

Soviet Transcript of the Malta Summit
December 2-3, 1989

First Plenary session, December 2.

Gorbachev: Welcome, Mr. President, and members of the American delegation, aboard the Soviet cruise ship Maxim Gorky. It was you who took the initiative for organizing this meeting between us. I would first like to say that we regard the president's initiative highly.

Bush: Thank you very much.

Gorbachev: I have been thinking: what has happened in world developments that has prompted the USSR and the U.S. to meet like this? Not only what has happened, but that so much is happening. That is the important thing. For that reason we need to find a new, deep dialogue, one that will be integrally linked with those changes and new events that need to be faced in the international arena. We must conduct our affairs in some other way; we must address the changes. Therefore, we can no longer limit the active work being conducted to the level of foreign ministers. Life demands that we organize more frequent working meetings and increase contacts between our nations' leaders.

This meeting is undoubtedly a prelude to an official meeting with you. In any case, it will have a meaning of its own. I am generally impressed by unofficial meetings which are not accompanied by particular formalities. You and I carry on a substantial correspondence. But it is important to sit down at the table and talk. This has a symbolic significance not only for the USSR and the U.S., but for the whole world.

In the Soviet Union and the United States, and throughout the world, people are hoping that the negotiations in Malta will not simply be a nice symbol of our relations, but that they will bring results.

Let our experts work together with the leaders. Opportunities will be created for them to do this.

Once again, I sincerely welcome you, Mr. President.

Bush: Thank you for your kind words. It was I who came forward with the suggestion for this meeting. But I proceeded along the assumption that such negotiations would be acceptable to the Soviet side as well. Therefore, I feel that we prepared this meeting together. When I was on my way from Paris to Washington this past summer and was on the plane editing the draft of my letter to you concerning this meeting, I realized that I would be changing my former

position 180 degrees. This change in our approach was understood by the American people.

Since the idea of this summit was proposed, many important events have taken place in the international arena. I expect that during the forthcoming exchange we will be able to share our views of these changes, not only in Eastern Europe but in other regions as well, in order to come to a better and deeper understanding of our respective positions. I am in favor of an exchange not only in the presence of our delegations, but also one-on-one. I think that we should meet more often.

Gorbachev: I agree. I have a feeling that we have already talked and that this meeting is a continuation of our useful discussions.

Bush: Yes, that's right. We have already had productive discussions. I would like, if you will permit me, to outline some of the thoughts of the American side.

I fully agree with what you have stated regarding the importance of our meeting on Malta. I was prepared to make similar points. Therefore, I will not repeat them.

Concerning our attitude toward perestroika. I would like to say in no uncertain terms that I agree completely with what you said in New York: the world will be better if perestroika ends as a success. Not long ago there were many people in the U.S. who doubted this. At that time you said in New York that there were elements that did not wish for the success of perestroika. I cannot say that there are no such elements in the U.S., but I can say with full certainty that serious-thinking people in the United States do not share these opinions.

These shifts in the public mood in the United States are affected by the changes in Eastern Europe, by the whole process of perestroika. Of course, among analysts and experts there are differing points of view, but you can be certain that you are dealing with an administration in the U.S. and with a Congress that wish for the crowning success of your reforms.

I would now like to offer a number of positive steps, which, in our opinion, might provide a general direction for our joint task of preparing an official summit in the United States.

A few comments concerning economic issues. I want to inform you that my administration intends to take measures toward suspending the Jackson-Vanik Amendment, which prevents the granting of Most Favored Nation status to the Soviet Union ...

I also want to inform you that the administration has adopted a policy of repealing the Stevenson and Baird amendments, which restrict the possibility of extending credit to the Soviet side...

These measures, which the administration is now proposing in the realm of Soviet-American relations, are guided by a certain spirit; they are not at all directed toward a demonstration of American superiority. And in this sense, as we understand it, they are in line with your approach. As it stands to reason, we in the U.S. are deeply convinced of the advantages of our type of economy. But that is not the issue right now. We have attempted to construct our proposals in a way that does not give the impression that America is "saving" the Soviet Union. We are not talking about a plan of assistance but about a plan for cooperation.

After the Jackson-Vanik Amendment is repealed, conditions will be favorable for eliminating restrictions on granting credit. The American administration considers this a question not of granting assistance, but of creating the conditions for the development of effective cooperation on economic issues. We plan to convey our considerations on this issue to the Soviet side in the form of a document. It involves a number of serious plans in the areas of finance, statistics, market function, etc. ...

I would like to say a few words to clarify our position with respect to the wishes of the Soviet side to gain observer status in the GATT. There used to be a division of opinion among us on this issue--the U.S. was against admitting the USSR into this organization. Now the position has been reexamined. We are for granting the Soviet side observer status in the GATT. This is based on the view that participation of the USSR in the GATT will be conducive to its becoming familiar with the conditions, operation, and development of the world market ...

There is one other area in which new approaches can be used to develop economic cooperation. I have in mind the establishment of contacts with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. This would provide a good framework for cooperation on economic issues between East and West. The administration is in favor of active progress in this direction ...

[Bush moved on to discuss regional issues, and stated the U.S. position with regard to the situation in Central America. Then he proposed that the two sides discuss the issue of disarmament.]

Gorbachev: I agree.

Bush: You know that my administration is in favor of eliminating chemical weapons from mankind. Today I want to state our new proposal, which contains a certain new element. If the Soviet side will give its agreement in principle to our proposal on the issue of chemical weapons, which was set forth in my speech to the United Nations General Assembly in September, then within the framework of this approach the U.S. could agree to abandon our program of modernization, that is, the [program of] further production of binary weapons after comprehensive convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons would enter into force.

In practical terms this would mean that in the near future the two sides could come to agreement on a significant reduction in supplies of chemical weapons, bringing to 20 percent the current figure on chemical agents in the U.S. arsenal, and, eight years after entering into the arms convention, [bringing it down] to 2 percent. We propose to carry out the plan so that by the time of the summit meeting in the U.S. in the middle of next year the draft of a bilateral agreement would be ready, and it could be signed at that time.

On conventional weapons. Although this matter requires serious work connected, among other things, with the necessity of overcoming certain barriers not only in our countries but in other countries, for example in France, we could expect to reach an agreement sometime next year. I think that in this connection, we could set the following goal: to aim toward signing an agreement in 1990 on radical reductions in conventional forces in Europe, having obtained signatures on such an agreement during the summit meeting of representatives of the countries participating in the Vienna negotiations.

On the issue of a future treaty for the reduction of strategic offensive weapons. The American side seeks to provide the proper initiative for negotiations on that matter. We are in favor of jointly resolving all outstanding key issues for the forthcoming summit meeting in the U.S. We are also not excluding the possibility that by then the draft treaty on reducing strategic offensive weapons and its attachments will be agreed upon in full. In this case, the treaty could be signed in the course of the summit meeting.

We are hopeful that at the forthcoming Soviet-American talks between our foreign ministers a solution might be found in the near future to issues such as a procedure for accounting for long-range air-launched cruise missiles,

telemetry encryption, restrictions on non-deployed missiles, etc. On the eve of the meeting between our foreign ministers, which could take place at the end of January, the American side is planning to formulate its position on these questions and to offer it at these negotiations.

We are also planning to provide instructions to our delegation at the Geneva negotiations to withdraw the previous American proposal on banning mobile intercontinental ballistic missiles.

I would like to ask the Soviet side to turn once again to the issue of restrictions on SS-18 intercontinental ballistic missiles. We would like to prohibit the modernization of these missiles and would like the Soviet side to explore the possibility of deeper unilateral reductions.

Regarding preparatory protocols to the treaties of 1974-1976 on underground nuclear testing, there is, in our opinion, every possibility for completing this work soon and signing the stated protocols at our meeting in the U.S.

It is becoming increasingly important at the present time to find a solution to the problem of preventing the proliferation of missiles and missile technology. In this regard the United States would welcome the Soviet Union's joining the arms limitation convention to which seven Western nations already belong.

Gorbachev: This issue is already under discussion.

Bush: We would like to raise the question of whether it would be possible for the Soviet Union to publish roughly the same amount of data on the Soviet military budget as we do in the United States. I think that our publications give quite a comprehensive idea of the kind of military activity undertaken in our country. I am sure that your intelligence services can confirm this authoritatively.

Gorbachev: They report to me, on the contrary, that you do not publish everything.

Bush: I am certain that the publication of more detailed data on military budgets, on a mutual basis, would encourage trust in this sphere.

I would like to touch on a few questions which are important for the future ...

Particularly critical at the present time are problems of environmental protection. We are now forced to take into account even the economic consequences of global climate changes. Some Western countries are going so far

as to drastically curtail even essential economic activity for the sake of averting these changes.

We are trying to approach these issues rationally, to avoid extremes. At the present time, the USSR and the U.S. are working actively on a committee preparing an international conference on the climate under the aegis of the U.N. This is bringing satisfactory results. Looking ahead, we are planning two more important steps in this direction. First, after the committee work is finished by autumn of next year we intend to host a conference to draw up a limited treaty on climate change.

Environmental protection demands the attention of leading scientists. I have asked the White House Assistant for Science [and Technology], Director [B]romley, to organize a conference for next spring on the environment, to bring together the finest scientific minds as well as leaders of appropriate departments from many countries. I hope that Soviet representatives will also attend this forum.

The development of cooperation between our countries depends largely on the participation of young people in this process. Here student exchanges are intended to play a great role. We suggest making arrangements so that in the 1990-91 school year, this type of exchange could be increased to approximately 1,000 persons from each side. The expanded program would involve young people up to 25 years of age. In addition, special attention should be paid to student exchanges in the humanities and sociology. The practical experience would be very productive with respect to agricultural studies programs.

Gorbachev: Thank you for sharing these interesting ideas. This is possibly the best proof of the fact that President Bush's administration has set its political focus along Soviet-American lines. I intend to touch on some specific issues a little later.

Now I would like to make some observations of a general philosophical nature. It seems very important to me that we talk about the conclusions we can reach from our past experience, from the "Cold War"--what took place, what will linger in history. Such, if you wish, is the advantage of the historical process. But trying to analyze the course of past events is our primary obligation. Why is this necessary? We can probably assert that we have all lived through a historic turning point. Entirely new problems, of which people in the past could not even conceive, have arisen before mankind. And so--are we going

to resolve them using old approaches? Absolutely nothing would come of that.

By no means is everything that has happened to be considered in a negative light. For 45 years we succeeded in preventing a major war. This fact alone shows that in the past all was not bad. But all the same, the conclusion is obvious--the emphasis on force, on military superiority, and along with it the arms race, has not justified itself. Both our countries apparently understand this better than any of the others.

The emphasis on ideological confrontation did not justify itself either and resulted only in our continual criticism of each other. We reached a dangerous line. And it is good that we knew enough to stop. It is good that a mutual understanding has arisen between our countries.

And the emphasis on the uneven exchange between developed and underdeveloped nations is also being weakened. In what way? The colonial powers gained a lot from that relationship. But so many problems arose in the developing world, problems that are literally taking us by the throat. Indeed everything is interrelated.

On the strategic level, Cold War methods and confrontations have suffered defeat. We recognize that. And perhaps it is even better recognized by the general public. I am not going to start preaching. It is just that people are rushing into politics. Problems have arisen with respect to the environment and the preservation of natural resources that are linked to the ill effects of technological progress. And this is entirely understandable--after all, this is essentially about the problem of survival. Public opinion of this kind has a strong effect on us politicians as well.

Therefore we--in the USSR and in the U.S.--can do a lot together at this stage to alter radically our old approaches. We were aware of this in our dealings with the Reagan administration. The process is continuing now. And look at how we have opened up to each other.

On the political level, we lag behind the public mood. And this is understandable--after all, there are many forces acting on political leaders. It is good that Marshal [Sergey] Akhromeyev and your adviser, [Brent] Scowcroft, understand the problems arising in the military sphere. But in both countries there are people--and a considerable number--who simply frighten us. In the area of defense there are many people who are accustomed to their profession and who do not find it easy to change

their way of thinking. But this process has begun all the same.

Why have I started off with this topic? In American political circles a certain premise is persistently put forward: the Soviet Union, they say, began its perestroika and is changing direction under the influence of Cold War politicians. It is said that in Eastern Europe everything is collapsing and, they say, that also supports the self-righteousness of those who relied on Cold War methods. And since this is so, then no political changes need to be made. What needs to be done is to increase the force of oppression and prepare more baskets for reaping the fruits [of this approach]. Mr. President, this is a very dangerous misconception.

I realize that you see all this. I know that you have to listen to representatives of various circles. However, your public announcements and the concrete proposals you put forth today, which are aimed at developing cooperation between the USSR and the U.S., signify that President Bush has formulated a conception of the world that meets today's challenges.

It goes without saying that each person makes his own choices. But it is also clear that as far as relations between the USSR and the U.S. are concerned, mistakes and errors in politics are unacceptable. We must not let our politics be built on misconceptions either in relations with each other or in relations with other countries.

At first I even considered delivering some sort of reproach--saying that the U.S. president time and again has expressed his support of perestroika and wished it well and has commented that the Soviet Union should carry out its reforms on its own; but that we expected from the president of the United States not only a statement but also concrete action to back up the statement.

Now there is both a statement and an action. I come to this conclusion having listened to what you just said. Even if this means only plans for action, it is very important.

My second consideration. The world is experiencing a major regrouping of forces. It is clear that we are moving from a bipolar to a multipolar world. Whether we want to or not, we will have to deal with a united, economically integrated Europe. We could discuss the issue of Eastern Europe separately. Whether we like it or not, Japan is another center of world politics. We once discussed China. This is another most serious reality, which neither of us should exploit against the other. And we must think about

how not to make China feel excluded from the processes that are taking place in the world.

All these, I repeat, are major factors in the regrouping of forces in the world. I am watching political developments in India--these politics are dynamic. I have spoken at length with Rajiv Gandhi. India has a balanced approach aimed at establishing good relations both with us and with you.

What role do we play in this regrouping? Very serious things follow from this. I began discussing this question with [George] Shultz. After one of the discussions he showed us some diagrams reflecting changes that will occur at the end of the century in economic relations between the leading countries of the world. Now it is simply essential to understand the role of the USSR and the U.S. in these major changes. The changes cannot always be accompanied by a peaceful flow of events

Take Eastern Europe. Its specific share in the world economy is not very large. And look at how nervous we are. What form of action should we take? Collective action?

And what lies ahead in terms of economics, the environment, and other problems? We must think about this together, too.

For a long time the Soviet leadership has pondered this. And we are coming to the conclusion that the U.S. and the USSR are simply "doomed" to dialogue, joint action, and cooperation. It cannot be otherwise.

But for this to happen we must stop viewing each other as enemies. There is a lot of this in our heads. We must take care not to look at our relations solely from a military standpoint.

This does not mean that we are suggesting a Soviet-American condominium. This is about realities. And this in no way puts into question allied relations or cooperation that have built up with other countries. We need to understand all this. I do not think that this was there before. We have just now entered the process of mutual understanding.

We have asked the question: what kind of Soviet Union is in the U.S. interest--the dynamic, stable, solid one or the one struggling with all kinds of problems? I am informed about the advice you have been receiving.

As far as we are concerned, we are interested in a U.S. that feels confident in the decisions it makes on national security and progress. This thought is present in all discussions with my Western partners. And there have been hundreds of such meetings. I believe that any other

approach is dangerous. Ignoring domestic political processes, an unwillingness to take into account the practical interests of the U.S. in the world--that is a dangerous policy.

And the U.S. must take into account the interests of other countries. Meanwhile, there is still a desire to teach, oppress, and step on throats. It is still there. We all know this. Therefore, I would like to hear your opinion on this. For the question is how to build a bridge between our countries--across the river or down its course.

Since there is much time remaining in the president's leadership of the U.S., this point must be made clear. I think that we will not achieve this in just one meeting. But the main issues must be sorted out. I repeat: we need clarity. All the rest is concrete detail, specifics that in the final analysis are integrally linked to mutual understanding on these basic problems ...

Bush: I hope you noticed that while the changes in Eastern Europe have been going on, the United States has not engaged in condescending statements aimed at damaging the Soviet Union. At the same time, there are people in the United States who accuse me of being too cautious. It is true, I am a cautious man, but I am not a coward; and my administration will seek to avoid doing anything that would damage your position in the world. But I was persistently advised to do something of that sort--to climb the Berlin Wall and to make broad declarations. My administration, however, is avoiding these steps; we are in favor of reserved behavior.

Gorbachev: ... I want to reply to the views you expressed at the beginning of the discussion. I welcome your words. I regard them as a manifestation of political will. This is important to me.

From my own experience, and the experience of working with President Reagan, I know how we found ourselves more than once in a situation concerning disarmament where everything came to a halt and was stuck in the mud. The delegations sat in Geneva sipping coffee, and there was nothing to do.

At that time I received a message from President Reagan. I read the text carefully and concluded that nothing would come of it. Of course, I could have written a formal reply but I do not like wasting words. I had to make a decisive move. And that is how the idea arose for a meeting in Reykjavik. Some people were frightened by the results of the Reykjavik talks. But in reality Reykjavik became a genuine breakthrough on questions of arms

limitation. After this, the mechanism for negotiations began to work actively and effectively.

Or take another area--economic ties. Here there are limited possibilities for advancement. In order to overcome these limitations, political will is needed. A signal is needed from the president. American businessmen are disciplined people, and as soon as they see a new way of thinking in the economic sphere, they respond very quickly.

At the Geneva talks, the delegations squeezed literally everything they could from the directives given to them. It is essential to give impetus to all work. I noted your views in this connection. They appear to me to be worthy of attention.

I thank you for placing top priority on the question of bilateral cooperation. We are prepared to discuss all issues related to this.

The following situation often arises: when discussing relations between our countries, we are told: "Come to an agreement with the Americans, we will support you." But as soon as we start to negotiate, they scream: "A new Yalta." That is somewhat natural. Much depends on our work with our allies, and with the non-aligned countries.

We will move to adapt our economy to the world economy. Therefore we consider it important to be part of the GATT system and other international economic organizations. We believe that this will be useful to our perestroika, and will allow us to understand better how the world economic mechanism functions.

In the past, the U.S. took a negative stand on the question of the USSR's participation in international economic organizations. It was said that participation in the GATT would politicize this organization's activity. I think that this is a vestige of old approaches. There really was a time when we placed ideological issues in the forefront. By the way, you did, too. Now times have changed, there are other criteria, other processes, and there will be no return to the old ways.

... We are allowing for the possibility in our country of various forms of private property. We will aim toward making the ruble convertible. Perestroika is also happening within the framework of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance in order to bring this organization's operational principles closer to generally accepted world economic standards.

Now, on Central America. We see how you perceive the situation in Latin America. But it is not quite clear to us

what you want from Nicaragua. There is political pluralism in that country, there are more parties there than in the United States. And the Sandinistas--what kind of Marxists are they?! This is laughable. Where are the roots of the problem? At the core are economic and social issues. Why does the U.S. fail to see them? You say that the main problem in Nicaragua is the question of power. Well, there will be elections there. Let the United Nations monitor them. Frankly speaking, it is not our business. Let this process go where it will.

On Cuba. Cuba came into being without our assistance. Rather, it was the United States that played some role in that. When the new Cuba was born, we learned about it from the newspapers. But let us not touch on history. The issue now is how to improve the current situation. There is a simple and well-proven method: one has to speak directly to Castro. You must learn: nobody can lord themselves over Castro. He has his own ideas about our perestroika, too.

I want to emphasize again: we are not pursuing any goals in Central America. We do not want to acquire bases or strongholds there. You should be assured about this.

Let us return to the problem of disarmament. We are familiar with the U.S. approach to solving the problem of chemical weapons. However, in the past this approach has been missing an important element--a U.S. readiness to curtail production of binary weapons after the convention banning chemical weapons went into effect. Now this element has appeared, and that is very substantial. There has been progress here.

Therefore we, you and we, believe that a global ban is essential. We hold to this goal. But there are two-sided measures and definite stages to be negotiated. Our foreign ministers can discuss this.

Bush: The issue of nonproliferation of chemical weapons is also highly critical. I hope that our experts will touch on this subject.

Gorbachev: I agree.

Now on the Vienna negotiations and the reduction of conventional arms in Europe. You came out in favor of concluding an agreement on this most important issue in 1990 and on its signing at the highest level. Our approaches here coincided. We are ready for active and constructive cooperation to attain this goal. There are difficulties, of course. But I will not elaborate on the details.

On negotiations for limiting strategic weapons. Here political will is needed to give impetus to the work being

done. I listened to you attentively, and you emphasized some of the elements. But, unfortunately, I did not hear you mention the problem of sea-launched cruise missiles.

Now the climate is favorable for preparing a draft treaty on the reduction of strategic offensive weapons for signature by the time of our meeting next year. And if by this time a solution to the problem of sea-launched cruise missiles has not been found, then a serious difficulty will arise. Here you are at a great advantage. The American side must consider this question again in the context I mentioned.

Bush: That is a problem.

Gorbachev: We are not trying to achieve mirror symmetry. Each side has a choice; there is the situation of the country to consider, the different structures of the armed forces.

But in working toward a reduction of strategic offensive weapons, it is impossible to ignore sea-launched cruise missiles. The U.S. has a serious advantage in this area. Put yourselves in our position. Our Supreme Soviet will not agree to the ratification of a treaty if it avoids the problem of sea-launched cruise missiles.

I very much welcome your proposals on the environment. You can expect our experts to take an active part in the conference on environmental issues planned by the White House.

I am glad that you touched on the question of increasing student exchanges. We began this good work during Reagan's presidency. For young people it is easier to find a common language. And I am sure that they will make a contribution toward the positive development of Soviet-American relations.

In summary, I would like once again to emphasize that I am happy with the steps that you outlined here. The Soviet-American dialogue is gaining a certain momentum. And to give it a new breath, new efforts and new steps will be necessary ...

First private session.

Record of conversation between General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev and President George Bush (one-on-one) December 2, 1989

Gorbachev: In our confidential conversation, I would like to raise three issues:

First, the issue of Central America, primarily Cuba. Mr. President, perhaps you remember that after my visit to Cuba I wrote a letter to you. My talks there were not simple. I must admit that Castro expressed a certain concern regarding our course. We clarified a number of issues for him, and in general everything ended well. Among other things, we said to him: What we are doing in our country is dictated by our needs. What you are doing in your country is your business; we are not interfering with it.

In a one-on-one conversation, Castro essentially asked for our assistance with the normalization of relations with the U.S. Recently the chief of staff of the Cuban Air Force visited the Soviet Union. He talked with [officials] at the Defense Ministry of the USSR, as well as with Marshal Akhromeyev. And he confidentially repeated this request. I am confiding it to you in a one-on-one conversation and hope that this will remain between us. Otherwise Castro's reaction may be rather strong.

Bush: Certainly. I am not going to put you in an embarrassing situation. There cannot be leaks from my side. I understand how delicate this matter is for you.

Gorbachev: Perhaps we should think about some kind of mechanism to begin contacts on this issue. We are ready to participate, but perhaps it will be unnecessary. It is up to you to decide. We are ready to assist you in starting the dialogue, but it is certainly your business, and I could only ask you to think about it.

It seems to me that Castro understands how much the world has been changing. I felt it in my conversation with him. But he has a remarkably strong sense of self-esteem and independence.

Bush: Could you please repeat verbatim what he told you.

Gorbachev: His words were the following: During your contacts with the president, we request that you find the ways and means to convey Cuba's interest in normalizing relations with the United States. That is what I have done just now.

Bush: I would like, so to speak, to show you all my cards on Central America and on Cuba. If we take our NATO allies, including Thatcher, Kohl, Mitterrand, in general they do not care about Central America. Of course, they say good words about democratization and free elections, but they have no vital interests in what is going on there. The same concerns the "left flank" of the American body politic. However, young fledgling democracies to the south

of the Rio Grande, as well as the overwhelming majority of American people, take this issue very close to heart.

We see also that, compared to your movement forward, Castro looks like an anchor which makes this movement more difficult. This man is clearly out of step with the changes and processes that have enveloped the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and our hemisphere. Democratic changes are alien to him.

The leaders of Latin American countries, of course, avoid criticizing other Latin Americans in the United Nations. Therefore I was surprised when Costa Rican President Oscar Arias pointed out that Castro was now in complete isolation. Castro poses yet another grave problem. I am talking about many Cubans who have been expelled from Cuba and whose relatives in Cuba are being persecuted. Many such Cubans tend to live in southern Florida, and there passions run high against this man who is considered to be the worst dictator.

Castro sounded us out before; however, he never followed through with any signs of readiness to change his behavior.

Now, about Nicaragua. You said that the Sandinistas are not real Marxists. Earlier I had a different opinion, but today I would tend to agree. Nevertheless, they still export revolution. I am deeply convinced that the "Cessna" episode was not just an accident. Whatever they say to you, they methodically transfer arms--here it does not matter from what sources--for the FMLN. I am concerned that now a new shipment of helicopters from the Soviet Union to Nicaragua is being delivered, although I do not doubt Mr. Shevardnadze's declaration regarding the missiles. Indeed they could get them from other sources.

Gorbachev: Your weapons are also in the region.

Bush: This is possible. We should look for a way to remove this source of tension in our relations. We see holding free elections under appropriate monitoring as such a way.

Gorbachev: I agree.

Bush: Today both of us should hope and pray that free elections will really take place and that [Daniel] Ortega, if he is not elected, will not try to cling to power somehow with the help of the army. If there are really free elections certified by a group of foreign observers, then the United States will accept their results and will in no way attempt to influence or sabotage their outcome.

There is another malignant issue in Latin America; I would say an open wound. I am speaking of Panama. I must

tell you that nobody in the United States believes that the Soviet Union might have a stake in Noriega's success. For us he poses a terrible problem. By the way, I inquired of our attorney general how sound the incriminating evidence against Noriega is.

To tell you frankly, I would be ready to look for a way to give him a chance to leave without losing face, to alleviate the problem somehow. I am telling you this, of course, in confidence. However, I received a response that the evidence against him is very convincing and, considering how acute the issue of drugs in the United States is, we cannot simply dispose of an official indictment of Noriega.

Gorbachev: I would like you, Mr. President, to know how the Soviet Union perceives some of your administration's steps with regard to such countries as, for instance, Panama, Colombia and, most recently, the Philippines. In the Soviet Union people ask: The fact that these are sovereign countries--is this not a barrier for the United States? Why does the U.S. arrange a trial, reach a verdict and carry it out by itself?

Bush: What do you have in mind when you include Colombia?

Gorbachev: I have in mind the use of force against the drug business.

Bush: Now, we do not carry out any military operations. But you must have no doubt that when we are asked to help a democratically elected government in its struggle against the drug-mafia, we will do it. But President [Virgilio] Barco is a very courageous man and he will not ask us for it.

As for the Philippines, your reaction surprised me. President [Corazon] Aquino was elected democratically, and now she is being challenged by a group from the military led by Colonel [Gregorio] Honasan. She asked for aerial cover for her palace, which was under threat of bombardment. It seems to me this should not have caused problems for the Soviet Union. And the scale of assistance was not that large. If this creates problems for the Soviet Union, then at least it is good that you mentioned it. Otherwise, it would never have occurred to me. In any case, it is not my wish that such minimal assistance cause difficulties in our relations with the Soviet Union.

Gorbachev: Some are beginning to speak about the "Bush Doctrine" that is replacing the "Brezhnev Doctrine."

Bush: Do they really say so with regard to the Philippines? I simply cannot understand this. We are

talking about the legitimate elected leader. She is asking for help against an insolent colonel.

Gorbachev: I agree. However, I think one can explain such a reaction in the context of the current situation. Just take a look; Europe is changing; governments are falling--governments that were also elected on a legitimate basis. One wonders if during this power struggle someone were to ask the Soviet Union to intervene, what should we do? Should we follow the example of President Bush?

Bush: I see.

Gorbachev: Sometimes I hear that in the current situation we are not fulfilling our mission with regard to our friends. I always respond in such cases: first, nobody asked us to help; second, the changes are proceeding according to the Constitution.

Bush: I would say more--that it is thanks to you that they are proceeding peacefully. But there is a big difference between this and a colonel who intends to overthrow Aquino.

The whole thing is that changes should come about peacefully. President Aquino is the very symbol of peaceful change in the Philippines. But I can see how some people in the Soviet Union might have a different reaction.

Gorbachev: I understand you. We stand for peaceful change; we do not want to interfere, and we are not interfering in the processes that are taking place. Let the people themselves decide their future, without external interference. But, you see, such colonels, such people can pop up in any country.

Bush: I do not want to sound like an old, bad record, but let me repeat: public opinion in the U.S. supports you, firmly supports perestroika as well as your role in the pluralist processes in Eastern Europe: a role that cannot be reduced merely to restraint, but also is the catalyst for change. But in the eyes of our people, your continuing assistance to Fidel Castro causes you serious damage. I should be frank: it is simply incomprehensible. He is opposed to your course.

It would be nice if you could also find a way to terminate this extremely expensive outpouring of assistance that gives nothing back to you. These billions of dollars you could spend with great benefit for yourself, while removing this serious element of friction in Soviet-American relations.

Yet, even at the risk of contradicting myself, I would say: all this testifies to the fact that Castro is out of step with you and, therefore, he is not your puppet. People

understand this. Well, in any case, it would be very good to find a way to halt assistance to Cuba and to certain forces in Central America so that we do not stand divided on such issues as Panama, Nicaragua, and Cuba.

Positive changes are taking place now in Chile, in other countries of Latin America. And this is good not only for the United States, but also for democracy and freedom of choice. Against this background Cuba and Nicaragua stand out like alien bodies, and, besides, they stand in the way of Soviet-American mutual understanding.

Gorbachev: The Soviet Union has no plans with regard to spheres of influence in Latin America. This was and will continue to be the case. This continent is now in motion. You know it better than I do. I agree with you: the general trend is positive, democratic; dictatorships give way to democratic forms, although these are young, newly formed democracies with the heavy burden of the past, and their road will be a difficult one. We sympathize with these processes. We do not intend to interfere with what is happening.

As to Cuba, we have certain established relations with it; they go back to a certain period of history characterized by economic blockades, etc. Now we would like gradually to transfer our economic relations to a normal track. One should not forget that Cuba is a sovereign country with its own government, its own ambitions and perceptions. It is not up to us to teach Cuba. Let them do what they want.

[.....]

Gorbachev: I would like to say a few words about reactions and behavior in connection with the events in Eastern Europe. First of all, I would like to say that the vector of these changes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union is bringing us closer to each other, and this is the main thing. But there is an important point. I cannot accept it when some American politicians say that the process of overcoming the split in Europe should be based on Western values. It seems that earlier we were blamed for the "export of revolution," and now they speak about the export of American values. I believe this goes against the spirit of today's changes; it may complicate the processes that are taking place. I wanted to share that with you, although I know that your position is different.

With regard to the "German Question." We have the impression that Mr. Kohl fusses and bustles around too much. He does not act seriously and responsibly. We are afraid that the topic of reunification may be exploited for

electoral gain, that it will not be strategic factors but the mood of the moment that will take the upper hand. By the way, opinions in the FRG vary on this issue, both inside the governing coalition and between the coalition and the Social Democrats. It is important for both of us to convey to everyone that certain actions may cause damage to constructive processes. Moreover, they may put in question very important and serious issues, including trust in the government of the FRG.

So what would happen? Would a unified Germany be neutral, not a member of any military-political alliances, or would it be a member of NATO? I believe we should let everyone understand that it is still too early to discuss either of these options. Let the process take its course without artificial acceleration.

None of us is responsible for the division of Germany. History occurred this way. Let history continue to decide on this issue in the future. It seems to me we have developed an understanding in this regard.

Bush: I believe that in his actions Helmut Kohl was greatly influenced by an emotional reaction to events. The same concerns Genscher. True, the 10-point program does have a flavor of electoral political considerations. But we should not overlook the wave of emotions there. Kohl knows that some Western allies who pay lip service to reunification when the people of Germany support it are [actually] quite upset by the prospect.

Gorbachev: Yes, I know about that. And Kohl was informed about this viewpoint. But unlike you and your allies, I am speaking openly. There are two German states; this is the way history happened. Let history decide how the process will develop and what it will lead to in the context of a new Europe and a new world. Kohl declared repeatedly that he understands his responsibility and that he will abide by the understandings we reached in Bonn. In general, this is an issue where we should act with maximum consideration to avoid hurting the chances that have opened up.

Bush: I agree. We will not take any rash steps; we will not try to accelerate the outcome of the debate on reunification. When you speak to Kohl, you will find that he is in agreement with my approach. And if his public declarations often contradict this, one should take into account the specifics of the political equation and the emotional aspects, especially the latter. They speak about this topic with tears in their eyes.

Gorbachev: I would like to stress that we view positively the change that created these possibilities for normal contacts, broader cooperation and trade between the two German states.

Bush: As strange as it may seem, on this issue you are in the same boat with our NATO allies. Most of the conservative ones among them welcome your approach. At the same time they have to think beyond the time when notions of the FRG and the GDR are history. I would tread cautiously on this issue. If our Democrats criticize my timidity, let them do it. I do not intend to jump up onto the Wall because too much is at stake on this issue.

Gorbachev: Well, jumping on the Wall is not a good activity for a president (Laughter).

Bush: If Bush and Gorbachev can express satisfaction about the changes, it will be great. But I will not be tempted to take actions that, while they might look attractive, could lead to dangerous consequences.

Gorbachev: Correct. The times we live in are not only promising, but also demanding.

Bush: I hope we will have another chance, today or tomorrow, to speak in confidence on one or two other issues.

Gorbachev: I have one such issue. It is Afghanistan. Today you skillfully dodged it. At another time I said to your predecessor that Afghanistan is a testing ground that will show whether our two countries can resolve even the most difficult issues. I believe we should discuss it.

Bush: I would say that today this issue is more important for you, not for us. I must admit that some time ago I was wrong in my forecast of what would happen after the pullout of your troops. I am ready to discuss this issue.

From my side I would suggest discussing one issue concerning the domestic affairs of the USSR. It could be discussed at the plenary meeting or in a one-on-one conversation. And, if you object, we may not discuss it at all. But I would like to have the clearest understanding of your approach to the Baltics. No mistakes should be made there. I believe it would be preferable to talk about this issue confidentially, since I would very much like to understand the essence of your thinking on this extremely complicated issue.

Gorbachev: We shall discuss this issue.

Second Plenary session.

Third meeting between Gorbachev and Bush (Plenary Session),
December 3, 1989.

Gorbachev: ... I will start off by saying that we are pleased with the work that was done yesterday, but I believe there is a possibility for advancing even further. If you do not object, I would like to start first. Nevertheless, today I am your guest ...

Bush: I like "my ship" very much.

Seriously, we would like to express deep gratitude for the excellent opportunity extended to our delegation to work on the Soviet liner. Although the press is putting pressure on me right now, bombarding me with questions about our shortening the talks yesterday, I believe the changes in the program affected the content of our discussion substantially. For my part, I consider our discussion to have been very good and productive. Actually, we essentially continued the talks at breakfast.

Gorbachev: Yes, we have made a calculation and it turns out that the discussions lasted over five hours.

Before we begin discussing fundamental issues, I want to make one suggestion to you of an organizational nature. Why don't we hold a joint press conference? I think that there would be great positive symbolism in this.

Bush: That is a good idea. In principle I agree. Only I am afraid that our American journalists might think that I am avoiding their questions, since I did not agree to a separate press conference.

Maybe we can arrange a press conference in several parts. First we will speak to the journalists together, and then I will answer questions on my own.

Gorbachev: I also planned to meet with Soviet television after our joint press conference. So that is fine with me.

Bush: Excellent. So it is decided.

Gorbachev: Mr. President, yesterday I responded very briefly to the views you expressed on the military-political questions. Today it is our turn. I assume that our positions in this area are of great interest to you as well. I am revising my statement to take into account yesterday's exchange of opinions.

Even though this is only an informal meeting, we are meeting like this for the first time, and I would like to begin with a few statements on matters of principle.

First and foremost, the new U.S. president must know that the Soviet Union will not under any circumstances initiate a war. This is so important that I wanted to

repeat the announcement to you personally. Moreover, the USSR is prepared to cease considering the U.S. as an enemy and announce this openly. We are open to cooperation with America, including cooperation in the military sphere. That is the first thing.

Secondly. We support joint efforts for providing mutual security. The Soviet leadership is dedicated to continuing the disarmament process in all aspects. We consider it essential and urgent to overcome the limitations of the arms race and prevent the creation of new exotic types of weapons.

In passing, I will note that we welcome the process of cooperation that has begun between our military leaders. In particular, we are grateful for the opportunity provided to the Soviet minister of defense to become familiar with the U.S. armed forces.

One more thought on a matter of principle. We have adopted a defensive [military] doctrine. We made great efforts to explain to you exactly what this was. Our armed forces are already involved in serious reforms. The structure of the military grouping in Eastern Europe is becoming defensive: the divisions now have fewer tanks, and they are removing ferrying equipment. And air force deployments are changing; aviation attack forces are reverting to the second echelon, and fighter aircraft, that is, defensive aviation forces, are moving to the front line.

We are not making a secret of our plans for a perestroika in the armed forces. The Soviet military is prepared at any time to meet with its American colleagues, to provide essential information, and to discuss questions that arise.

But [new] questions also arise in return. While the Soviet Union has approved and implemented a purely defensive doctrine, the U.S. continues to be guided by a rapid reaction strategy that was adopted over 20 years ago. That could formerly have been justified somehow. But now, when on the military-political level it is recognized that the threats formerly emanating from the Warsaw Treaty no longer exist, we naturally pose the question: why is the U.S. being so slow in enacting perestroika within its own armed forces? I have familiarized myself with the voluminous--around 60-page--Brussels statement. And, unfortunately, I found that there is no progress yet to be found on the part of NATO in altering its policy at the doctrinal level in this most important area.

The next question of principle. To some degree we touched on this already when we looked at the dynamic of the negotiating process. However, I want to return to this problem and single out one very important point.

You and I have admitted that as a result of the arms race truly unimaginable military power arose on both sides. We have come to the same conclusion that such a situation is fraught with catastrophe. An extremely important negotiating process was initiated, at the forefront of which were questions about nuclear arms reductions.

Bush: Excuse me for interrupting you, but I would like in this context to thank you for the deeply symbolic gift which you sent to me through Ambassador Dobrynin--a memento made out of disassembled missiles.

Gorbachev: Yes. The treaty on shorter-range and intermediate-range missiles became a historic watershed.

Generally speaking, the prospects that are opening up are not bad, and your comments yesterday convinced me that a promising basis for further progress has been established.

But what worries us? Until now, the negotiations have left out one of the three fundamental components of military power--naval forces. Both the previous and the current administration have reacted very emotionally whenever this question has been raised.

Meanwhile, there has been no infringement on American security. I want to announce with full responsibility that we are taking into account the interests of the U.S. Your country is a sea power with vitally important lines of communication conveyed via seas and oceans. Building up naval forces is for you both a historical tradition and an entire system in science and industry that is deeply integrated with economic interests. For that reason changing the approach here is not so easy. We understand this well, since we ourselves are experiencing similar difficulties in other areas of military build-up.

But what is to come of this? As early as the beginning of the 1950s we were literally encircled by a network of military bases. They consisted of more than 500,000 people, hundreds of fighter planes, and powerful naval forces. The U.S. has 15 aircraft carriers, approximately 1,500 fighter planes. And what immense forces are already deployed along our shores, or could be deployed at any moment? I am not even speaking about strategic submarines--at least those fall under the nuclear [strategic] offensive weapons negotiations. As a result of

the Vienna talks, the level of military confrontation on land will be substantially lowered.

As I have already said, there are good prospects for concluding a treaty on the reduction of strategic offensive weapons [START]. Under these circumstances we have a right to expect that the threat to the Soviet Union from the sea will also be diminished.

Our ministers have already talked about this. I am taking the initiative upon myself and am officially raising the issue of starting negotiations on the problem of naval forces. As for how to begin them--here we are prepared to be flexible. In the beginning let it be through measures of trust, then a general reduction in the scale of naval activity. Then, when the situation becomes clear at the same time in Geneva and in Vienna, the time will come to deal in earnest with the question of reducing naval forces.

I will say in advance that we will adopt a realistic position. In particular, we are aware that the U.S. has other problems aside from Soviet military forces. But I would still like to stress once again with total certainty: just as European security is important to the U.S. and its allies, we are interested in the security of the seas and oceans.

Now, after delineating some of our fundamental approaches, I would like to comment on specific negotiating points. Since we agreed in advance not to get carried away in the details, I will, as you did yesterday, limit myself to the main issues.

I would like to make things clear between us, at least concerning three very important negotiating positions. First, our ministers and military leaders have clarified the interconnection between the future treaty on strategic offensive weapons and the ABM Treaty. Second, we consider it of utmost importance--and the initiative of E.A. Shevardnadze in Wyoming is evidence of this--to come to an agreement on the rules of accounting for heavy bombers and strategic air-launched cruise missiles. If we take the current American formula, then the U.S. can claim as a result not 6,000 but around 8,500 warheads. We are not trying to bargain here; as a starting point we must simply accept the facts of the matter.

The third problem, which I already touched upon, are the strategic sea-launched cruise missiles.

There are, of course, other questions, but I am not going to speak about them now. If I understood the president correctly, we are setting for ourselves a common frame of reference, at least to resolve all remaining major

questions by the time of the summit meeting in Washington, and to sign the START treaty itself by the end of next year.

One more important point. I understand that this point was "pushed" by Akhromeyev and Scowcroft. The USSR and U.S. navies have nuclear weapons, both strategic (submarine-launched ballistic missiles and sea-launched cruise missiles) and tactical (short-range sea-launched cruise missiles, nuclear torpedoes, and mines). The subject of the Geneva negotiations is the strategic nuclear component of the navy. We are left with tactical nuclear weapons. We propose that they be destroyed. For the moment this is an unofficial conversation, but I am making a proposal to begin official discussions. The Soviet Union is prepared to completely destroy the navy's tactical nuclear weapons on a mutual basis. Such a radical decision would immediately simplify the procedures for monitoring its implementation as well.

Now a few words about Vienna. On the whole I agree with the president's evaluation of the negotiations. However, even here three important problems remain. The first is the question of reducing not only arms but also military personnel. We proposed a reduction to 1,300,000 on each side, that is, by one million on each side. NATO representatives do not agree with this, but for some reason they do not name their own figures. I think that people will simply not understand us if we limit ourselves only to a reduction in weapons [when] groupings that are enormous in strength face each other in Europe.

The second issue relates to troop reductions on foreign territory. We propose limiting them to a ceiling of 300,000, but we are being drawn in another direction--to the reduction of only Soviet and American troops. But there are also English, French, Belgian, Dutch, and Canadian troops. In short, we are being offered an unfair solution.

Now on the problem of air forces. We have proposed for each alliance a level of 4,700 tactical theater aviation aircraft and a separate level for interceptor aircraft. But so far things here have also been progressing slowly. We suggest that special attention be paid to this issue at the next ministers' meeting.

Briefly, about the president's proposal on "open skies." We support it. We will participate in the Ottawa conference. We are ready for productive joint work with the U.S. As it seems to us, there are substantial reserves in this proposal. Let us have our ministers and military

specialists discuss expanding the open status of the oceans and seas, space and land.

... To summarize what I have said, I wish to stress once again most strongly that we are disposed toward peaceful relations with the U.S. And based on that premise, we propose to transform the current military confrontation. That is what is most important.

[....]

Gorbachev: Perhaps we should now end the discussion of military issues and talk about Europe, and reflect on how to react to the efforts regarding developing cooperation there?

Bush: That is an excellent idea. But allow me to add a few words. I am very pleased with the cooperation between our diplomatic departments, in military as well as in other areas. I believe that the channels for discussing military-political problems are now integrally supplementing the contacts initiated by Akhromeyev and [Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. William] Crowe. Meetings between military specialists help matters greatly, and I hope that we will continue to develop this practice.

Gorbachev: That is exactly what we intend to do.

Bush: I will say frankly that our military has immense influence in NATO. I have just asked them to do an analysis of military expenditures in the U.S. and the West combined, and to present their recommendations. I think that in this crucial period, contacts between our military leaders are particularly significant.

Gorbachev: So we will have them meet more often. Would you like to go first in discussing European issues?

Bush: You are closer to Europe, but I would like to preface our conversation with a few comments.

First of all, I admit that we were shocked by the swiftness of the changes that unfolded. We regard highly your personal reaction and the reaction of the Soviet Union as a whole to these dynamic, and at the same time fundamental, changes.

Although we did not go into details, during yesterday's conversation we discussed eye-to-eye the problem of the reunification of Germany. I hope that you understand that you cannot expect us not to approve of German reunification. At the same time, we realize the extent to which this is a delicate, sensitive issue. We are trying to act with a certain reserve. I will phrase this thought a little differently: there is no desire on my part, nor among the representatives of my administration,

to be in a position that would appear provocative. I emphasize that point.

Another example of our policy with respect to Eastern Europe: we sent a high-level delegation to Poland. It included my senior economic advisers, other representatives of the administration, businesspeople, union leaders, etc. They went there not to create difficulties but to explain to the Poles what mechanisms, in our opinion, are effective in the economic sphere.

I will not elaborate on each Eastern European country but will stress the thought that we understand very well the meaning of the section of the Helsinki Act governing national boundaries in Europe.

It stands to reason that I am ready to answer any of your questions. Personally, I am most interested in how you view the possibility of moving beyond the limits of the status quo.

Gorbachev: I do not agree that we are "closer to Europe." The USSR and the U.S. are equally integrated into European problems. We understand very well your involvement in Europe. To look at the role of the U.S. in the Old World any differently is unrealistic, erroneous, and ultimately unconstructive. You must know this; it is our basic position.

Bush: That is not exactly what I meant. I just meant that historically we were not as close to Eastern Europe. Of course we are close--and will be close--to Europe; we are vitally interested and involved in NATO. The U.S. is, properly speaking, the leader of NATO.

I want to emphasize apart from this that you are catalyzing changes in Europe in a constructive way.

Gorbachev: I reaffirmed our fundamental position on the U.S.' role in Europe for a reason. There is too much speculation on this issue. It is aimed both at you and us. We should be absolutely clear on such important matters.

Now, on the changes in Europe. They are truly fundamental in nature. And not only in Eastern Europe--in Western Europe, too. I received representatives from the Trilateral Commission. After one of the conversations, Giscard d'Estaing, who was the speaker, addressed me and said in a very meaningful way: "Be ready to deal with a united federal state of Western Europe." By saying that, I think, he meant that when European integration reaches a qualitatively new level in 1992 it will be accompanied by a deep reorganization of political structures that will reach the federal level as well.

Therefore, all of Europe is on the move, and it is moving in the direction of something new. We also consider ourselves Europeans, and we associate this movement with the idea of a common European home. I would like to ask E.A. Shevardnadze and Secretary of State Baker to discuss this idea in more depth, because I think it is in the interests of both the USSR and the U.S.

We should act--and interact--in a particularly responsible and balanced way during this period when all of Europe is undergoing such dynamic changes.

Bush: I agree with you.

Gorbachev: After all, as the saying goes, every five years a gun goes off by itself. The fewer weapons, the less chance for an accidental catastrophe.

In the process, the security of the U.S. and its allies should not be less by even one millimeter than our own security.

Shevardnadze: Yesterday the president introduced an interesting proposal on chemical weapons. The secretary of state and I discussed this issue in great detail and very constructively. As is apparent, it deserves the strictest attention.

Gorbachev: I have already stated my first reaction. As I understand it, there are two areas in which we agree. As a common goal we have before us a global prohibition on chemical weapons, but we are moving in stages and in so doing are rejecting the modernization of binary weapons. This is a good basis for negotiations.

Bush: If you will allow me, I would like in this connection to raise the very critical question of the proliferation of chemical weapons outside our two countries. In particular we are concerned about Libya. I, of course, understand that you are not in a position to control the Libyan leader. However, we, as before, are convinced that the factory in Rabta is designated to produce chemical weapons. We would like to work with you not only on this specific problem, but on the whole issue of preventing the spread of chemical weapons, which are still sometimes called the "poor man's atom bomb." The whole world has already seen the horrible consequences of the spread of chemical weapons during the Iran-Iraq conflict. Therefore, we propose reaching an agreement in this area, too. Personally, this issue worries me greatly.

Gorbachev: I want to assure you that our positions on this issue coincide. The Soviet Union is decisively against the spread of chemical weapons. I suggest that our

ministers continue their discussion of this problem on the basis of directives set by us.

Bush: We must make immediate progress in this area. For now, you and I are morally vulnerable. Others do not want to move, or they are moving in the opposite direction, alleging that Soviet and American chemical arsenals will remain untouched.

Gorbachev: I am convinced that even here we can work together successfully. If the USSR and the U.S. begin to reduce their chemical arsenals gradually, we will have the moral right to argue even more strongly for nonproliferation of chemical weapons ...

Bush: I fully agree with these views.

Gorbachev: When I meet with political leaders from Eastern as well as Western Europe, I tell them all that this is an objective process that brings together countries across the continent. They are now looking for optimal variants for combining economics, technology, and various standards ...

What is the essence of this essentially consensus-based approach? We are convinced that we must work toward continuing and developing the Helsinki process, and by no means toward destroying what was created on the basis of it. After this, Helsinki II will be needed so that we can interpret the new situation and work out joint criteria and frameworks. It is understood that all the countries that signed the Helsinki Act, including of course the U.S. and Canada, must take part in this meeting.

Another important question: What to do with institutions created in another age? This also demands a balanced and responsible approach. Otherwise the current positive direction of the process of change might turn into its opposite, and lead to the undermining of stability. Existing instruments for supporting the balance must not be shattered but modified in accordance with the demands of the age. They must be utilized to strengthen security and stability and improve relations between states. Let NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization become to an even greater degree political, not just military, organizations; and let there be a change in their confrontational nature. It is good that our generals have already begun to grasp the spirit of the times, to visit each other, and to discuss the most complex questions.

I am certain that there are good prospects for cooperation in the CMEA. In the CMEA we are planning complex measures to ease entry into the structure of the world economy.

Our members of parliament are already cooperating--and are not doing a bad job: a "people's diplomacy" is developing. Such a comprehensive, positive atmosphere will protect all of us from unexpected and unpleasant surprises in the future.

I am under the impression that U.S. leaders are now quite actively advancing the idea of conquering the division of Europe on the basis of "Western values." If this premise is not solely for propaganda purposes, and they are intending to make it a basis for practical policy, then I will say bluntly that they are committing many follies. At one time in the West there was anxiety that the Soviet Union was planning to export revolution. But the aim of exporting "Western values" sounds similar.

I would put it this way: The times are now very complex and therefore particularly crucial. The fact that Eastern Europe is changing in the direction of greater openness, democracy, and rapprochement toward general human values, and creating mechanisms for compatibility and world economic progress, all this opens unprecedented possibilities for stepping up to a new level of relations; a step utilizing peaceful, calm means. Here it is very dangerous to force artificially or to push the processes taking place, all the more so for the purpose of satisfying certain unilateral interests.

The possibilities for European integration in the cultural and political spheres can be most varied, including those never before experienced. This will not take place painlessly. In some locations the situation will even become critical. And this is natural, for there are immense and varied social forces being drawn into the events.

I can make this judgment at least about the Soviet Union. Our country is a genuine conglomerate of peoples. They have various traditions and historical features of development. We are now fiercely discussing the future of the Soviet economy, or, for example, the question of what kinds of political institutions are needed under conditions of serious democratization. The task of transforming our federation has once again become critical. Recently I exchanged views on this issue with the Canadian prime minister. He is worried about Quebec, which for many years has been pursuing separatist goals. By the way, even at that time the thought occurred to me: why is the American Congress involved in the Baltic region and not in helping the Canadians resolve the Quebec problem?

Our own experience allows us to predict that the processes in Europe will not always go smoothly. In general, this has already been confirmed. But on the whole we are looking at things optimistically. When you think on the level of a simple reaction to events, it can make you shiver; some people might even begin to panic. But if you rise to the political, philosophical level, then everything falls into place. After all, if the nature of the process is a deep one, if it broaches fundamental matters involving millions of people, whole nationalities, then how can it flow smoothly and easily?

It is essential to proceed from an understanding of the immense importance of current changes. We must avoid any possible mistake and utilize the historical possibilities opening up for a rapprochement between East and West. Of course, differences will remain. We discussed that yesterday. Even in the Soviet Union--in one state--differences between republics and different regions are visible to the naked eye. I am certain that such differences exist in the U.S. as well. Even more so, they must be present on the vast European continent.

We are in favor of having a common understanding with the U.S. of the events taking place in our country. I have ascertained that today such a common understanding exists. But the process will continue to develop. And I want this understanding not to weaken but, on the contrary, to become even stronger.

I want us to cooperate continually on the basis of this understanding throughout this complex transitional period. Otherwise the process might fall apart, and we will all end up in a chaotic state, which will create a multitude of problems, will bring a halt to the changes, and will throw us back to an age of suspicion and mistrust.

I emphasize: great responsibility lies with the Soviet Union and the U.S. at this historic moment.

Bush: I want to clarify one point. You expressed concern about Western values. This would be understandable if our adherence to certain ideals caused difficulties in the USSR or in Eastern Europe, if it disturbed the progressive processes developing there. But we have never pursued such goals. Any discussion of Western values in NATO or in other Western organizations is completely natural and does not have a destructive purpose. After all, what are Western values? They are, if you will, free speech, openness, lively debates. In the economic realm--stimulus for progress, a free market. These values are not something new or of the moment; we have shared them for a

long time with the Western Europeans; they unite the West. We welcome changes in the Soviet Union or in Poland, but by no means set them against Western values. So I want as best as possible to understand your point of view in order to avoid any misunderstanding.

Gorbachev: The main principle which we have adopted and which we are following in the framework of the new way of thinking is the right of each country to a free election, including the right to reexamine or change its original choice. This is very painful, but it is a fundamental right: the right to elect from within without interference. The U.S. adheres to a certain social and economic system, which the American people chose. So let other people decide for themselves which God, figuratively speaking, to worship.

For me it is important that the tendency toward renewal that has taken shape in Eastern and Western Europe is moving in the direction of rapprochement. The result will not be a copy of the Swedish, English or Soviet model. No. Something will turn out that will meet the demands of the current stage of development in human and European civilization.

I have just discovered that people have no fear of choosing between one system and another. They are searching for their own unique possibility, one that will provide them with the best standard of living. When this search flows freely, then there is only one thing left to say: good luck.

Bush: I do not think that we differ on this. We approve of self-determination and the debates that go along with it. I want you to interpret our approach in a positive light: Western values by no means signify the intrusion of our system on Romania, Czechoslovakia, or even the GDR.

Gorbachev: That is very important for us. Fundamental changes are happening, people are coming together. That is the most important thing. I see that on East European soil, ways of resolving problems that involve a different system--in the fields of economics, technology, etc.--are becoming established. That is natural.

If we share a common understanding, then all our practical actions undertaken under changing conditions will be appropriate and will come to acquire a positive character.

Baker: I would like to clarify our approach to self-determination. We agree that each country must have the right to free elections. But all this makes sense only

when the people in the country are really in a position to choose freely. This also falls under the concept of "Western values," and by no means is it a right to thrust one's ways upon others.

Gorbachev: If someone is making a claim to the ultimate truth, they can expect disaster.

Bush: Absolutely right.

Baker: That is not exactly what I meant. Take, for example, the question of reunification of Germany, which is making both you and us nervous, as well as many Europeans. What are we advocating there? For reunification to happen based on the principles of openness, pluralism, and a free market. By no means do we want the reunification of Germany to reproduce the model of 1937-1945, which, evidently, is something that worries you. Germany of that time had nothing in common with Western values.

Gorbachev: A.N. Yakovlev is asking: Why are democracy, openness, [free] market "Western values?"

Bush: It was not always that way. You personally created a start for these changes directed toward democracy and openness. Today it is really much clearer than it was, say, 20 years ago that we share these values with you.

Gorbachev: There is no point in entering into propaganda battles.

Yakovlev: When you insist on "Western values," then "Eastern values" unavoidably appear, and "Southern values" ...

Gorbachev: Exactly, and when that happens, ideological confrontations flare up again.

Bush: I understand and I agree. Let us try to avoid careless words and talk more about the content of these values. From the bottom of our hearts we welcome the changes that are taking place.

Gorbachev: That is very important. You see, as I said, the most important thing is that the changes lead to greater openness even in our relations with each other. We are beginning to become organically integrated, freeing ourselves from everything that divided us. What will this be called in the final analysis? I think it is a new level of relations. For that reason, for my part, I support your proposal; let us not conduct the discussion at the level of the Church. In history this has always led to religious wars.

Baker: Maybe, by way of compromise, we will say that this positive process is happening on the basis of "democratic values?"...

Gorbachev: There are two realities in Afghanistan—the opposition and Najibullah. Let us try to help this interaction between them. How they will come to an agreement—is their business. The Soviet Union will accept any decision. Najibullah is ready for such an open dialog, and one should not present ultimatums, demands for his departure. Who would remove him? Or should we send our troops there again?

Baker: Stop your massive assistance to Kabul.

Gorbachev: Leave this empty talk behind. Do not assume that you know everything. You predicted Najibullah's demise after the Soviet troop withdrawal so many times already. They have such a difficult situation there that primitive solutions simply do not exist.

Bush: Frankly speaking, I am surprised by your information that tribal leaders are ready to talk to Najibullah.

Gorbachev: Not just ready, they are already talking with him one by one. Ask Hekmatyar, for example.

Bush: We do not have any contact with him.

Shevardnadze: But the CIA does.

Scowcroft: We are not trying to prevent contacts between the mojahadeen and Najibullah.

Gorbachev: We ourselves probably know only about a small portion of such contacts. The East is the East.

Bush: I completely agree with you.

Gorbachev: Let our ministers continue this useful conversation.

Baker: We need the mojahadeen agreement to the idea of a "transitional period." Before the opposition did not want to have any contacts with Najibullah. Now they are sending us signals that they are ready to start negotiations about a period of transition at one table with Najibullah. But only on the condition that from the very beginning, there will be a clear understanding that in the end of the period of transition Najibullah would retire and a new government would be formed. Here, the participation of the UN might be useful, including organizing an international conference. The American delegation in Wyoming was negotiating from precisely these positions.

Gorbachev: We can discuss your ideas.

Baker: If the mojahadeen agree, then elements of the PDPA could be included in the next government, but with a clear understanding that Najibullah and his close allies would not be a part of it.

Shevardnadze: Let them decide this themselves.

Gorbachev: The dialog itself will clarify this issue. The idea of a transition period is quite reasonable, because it allows the two realities to interact. If the Afghans themselves decide that Najibullah must leave—God help them. This is their business. Nobody is imposing him on them.

Bush: This would be good.

Baker: But the mojahadeen will simply not sit at the negotiating table if they are not convinced beforehand that in the end of the transition period there would be a new head of government in Afghanistan.

Gorbachev: And who would give them such a guarantee? If they are so confident that their positions prevail, why worry about it?

Baker: A new element just emerged. The opposition is at last ready to talk with Najibullah about the conditions of forming a new government. But they have to be confident that in the interests of peace Najibullah would step down in the end.

[Source: Archive of the Gorbachev Foundation, Fond 1. Opis 1. Excerpts published in: M.S. Gorbachev, Gody Trudnykh Reshenii, 1985-1992 [Years of Difficult Decisions], (Moscow: Alfa-print, 1993), pp. 173-185. Translated by Vladislav Zubok and Svetlana Savranskaya for the National Security Archive.]