security, the Soviet Union considers further participation in these negotiations to be impossible.

□Second. The obligations taken upon itself unilaterally by the Soviet Union which had as their goal the creation of more favorable conditions for achieving progress in the negotiations, are cancelled. By the same token, the moratorium on the deployment of medium-range nuclear weapons in the European part of the USSR is cancelled.

□Third. By agreement with the governments of the GDR and the CSSR, preparatory work on the deployment of operational-tactical missiles of increased range on the territories of these countries, which was begun some time ago, as was announced, will be speeded up.

□Fourth. Insofar as the US's deployment of its missiles in Europe is increasing the nuclear threat to the Soviet Union, corresponding Soviet forces will be deployed in keeping with this circumstance in ocean regions and in the seas. In their character, these forces of ours will be adequate [to meet] the threat created against us and our allies by the American missiles deployed in Europe.

□Of course, other measures directed guaranteeing security to the USSR and the other countries of the socialist commonwealth will be taken as well.

□Proceeding to the realization of the resolutions we have undertaken, we state that the counter-measures taken by the Soviet side will be strictly restrained within the boundaries dictated by the actions taken by NATO countries. The Soviet Union - and Yu.V. Andropov again emphasizes this in his Address - is not striving for military superiority, and we will do only that which is absolutely necessary in order that the military balance not be disrupted.

□If the US and the other NATO countries show a willingness to return to the situation which existed before the beginning of the deployment of American medium-range missiles in Europe, the Soviet Union will also be ready to do so. Then the proposals earlier introduced by us on the issues of limiting and reducing nuclear weapons in Europe would once again come into force. In this case, that is, under the condition of a restoration of the previous position, the USSR's unilateral obligations in this area would also be renewed.

□The Soviet Union announces with all resolution and firmness that it remains devoted to the principled course toward the halting of the arms race, above all the nuclear [arms race], to the lessening and ultimate elimination of the threat of nuclear war. In future as well, it will apply every effort toward the attainment of these noble goals.

□As before, we advocate a most radical resolution of the issue of nuclear weapons in Europe. We repeat our proposal to make Europe wholly free of nuclear weapons, both medium-range and tactical.

□ We advocate that all of the nuclear powers, and first and foremost the US, follow the Soviet Union's example and take upon themselves the obligation not to make the first use of nuclear weapons.

□ We advocate the soonest possible negotiations on the conclusion of a treaty between the Warsaw Pact Organization and NATO to exclude the first use of any kind of military force - either of nuclear or of conventional weapons.

□ We confirm the readiness of the Soviet Union to agree to a freeze on nuclear weapons on the condition that at least the US do the same simultaneously with us.

□ We consider that it is necessary to exert a maximum of effort to create non-nuclear zones in different regions of the earth, and in the center of Europe - such a zones free of battlefield nuclear weapons.

□ These and others of our peaceful proposals which you know about not only remain in force, but now take on, in the opinion of the CPSU, even greater importance.

□ The Soviet Union is convinced that peace can be secured and the security of peoples guaranteed not through the increase and acquisition of all new kinds of arms, but, on the contrary, through a reduction of existing armaments to immeasurably lower levels. Humanity has too many tasks which are not being resolved simply because of the diversion of colossal material, intellectual and other resources.

□ Now, many are asking the question: what next? What can be done in order to prevent a further worsening of the situation, a slide toward nuclear catastrophe?

□ Are the social forces which have of late expressed so powerfully the striving of peoples to put an end to the senseless arms race capable of influencing the policy of governments?

□ It is our deep conviction that pressure from social forces should be directed at forcing those who currently define the policy of the US and NATO to take a more reasonable position, to renounce pretensions to military superiority and nuclear blackmail of the Soviet Union, and to take the path to searching for a mutually acceptable agreement on the basis of the principle of parity and equal security. This is the only path leading to an end to the arms race, to the lessening of the level of nuclear confrontation.

□ In wide social circles, there is a growing understanding of the fact that in the interests of preventing a further worsening of the situation, it is necessary to halt the deployment of American missiles, to obtain their withdrawal and the creation thereby of the conditions for a renewal of negotiations. Demands for the freezing of existing nuclear armaments are sounding ever louder.

□ The anti-war movement, which has put down such deep roots and has accumulated so much political capital, must not weaken its pressure exactly when it is most needed. We operate on the assumption that the role of the anti-war movement is growing precisely in connection with the growth of the military threat.

□ In this way, the struggle has not ended; it is continuing and will continue. The peoples of Europe have expressed their will clearly enough: they do not want new missiles, do not want an endless arms race. And social democrats (socialists, laborites) can, without a doubt, do much for the fulfillment of this will of the peoples.

□ I would like once again to assure you that our party is full of resolve to do everything

in its power to curtail the arms race and to preserve and strengthen peace on earth.

□CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE
□COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION