

Conference with Politburo Members, March 10, 1988

On the meeting with American Senators and the contacts between Yazov and Carlucci (US Minister of Defense)

Gorbachev: The meetings, like the NATO session in Brussels, show that the center of the disarmament dialogue is shifting more and more to the question of reducing the armed forces and conventional weapons in Europe. This is the result of progress in nuclear issues and our own initiatives regarding Europe.

Some people (such as Senator Nunn, Levin, and others like them) want to seize our initiative. Others, headed by Thatcher, want to show that our initiatives are only demagoguery; they want to lock people's minds on the necessity of "nuclear containment." They accuse us of propaganda and suggest that we are happy with the "superiority" and essentially do not want to change anything.

We have already agreed to release data jointly with the Americans. But this is only half the battle.

We need to do the following:

- Seriously and comprehensively prepare on a military-technical level the "cards" that we are urging them to "put on the table;"
- Calculate the possible consequences for the army and for military industry, as well as for the economy as a whole (conversion); for the Warsaw Pact; for the necessary "compensation," so the security of our nation does not suffer in a single point, etc.

We must not delay in developing proposals and presenting them to the CC.

If we want to keep the dynamic and the trust in our initiatives, we have to seriously consider the proposals coming from different NATO circles, such as the social-democrats, and of course the American senators. They are not amateurs; these proposals have been developed by specialists, scientists, and people who wield a great deal of influence in the disarmament process.

For example, Nunn proposed to conduct parallel (in the USSR and the US) studies on the prevention of unsanctioned use of nuclear weapons. Afterwards, we would exchange the results of these studies and even publish them. This idea deserves our attention. We should assign our scientists to develop this initiative.

To do this seriously means not to simply present reasoned refusals, but to be able to use the good ideas. In other words, we have to conduct a truly practical, effective dialogue.

[Source: Archive of the Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow, Notes of Anatoly Chernyaev. Translated by Anna Melyakova for the National Security Archive]