

*Undated*

REFERENCE NOTE

On the proposal of comrade Y. P. Velikhov

I. Academician Y. P. Velikhov proposes to organize a visit to the USSR Defense Ministry's test range in the area of Sary Shagan by foreign scientists and journalists ("comrade Velikhov's idea") and to offer this invitation in the process of M. S. Gorbachev's speech at the forum of the peace forces in Moscow on February 16 of this year.

The arguments of the proposition are as follows.

The Americans know that along with other types of weapons of Air Defense troops, ground-based laser devices are located at the territory of the 10<sup>th</sup> State scientific-research test range of the USSR Defense Ministry. The range is situated in the area of Sary Shagan.

The U.S. claims that the work on laser weapons is far advanced in the Soviet Union, and that the installations of the Sary Shagan range are allegedly the elements of SDI. According to Velikhov, lack of information about the actual state of work on the test range is used by the Western mass media in an arbitrary way. (For information: as part of opening laboratories, the Americans offered exchange visits to Sary Shagan and White Sands test ranges.)

II. Realizing the acute nature of the issue of Sary Shagan test range, the Department of Defense Industry of the CPSU CC has undertaken several evaluations of expediency of visits by foreign specialists to the range.

The following circumstances were taken into consideration.

- The test range has two permanently-stationed facilities of laser direction:
  - Terra-3K, an experimental laser weapons guidance system mock-up model for space defense.
  - LE-1, a laser locator for measuring the coordinates of space objects at distances up to 500 km.

Besides, there is the Omega-2M complex, a sample of laser weapon in the interests of Air Defense, which is not related to problems of space and anti-ballistic missile defense.

Identification of laser content and capabilities of these facilities does not present large complications for the American means of space intelligence. That's why publications and discussions about their use in the interests of space and anti-missile defense cannot be explained by the Americans' ignorance in the technical field, but have the deliberate nature of a provocation.

- The Terra-3K and LE-1 complexes have been built as experimental samples and use components of the early 1970s. Thus, the LE-1 generator is composed of a battery of ruby lasers and looks like a museum item. Terra-3K uses a technological laser of low power (about 5 kW), yet a number of technical properties makes it totally clear for the specialist that it is not a measuring device but a simulating unit for a final adjustment of weapons. At the same time, the world is well aware of the high scientific level of our research in laser equipment.

It cannot be excluded that the Americans are aware of our further works on means of anti-space defense, Gamma (it is planned to create an experimental module at the Sary Shagan range by 1991), and the space control system Krona (under construction in the area of station Zelenchuk, submission for testing in 1988).

Therefore, demonstration of Terra-3K and LE-1 complexes is bound to create an impression of either our extreme backwardness or insincerity; in any case, it will naturally raise questions: why obsolete rather than modern complexes are being demonstrated, and what exactly is located at other sites of the test range.

- The location of sites around the test range is such that when visiting the Terra-3 and LE-1 facilities, various means of anti-missile and air defense come into view, including the Amur-II complex and systems S-300P.

III. Examining comrade Velikhov's idea in connection with these circumstances, it is possible to make the following overall conclusion.

The visit will undoubtedly strengthen propaganda attacks, add the persuasiveness of eyewitnesses to them, and a new tone – “the Russians are involved in laser weapons, at the same time they demonstrate old stuff and conceal their true achievements.”

Politically, the visit will mostly likely have a negative effect, in general it will not be perceived as a successful impromptu, but as a pre-arranged and a rather primitive propaganda trick, organized at the highest level.

Thus, the implementation of the idea may have undesirable consequences affecting the reputation of the country's top leadership.

On top of that, and this is a key point – the initial prerequisite of c.Velikhov's idea is dubious – it is absolutely unclear why we have to prove our lack of means (laser, in this case) that make it possible to devalue SDI.

Taking the above arguments into account, we consider it proper to refrain from organizing a visit to Sary Shagan test range by the Americans.