

**December 2, 1989**

**Notes by A. S. Chernyaev, Record of Conversation  
between Mikhail Gorbachev and George H. W. Bush  
at Malta Summit**

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**Summary:**

George H.W. Bush and Gorbachev meet off the coast of Malta in a meeting that came to symbolize the end of the Cold War. While no agreements were concluded, the leaders decided to press ahead in the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START), as well as in efforts to reduce arsenals of chemical weapons and conventional forces in Europe. Bush also made a number of proposals to advance bilateral relations, including steps to normalize trade relations through the granting of most-favored nation status, efforts to bar Congressional restrictions on credits, and US support for Soviet observer status at the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

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Russian

**Contents:**

Translation - English

M. S. Gorbachev: I welcome you, Mr. President, and also the members of the American delegation, on board the Soviet cruise ship "Maxim Gorky." The initiative to hold this meeting was yours. I would like to start by saying that we view the President's initiative favorably.

G. Bush: Thank you very much.

M. S. Gorbachev: I think what has been occurring in a peaceful evolution prompts the USSR and the US to have such meetings. It has not only taken place but much else is taking place. That's the main thing. Therefore we need a new, extensive dialogue which would be organically connected with those changes and the new conditions with which we have to deal in the international arena. We should do business differently, suitable to the changes. Therefore it is already impossible to restrict ourselves to activities at the foreign ministers' level. Reality dictates the need for more frequent working meetings and contacts between the leaders of our countries.

This meeting is probably a prelude to an official meeting with you. Nevertheless it will have its own significance. Generally, the unofficial meetings which impress me are not accompanied by special formalities. We have been conducting a substantive correspondence. But it is very important to sit at a table and talk. This has not only symbolic significance for the USSR and the US, but for the entire world.

In the Soviet Union and the United States, and yes, in the whole world, people hope that the talks in Malta will become not only a positive symbol of our relations, but bring results.

Let our experts work side by side with their presidents. Opportunities will be created for them to do this.

Again, I sincerely welcome you, Mr. President.

G. Bush: Thank you for your kind words. I indeed suggested this meeting. But I proceeded from the belief that the idea of such talks would also be useful for the Soviet side. Therefore I think that we are prepared to begin a meeting with you. When, on the way from Paris to Washington this summer, I was editing a draft of my letter to you about the issue of this meeting, I realized that I was changing my previous position by 180 degrees. This change in our approach has found understanding among the American people.

Several important events have occurred in the international arena since the idea arose to hold the present summit meeting. I expect that during the upcoming exchange of opinions we can share our evaluations of these events, not only of those in Eastern Europe, but those in other regions as well in order to understand one another's positions better and more deeply. I favor having this exchange of opinions not only between the delegations but in one-on-one talks. I think that we ought to meet more often.

M. S. Gorbachev: Agreed. I have the feeling that we have already discussed this, and that this meeting is a continuation of our useful conversations.

G. Bush: Yes, this is right. We have already had productive discussions. I would like for you to allow me to describe some ideas of the American side in summary form.

I completely agree with what you said about the importance of our meeting in Malta. I prepared quite similar in my notes. Therefore I won't repeat myself.

About our attitude to perestroika. I would like to express with all certainty that I completely agree with what you said in New York [during Gorbachev's visit to the UN]: that the world would be better off for perestroika's success. Until recently there were still some doubters on that score in the US. Then in New York you said that there are certain circles which did not want perestroika to succeed. I cannot say that there are no such elements in the US. But I can say with all certainty that seriously thinking people in the US do not hold such views.

But the changes in Eastern Europe and the entire process of perestroika influence these changes in the American mindset. Of course, there are differing points of view among analysts and experts. But you can be confident that you are dealing with a US administration and also with a Congress that wants your reforms to be successful.

I would now like to describe a number of positive steps which, in our opinion, could define in general terms the direction of our joint work to prepare for an official summit meeting in the US...

Some comments about economic questions. I want to inform you that my administration intends to take steps directed at preventing the Jackson-Vanik amendment[1], which prohibits granting the Soviet Union most-favored nation status, from going into force ...

I would also like to report that the administration has adopted a policy of repealing the Stevenson and Byrd amendments[2] which restrict the possibility of granting credits to the Soviet side...

Those measures which the administration is proposing right now in the area of Soviet-American relations are restrained [vyderzhany] in the appropriate spirit: they are not at all directed at demonstrating American superiority. And in this sense, as we understand it, they correspond with your attitude. We in the US, of course, are deeply confident of the advantages of our way of economic management. But that is not the issue right now. We have been striving to draw up our proposals so as not to create the impression that America "is saving" the Soviet Union. We're not talking about an aid program, but a cooperative program.

After the Jackson-Vanik amendment is repealed, favorable conditions will arise to remove the restrictions on granting credits. The American administration is not thinking about granting aid but about creating conditions for the development of effective cooperation on economic issues. We have in mind sending the Soviet side our proposals on this matter in the form of a document. It concerns a number of serious projects in the areas of finance, statistics, market operations, etc...

I would like to say a few words to explain our position regarding the Soviet side's desire to gain observer status at GATT.[3] Previously we had a difference of opinions on the subject that the US was opposed to the USSR joining this organization. This position has now been reexamined. We are [now] in favor of the Soviet side being granted observer status at GATT. In doing so, we are proceeding from the belief that Soviet participation in GATT would help it familiarize itself with the conditions, the functioning, and the development of the world market...

There is one more area to use new approaches in a plan to develop economic cooperation. I have in mind the establishment of ties with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. This would provide a good framework for cooperation on economic questions through East-West channels. The administration is in favor of moving actively in this direction...

G. Bush next switches to regional problems, describing the US position regarding the

situation in Central America. Then he suggested moving on to disarmament issues.

M. S. Gorbachev: Agreed.

G. Bush: You know that my administration is in favor of ridding mankind of chemical weapons. Today I would like to describe our new proposal which will contain a certain shift [podvizhka]. If the Soviet side consents in principle to our proposal about chemical weapons which was described in my speech to the UN General Assembly in September, then, in the framework of this approach, the US could undertake to renounce our program of modernization—that is, the further production of binary weapons, after a comprehensive convention prohibiting chemical weapons goes into force.

On the practical level this means that even in the near future both sides could reach agreement about a considerable reduction of chemical weapon stockpiles, bringing this amount to 20% of the amount of CW [Chemical Warfare] agents the US presently has in its arsenal, and, 8 years after the convention goes into force, to 2%. We propose to pursue work in such a manner that, by the time of the summit in the US in the middle of next year, a draft bilateral agreement will have been prepared which would then be signed.

About conventional weapons. Although serious efforts will be needed for this, including those associated with the need to overcome certain obstacles not only on our side but in other countries, let's say in France, one could count on reaching agreement as early as next year. It appears in this regard that we could put forward such a goal: to orient ourselves toward signing agreements about radical reductions of conventional forces in Europe in 1990, signing such an agreement during a summit of representatives of the countries which participate in the talks in Vienna.[4]

Concerning the issue of a future agreement about reducing strategic offensive weapons. The American side is trying to provide the proper impetus to the talks on this subject. We are in favor of resolving all remaining key questions through joint efforts before the upcoming summit meeting in the US. We also do not exclude the possibility that a draft treaty on reducing strategic offensive weapons, and the documents associated with it, will be completely worked out. The treaty could be signed during the summit in this case.

We proceed from the position that at the upcoming Soviet-American talks at the foreign-minister level, solutions could be found in the near future to such problems as the procedure for counting long-range air-launched cruise missiles, enciphered telemetry, limitations on undeployed missiles, etc.. The American side plans to form its own position on these issues just before the foreign ministers' meeting, which could take place at the end of January, and will set them forth at the talks.

We are also planning on sending instructions to our delegation at the Geneva talks that the previous American proposal to prohibit mobile ICBMs [Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles] be permanently withdrawn.

I would like to call upon the Soviet side to again return to the question of limitations on the SS-18 ICBMs. We are in favor of prohibiting the modernization of these missiles and of the Soviet side considering the possibility of deeper unilateral reductions in their numbers.

The resolution of the issue of preventing the proliferation of missiles and missile technology is gaining ever greater significance at the present time. In this regard the United States welcomes the accession of the Soviet Union to the regime of limitations which seven Western countries have been observing.

M. S. Gorbachev: This question is already at the discussion stage.

G. Bush: We would like to raise the question about the possibility of the Soviet Union publishing information about their military budget in approximately the same detail as is done in the United States. It appears that our publications give a quite complete picture of what activity is being carried out in the military field in our country. I am confident that your intelligence agencies can authoritatively testify to this.

M. S. Gorbachev: On the contrary, they report to me that you do not publish everything.

G. Bush: I am confident that the publication of more detailed information about military budgets on a mutual basis would facilitate the growth of [mutual] trust in this entire area.

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

The issue of protecting the environment is acquiring special urgency at the present time. Now we have to take into account even the economic consequences of the changes in the global climate. In several Western countries, feelings are emerging in favor of preventing such changes to phase out even necessary economic activity as much as possible.

We are trying to approach these issues rationally and avoid extremes. At the present time the USSR and US are actively working in a committee to prepare an international conference on the climate under the aegis of the UN. This is cause for satisfaction. In the future we plan to take two more important steps in this direction. First, after work in the committee is completed by autumn of next year, we plan to host a conference in the US to work out a framework agreement on climate change issues.

Protection of the environment requires the attention of eminent representatives of science. I have instructed White House Science Adviser Dr. [Alan] Bromley [Translator's note: incorrectly rendered as "Romli" in Russian] to convene a conference on ecology in the spring of next year in which the best scientific energies [sily] as well as the leaders of the appropriate agencies from many countries of the world could participate. I hope that Soviet representatives will also come to this forum.

The development of cooperation between nations depends in large part on the participation of youth in this process. Student exchanges are called upon to play a great role here. We propose that it be arranged so that such an exchange in the 1990-1991 school year be increased by 1,000 students from each side. This means carrying out such an expansion from young people under age 25. At the same time special attention would be devoted to an exchange of students who are studying humanities and sociology [sic]. Such a practice would be quite rewarding with respect to all kinds of programs in the field of agriculture.

M. S. Gorbachev: Thank you for your interesting ideas. It's possible that this is the best evidence that the administration of President Bush has shaped its policy in the Soviet-American direction. I intend to touch on several specific issues later.

But right now I would like to make a number of comments of a philosophical nature. It seems to me that it is very important for us to talk with you about what conclusions can be drawn from past experience, from the "Cold War." What has happened remains in history. Such, if you will, is the privilege of the historical process. However, to try to analyze the course of previous events-this is our direct responsibility. Why is

this necessary? Certainly we can say that we have all ended up at historical crossroads. Completely new problems have arisen before humanity which people had not previously anticipated. And what about it-will we decide them using old approaches? Simply nothing would come of this.

By no means should everything that has happened should be considered in a negative light. We have managed to avoid a large-scale war for 45 years. This single fact alone says that not everything was so bad in the past. Nevertheless, one conclusion is obvious-reliance on force, on military superiority, and the associated arms race have not been justified. Our two countries obviously understand this better than others.

And confrontation arising from ideological convictions has not justified itself either; as a result of this we ended up swearing at one another. We reached a dangerous brink and it is good that we managed to stop. It is good that now mutual trust between our countries has emerged.

Yes, and reliance on an unequal exchange between developed and undeveloped countries has also been a failure. On what terms? The former colonial powers gained much from this exchange. But so many problems arose in the developing world which literally grabbed all of us by the throat. So everything is interconnected.

Cold War methods, methods of confrontation have suffered defeat in strategic terms. We have recognized this. And ordinary people have possibly understood this even better. I do not want to preach here. People simply meddle in policymaking. Ecological problems, problems of preserving natural resources, and problems connected with the negative consequences of technological progress have arisen. All of this is completely understandable since we're essentially talking about the issue of survival. And this kind of public sentiment is strongly affecting us, the politicians.

Therefore we together-the USSR and the US-can do a lot at this stage to radically change our old approaches. We had felt it even in our contacts with the Reagan administration. And this process continues right now. Look how we have confided in one another.

We lag behind the mood of the people at the political level. And this is understandable since various forces influence leaders. It is good that [Chief of the General Staff] Marshal Akhromeyev and your [National Security] Adviser, [General Brent] Scowcroft understand the problems which arise in the military field. But there are people in both countries-and there are many of them-who simply scare us. Many people work in the defense sector who are used to their profession and for whom it is not easy to change their way of thinking. And all the same this process has begun.

Why have I begun with this? The thesis is consistently advanced in American political circles that the Soviet Union "has begun its perestroika and is changing policy under the influence of the 'Cold War' policy." They say that everything is collapsing in Eastern Europe and this also "confirms the correctness of those who relied on 'Cold War' methods." And if this is so, then nothing needs to be changed in this policy. We need to increase strong-arm pressure and prepare more baskets in order to catch more fruit. Mr. President, this is a dangerous delusion.

I have noticed that you see all this. I know that you have to listen to representatives of different circles. However, your public statements as well as specific proposals directed at the development of cooperation between the USSR and US which you spoke of today, mean that President Bush has formed a certain idea about the world, and it corresponds to the challenges of the times.

Of course, each side makes their own independent choice. But it is clear that when we talk about relations between the USSR and the US, mistakes and oversights in policy are impermissible. It is impossible to assume that our policy is built on misconceptions both in relations with one another and in relations with other countries.

Initially, I was even thinking of expressing something of a reproach. To say that the President of the United States has not once expressed his support for perestroika, wished it success, and noted that the Soviet Union itself should deal with its own reforms. What we were expecting from the President of the United States was not only statements, but specific steps in accordance with these statements.

Now there are both statements and these steps. I am drawing this conclusion having heard what you have just said. Although these are only plans for steps. But this is very important.

Second consideration. A great regrouping of forces is underway in the world. It is clear that we are going from a bipolar to a multipolar world. Whether we like it or not, we will have to deal with a united, integrated European economy. We could discuss the issue of Western Europe separately. Whether we want it or not, Japan is one more center of world politics. At one time you and I were talking about China. This is one more huge reality which neither we nor you should play against the other. And it is necessary to think about what to do, so that China does not feel excluded from all the processes which are taking place in the world.

All these, I repeat, are huge events typical of a regrouping of forces in the world. I am watching India's policy. This is a dynamic policy. I have talked many times with Rajiv Gandhi.[5] India has a deliberate approach, striving to establish good relations both with us and you.

But what is our role in this regrouping? Very serious things ensue from this. We began to discuss this question with [former Secretary of State George P.] Shultz.[6] Once during the conversations he showed us diagrams describing the changes which would occur by the end of the century in economic relations between the leading countries of the world. And now it's simply necessary to understand the roles of the USSR and US in these huge changes. They cannot always be accompanied by the quiet flow of events.

And now Eastern Europe. Its share of the world economy is not very great. But look how we are all tense. What should our form of actions be, our cooperation?

And what is waiting ahead for us with regard to the economy, the environment, and other problems? We need to think together about this, too.

We have been reflecting about this for a long time in the Soviet leadership and have come to the conclusion that the US and USSR are simply "doomed" to dialogue, coordination, and cooperation. There is no other choice.

But to do this we need to get rid of the view of one another as enemies. Much of this stays in our brains. And we need to keep in mind that it is impossible to view our relations only at the military level.

All this means that we are proposing a Soviet-American condominium. We're talking about realities. And this does not at all cast doubt on our relations with our allies and current cooperation with other countries. An understanding of all this is necessary. I do not think that all this has happened yet. We have only entered into the process of

mutual understanding.

You raised the question: what kind of a Soviet Union is in the US interest—a dynamic, stable, solid one, or one struggling with all kinds of problems. I am informed about the type of advice they give you.

As far as we are concerned, we are interested in the US feeling confident from the point of view of solving its national security problems and making progress. This thought is present in all the conversations with my counterparts in the West. And there have been hundreds of such meetings. I think that any other approach is dangerous. Any reliance on ignoring internal processes, a reluctance to consider the real interests of the US in the world—these are dangerous policies.

But the US, too, has to consider the interests of other countries. In the meantime there is still the desire to teach, to pressure, and to grab by the throat. There is yet more. We know all this. Therefore I would like to hear your opinion on this score since we're talking about how to build a bridge between our countries: across the river or alongside it.

Since the President still has much time to lead such a country as the US, there should be clarity. I think that we will not bring it up after this meeting. But the main issues need to be investigated. I repeat: clarity is necessary. All the rest—the specifics and the frequency—in the final account are organically connected with mutual understanding on these fundamental issues...

G. Bush: You have noted, I hope, that, as changes occur in Eastern Europe, the United States has not come out with arrogant pronouncements directed at causing harm to the Soviet Union. Meanwhile some people in the US accuse me of excessive caution. True, I am a cautious person, but not at all timid and my administration is trying to do nothing which would lead to undermining your position. But something else has been consistently suggested to me—as they say, climb the Berlin Wall and make high-sounding pronouncements. The administration, however, is not going to resort to such steps and is trying to conduct itself with restraint.

M. S. Gorbachev: ...I want to react to the ideas expressed by you at the beginning of the conversation. I welcome your words. I find in them a display of political will. This is important for me.

And from my personal experience, and from the experience of cooperation with President Reagan, I know how we have more than once ended up in such a situation on disarmament issues when everything came to a stop and got bogged down. The delegations sat in Geneva and drank coffee, but no business was conducted.

Then I received a letter from President Reagan. I read it carefully and came to the conclusion that it contained no conclusions. Of course, I could have written a formal reply but I don't care for wordy rehashing. It was necessary to take a decisive step. Thus the idea of a meeting in Reykjavik arose. The results of the Reykjavik talks scared some people. But in reality Reykjavik became a genuine breakthrough on arms control issues. After this, the entire negotiating mechanism started working actively and effectively.

Or take another field—economic relations. There are limited opportunities here to move forward. Political will is needed in order to overcome these restraints. A signal from the President is needed. American businessmen are disciplined people, and they will react to a display of new thinking in economics.



The delegations at the talks in Geneva have squeezed literally everything out of the directives they have. It is necessary to give momentum to all the work. I noted your ideas in this regard. They seem to me deserving of attention.

Thank you for putting issues of bilateral cooperation in first place. We are ready to discuss these issues.

This situation often arises: when the question is about our relations with you, they tell us-if you agree with the Americans we will support it. But as soon as we come to an agreement they cry-"a new Yalta." This is, in general, natural. Much depends on our work with our allies and the non-aligned countries.

We will move to adapt our new economy to the world economy. Therefore we attach significance to participation in the GATT system and other international economic organizations. We think that it will benefit our perestroika and allow us to better understand how the world economic mechanism functions.

Earlier the US took a negative position regarding the question of the USSR's participation in world economic organizations. They said that USSR participation in GATT would politicize the activity of this organization. I think this is a vestige of old attitudes. Actually, there was a time when we put ideological goals first. And, by the way, you [did] too. It's another time now, and different criteria, different processes, and these processes will not reverse themselves.

[...]We are permitting various kinds of property to function in our country. We will pursue matters so that the ruble will become convertible. Perestroika is taking place in COMECON[7] in order to bring the operating principles of this organization closer to the generally accepted standards of the world economy.

Now about Central America[...]

I want to stress again: we do not pursue any goals in Central America. We do not want to seize bridgeheads or strongpoints there. You should be confident of this.

Let us return to the problems of disarmament. We know the US approach to the solution of the problem of chemical weapons. However, earlier an important element was lacking in this approach-the readiness of the US to cease the production of binary weapons after a convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons came into force. Now this element has appeared, and it is quite important. There is movement here.

Thus both of us think that a global prohibition is necessary. We will maintain this goal. But we will get to it through bilateral measures and specific stages. Let's have the foreign ministers discuss this.

G. Bush: The issue of proliferation of chemical weapons is also very urgent. I hope that our experts will touch on this theme [as well].

M. S. Gorbachev: Agreed.

Now about the Vienna talks and the reduction of conventional weapons in Europe. You have spoken in favor of concluding an agreement on this most important problem in 1990 and signing it at a summit. Our approaches coincide here. We are prepared for active and constructive cooperation to achieve the designated goal. There are, of course, difficulties. But I will not get into details.

About the strategic armaments limitation talks. Political will is needed here to give momentum to the work underway. I have been listening to you carefully and you have specified some elements. But unfortunately I did not hear mention of the problem of sea-launched cruise missiles [SLCM; Russian acronym: KRMB: krylatye rakety morskogo bazirovaniya].

Realistic conditions are developing right now to prepare a draft treaty on strategic offensive weapons for signature before our meeting next year. And if a solution to KRMB [SLCM] has not been found by this time, then serious difficulties will arise. You have an enormous advantage here. The American side needs to think this issue over again in the context of what I have said.

G. Bush: This is a problem.

M. S. Gorbachev: We're not trying for mirror symmetry. Each side has its own choice. Each country has its own choice, each is in a [unique] situation and has a different armed forces structure.

But it is impossible to ignore KRMB [SLCM] in conducting affairs toward a reduction of strategic offensive weapons. The US has a substantive advantage in this area. Put yourself in our place. Our Supreme Soviet will not agree to ratify a treaty if the problem of KRMB is passed over.

I very much welcome your suggestions about the environment. You can proceed from the premise that our experts will take an active part in the conference on ecological problems which the White House staff has planned.

I am glad that you touched on the expansion of student exchanges. We began this good work during in the Reagan presidency. It is easier for young people to find a common language. And I am confident that they will make their contribution to the positive development of Soviet-American relations.

In summary, I would like to again stress that the steps that you have described and spoken of here have made me happy. The Soviet-American dialogue has gained a certain dynamic. And new efforts, new steps are necessary to give it a second breath...

\* \* \*

[The talks continued on 3 December 1989.]

M. S. Gorbachev: I'll say right away: we are satisfied with the work which was done yesterday but think that there are opportunities to move forward even further. If you do not object then I would like to begin first. After all, today I am your guest[...]

G. Bush: I like "my ship" very much.

Speaking seriously, we would like to express our great thanks for the excellent opportunity to work offered to our delegation on the Soviet liner. Although the press is besieging me right now, tossing out questions about the brevity of our conversation yesterday, I do not think that the changes in the program have substantially influenced the substance of our conversations. For our part, I think our discussion has been very good and productive since we, for instance, have essentially continued the conversation through breakfast.

M. S. Gorbachev: Yes, we have counted and it turns out that the conversations lasted over five hours.

Although we have not yet begun to discuss the main issues, I would like to make one suggestion of an organizational nature to you. Why not hold a joint press conference? I think there would be great positive symbolism in this.

G. Bush: A good idea. I agree in principle. I am only afraid only that our American journalists might think that I am avoiding their questions if I decide [not to hold] a separate press conference.

Possibly we will hold a press conference in several parts: at first we will talk together with journalists, and then I will reply to questions from our own people.

M. S. Gorbachev: I have also planned to meet with Soviet television after our joint press conference. So this works for me.

G. Bush: That's fine. So it's agreed.

M. S. Gorbachev: Mr. President, yesterday I reacted very briefly to the ideas you expressed about military-political issues. Today it's our turn. I believe that our position in this area is also of considerable interest to you. I will correct my description considering yesterday's exchange of opinions.

Although this is an informal meeting all the same we are meeting for the first time in this capacity. And I would like to begin with several statements of principle.

First of all, a new US President should know that the Soviet Union will not start a war under any circumstances. This is so important that I would like to personally repeat this declaration to you. Moreover, the USSR is prepared to no longer consider the US as its enemy and openly say so. We are open to cooperation with America, including cooperation in the military sphere. That's the first thing.

Second point. We are in favor of ensuring mutual security through joint efforts. The Soviet leadership is devoted to a continuation of the process of disarmament in all directions. We consider it necessary and urgent to get past the arms race and prevent the creation of exotic new kinds of weapons.

I note in passing that we welcome the process of cooperation which has begun between our militaries. In particular, we are appreciative of the opportunity afforded to the Soviet minister of defense to become acquainted with the US armed forces.

One more consideration of principle. We have adopted a defensive doctrine. Many explanations have been given to you that this is so. Our armed forces are already involved in deep changes. The structure of the military grouping in Central Europe is becoming defensive: there are fewer tanks in divisions now, and amphibious crossing equipment is being withdrawn. The deployment of aircraft is also being changed: strike aviation is being assigned to the second echelon, and fighters, which are defensive aircraft, are being moved to the forward lines.

We are not making a secret of our plans for perestroika of the armed forces. The Soviet military is ready at any time to meet their American colleagues, present the necessary information, and discuss issues which arise.

But reciprocal issues arise. At the same time as the Soviet Union has adopted and is

implementing a particularly defensive doctrine the United States continues to be guided by a flexible response strategy adopted more than 20 years ago. Earlier this would have been justified. However, now when it is recognized at the military-political level that a threat from the Warsaw Pact no longer exists, we naturally ask the question: why does the US delay perestroika of its own armed forces? I have familiarized myself with the long-about 60 pages-Brussels Declaration.[8] And, unfortunately, I have noticed that there is as of yet no progress planned on the part of NATO in [its] attitudes at the doctrinal level in this most important area.

The next issue of principle. We have already touched on it in some measure in examining the dynamics of the negotiation process. However, I would like to return to this problem and select one very important point.

The two of us have recognized that, as a result of the arms race, absolutely inconceivable military power was created on both sides. We have come to the common conclusion that such a situation was fraught with catastrophic [dangers]. We have started to act in the right direction and have displayed political will. A most important negotiation process was launched, in which issues of nuclear arms reductions moved to the forefront.

G. Bush: Please forgive me for interrupting you, but I would like in this context to express my thanks for the deeply symbolic gift which you sent me via Ambassador [Anatoly] Dobrynin[9]-a souvenir made from scrapped missiles.

M. S. Gorbachev: Yes. The INF [Intermediate Nuclear Forces] treaty became a historic watershed.

Generally, good prospects are opening up, and your comments yesterday have only convinced me of the idea that a reliable basis for further movement has been created.

But what worries us? Up to now one of the three basic components of military power, the naval forces, has remained beyond negotiations. Both previous administrations, and now the current administration, have reacted emotionally to raising this issue. Moreover, there is no encroachment on American security here. I want to declare with all responsibility that we are considering the interests of the US Your country is a naval power, and its critically important lines of communications pass through seas and oceans. The development of naval forces is both a historic tradition for you and an entire system in science, industry, and deeply integrated economic interests. Therefore it is not so easy to change the attitude here. We well understand this inasmuch as we ourselves are experiencing similar difficulties in other areas of military policy.

But what will come of this? Even from the beginning of the 50s we were literally ringed by a network of military bases. There were more than 500,000 men, hundreds of combat airplanes, and powerful fleet forces at them. The US has 15 carrier strike formations and about 1,500 combat aircraft. And such enormous forces are either deployed at our shores or can show up there at any moment. I am not talking about strategic submarines-even if they fall under YaVK[10] negotiations. As a result of the Vienna talks we will considerably reduce the level of confrontation on the ground. As I have already said there are good prospects for concluding a treaty about limiting strategic offensive weapons. Under these conditions we have the right to count on the threat to the Soviet Union from the sea also being reduced.

Our ministers have already talked about this. I am taking the initiative myself and officially raising the question of starting talks on the problems of naval forces. When they begin we should display flexibility here. Let there be confidence-building

measures at first, then a general reduction in the scale of naval activity. Then when our positions are clarified at the same time in Geneva and Vienna, the time will come to deal with the question of naval forces reductions in earnest.

I will say beforehand that we will take a realistic position. In particular, we realize that the US has other problems besides the Soviet armed forces. But all the same again it is necessary to stress with all certainty that, however important the security of Europe is to the US and its allies, we are just as interested in security on the seas and oceans.

Now, after describing some of our fundamental approaches I would like to comment on individual negotiation problems. Since we had earlier agreed not to get into detail, I, like you yesterday, will restrict myself to the main things.

It would be desirable if we achieved clarity, at least regarding three important negotiating positions. First, let our ministers and military experts clarify the interrelationship of the future START treaty[11] and the ABM treaty.[12] Second, we consider it quite important-and [Soviet Foreign Minister] E. A. Shevardnadze's initiatives in Wyoming are evidence of this-to agree about the rules for counting heavy bombers and air-launched strategic cruise missiles. If we take the present American formula, the US can end up not with 6,000 but with 8,500 warheads. We are not trying to haggle for anything here for ourselves: it is necessary to accept only the factual aspect of the matter as a basis.

The third problem which I have already dwelled on is sea-based strategic cruise missiles.

There are, of course, other issues, but right now I won't talk about them. If I have understood the President correctly then we are setting ourselves general guideposts: at minimum to resolve all the large remaining issues before the summit in Washington, and by the end of next year to sign the START treaty itself.

And one more important point. As I understand, Akhromeyev and Scowcroft have "chased it off." The Soviet and American navies have nuclear weapons, both strategic-ballistic missile submarines and sea-launched cruise missiles and tactical: short-range sea-launched cruise missiles, nuclear torpedoes and mines. The strategic nuclear component of naval forces is a subject of the Geneva talks. That leaves tactical nuclear weapons. Although this is an unofficial conversation I am proposing to begin official discussions. The Soviet Union is ready to completely liquidate naval tactical nuclear weapons on a mutual basis. Such a radical step would simplify immediately the procedures of monitoring its implementation.

Now some words about Vienna. On the whole, I agree with the evaluation of the talks which the President gave. However three important problems remain here. First, this is an issue of reducing not only armaments but also of personnel of the armed forces. We have been proposing to reduce them to 1,300,000 men on each side, that is by one million on both sides. NATO representatives do not agree but for some reason do not give their own figures. I think that people simply will not understand us if we limit ourselves only to arms reductions since enormous [force] groupings oppose one another in Europe.

Second issue, the reduction of the numbers of troops on foreign soil. We propose to limit them to a ceiling of 300,000 men. But we are being pulled in another direction-to reduce only Soviet and American troops. But there are also British, French, Belgian, Dutch, and Canadian troops. In short, they are proposing a solution unfair to us.

Now about the problem of air forces. We have proposed a level for each alliance of

4,700 tactical frontal aviation aircraft and a separate level for interceptors. But here this matter has been moving slowly so far. We propose that special attention be paid to this issue at the next meeting of ministers.

Briefly about the President's "Open Skies" proposal. We support it. We will participate in the Ottawa conference.[13] We favor joint effective work with the US. It seems to us there is substantial leeway [rezervy] in this proposal. Let our ministers and military specialists discuss expansion of the status of openness to the oceans and the seas, space, and land. [...]

Summarizing what I have said, I would like to stress again with all my strength that we favor peaceful relations with the US. And proceeding from this very precondition we propose to transform the present military confrontation. This is the main thing.

M. S. Gorbachev: Maybe we will now close the books on the discussion of military issues and talk about Europe, and give some thought to how to regard the processes of cooperation developing there?

G. Bush: An excellent idea. But let me add some words. I am very satisfied with the cooperation of our diplomatic departments both in the military and other areas. I think that these channels for discussing military political problems are now organically supplementing the contacts for which Akhromeyev and [Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral William] Crowe have laid the basis. The meetings of military specialists have helped military matters quite a bit and I hope that we will develop this practice.

M. S. Gorbachev: We indeed favor doing just that.

G. Bush: I will say openly: our military has enormous influence on NATO. I have now charged them with doing an analysis of the military expenditures of the US and the West as a whole and presenting appropriate recommendations. I think that in this important period contacts between our two militaries have special significance.

M. S. Gorbachev: That is why we are telling them to meet more often. Did you want to speak first about European matters?

G. Bush: You are closer to Europe, but I would like to anticipate our conversation with some comments.

First of all, I admit that we were shaken by the rapidity of the unfolding changes. We have a high opinion of your personal reaction and the reaction of the Soviet Union as a whole to these dynamic and at the same time fundamental changes.

Yesterday, when talking eye to eye, we discussed the problem of the reunification of Germany, although without going into detail. I hope you understand that it is impossible to demand of us that we disapprove of German reunification. At the same time we are aware how much of a delicate, sensitive problem this is. We are trying to act with a certain restraint. I will formulate this thought somewhat differently: neither I nor representatives of my administration want to be in a position which would be viewed as provocative. I am stressing this point.

One more example of our policy with regard to Eastern Europe. We have sent a high-level delegation to Poland. It includes my senior diplomatic advisers, other representatives of the Administration, business people, trade union leaders, etc. They have gone there not to create difficulties for you but to explain to the Poles what mechanisms, in our opinion, are effective in the economic sphere.

Without dwelling on each Eastern European country, I will share only the thought that we well understand the significance of the section of the [1975] Helsinki Act about national borders in Europe.

Of course, I am ready to respond to any questions you have. Nothing interests me more than how you view the possibility of moving beyond the status quo.

M. S. Gorbachev: I do not agree that we are "closer to Europe." Both the USSR and the US are integrated into European problems to different degrees. We understand your involvement in Europe very well. To look otherwise at the role of the US in the Old World is unrealistic, mistaken, and finally, not constructive. You should know that this is our fundamental position.

G. Bush: I had something else in mind: we simply were not so close to Eastern Europe historically. Of course, we are close-and will be close-to Europe and vitally interested and involved in NATO. The US is really the leader of NATO.

I want to stress separately that you are catalyzing the changes in Europe in a constructive way.

M. S. Gorbachev: I reaffirmed our principled position about the US role in Europe on purpose. There has been too much speculation on this subject. I feed it [sic] both to you and us. But we should be absolutely clear on such important matters.

Now about the changes in Europe. They really are of a fundamental nature. And not only in Eastern Europe-in Western Europe, too. I received representatives of the Trilateral Commission.[14] After one of our conversations, Giscard d'Estaing [former French President], who was the speaker, addressed me in a very meaningful way: "Be ready to deal with a united federated state of Western Europe." By saying that, I think, he wanted to say that when European integration reaches a qualitatively new level in 1992, it would be accompanied by a deep rebuilding of political structures which would also reach the federal level.

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 the idea of a common European home with this movement. I would like to ask E. A. Shevardnadze and Secretary of State [James] Baker to discuss this idea in depth since it appears that it is in the interests of both the USSR and the US

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

G. Bush. I agree with you.

For, as it is said, a gun fires itself once every five years. The fewer weapons, the lesser the possibility of an accidental catastrophe.

Thus security of the US and her allies should not be a millimeter less than our personal security.

E. A. Shevardnadze: Yesterday the President introduced some interesting ideas about chemical weapons. The Secretary of State and I have discussed this issue very constructively and in great detail. As you can imagine, it deserves the greatest attention.

M. S. Gorbachev: I have already described my first reaction. As I understand it there are two areas in which it appears we have agreement: a common goal remains a global prohibition on chemical weapons, but we are moving in stages and thus are abandoning the modernization of binary weapons. This is a good basis for negotiations.

G. Bush: If you will allow me, I would like in this regard to raise the very thorny problem of the proliferation of chemical weapons beyond the borders of our two powers. Libya in particular worries us. Of course, I understand that we are in no position to control the Libyan leader. However, we are convinced, as before, that the plant in Rabta is designed to produce chemical weapons.[15] We would like to work with you not only on this specific problem but also on the issue as a whole of preventing the proliferation of chemical weapons, which is sometimes called "the poor man's atomic bomb." The whole world has already seen the terrible consequences of the proliferation of chemical weapons in the example of the Iraq-Iran conflict. Therefore we propose to achieve an agreement in this area. Personally, this problem concerns me very much.

M. S. Gorbachev: I would like to assure you that our positions on this issue coincide. The Soviet Union is decisively against the proliferation of chemical weapons. I propose that our ministers continue the discussion of this problem in view of the goals we have mentioned.

G. Bush: It is necessary to achieve quick progress in this area. Meanwhile you and we are morally vulnerable: others do not want to move forward or they will move in the opposite direction, pointing out that the Soviet and American chemical arsenals remain untouched.

M. S. Gorbachev: I am convinced: we can successfully cooperate here. If the USSR and the US begin to reduce their chemical arsenals in stages this will give us the moral right to persuade others even more strongly of the need not to spread chemical weapons...

G. Bush: I completely agree with these ideas.

M. S. Gorbachev: Meeting with political leaders from both Eastern and Western Europe, I tell all of them that this is an objective process which is bringing the countries of the continent together. They are searching now for the optimal versions of combining the economy, technology, and different standards...

The essence of the problem is, is there a consensual approach in practice? We are convinced that we should work to continue and develop the Helsinki process and by no means tear down what has been created on this foundation. From here, there is a need for a Helsinki II where we all should comprehend the new situation and work out common criteria and guideposts. It is understood that all the countries that signed the Helsinki Act should take part in this meeting, including, of course, the US and Canada.

Another important issue-how to deal with institutions in the new situation created in another time? A balanced and responsible approach is also required here. Otherwise our present positive focus on the process of change can become its antithesis and lead to the undermining of stability. We do not need to actually destroy the existing instruments that maintain the balance but we need to modify them in accordance with the needs of the time in order to use them to strengthen security and stability and improve relations between countries. Let NATO and the Warsaw Pact become political organizations in ever greater measure and not just military organizations, and let them change their confrontational nature. It is good that our generals have



already started to catch the spirit of the times, visit one another, and discuss the most complex issues.

I am confident that there are good prospects for cooperation between the Common Market and COMECON.[16] We are planning comprehensive measures in COMECON to ease its inclusion into the structure of the world economy.

Our legislators are already cooperating-and not badly-and a "people's diplomacy" is developing. Such a meticulous and positive attitude will protect all of us from unpleasant surprises in the future.

I have gained the impression that the US leadership is how somehow especially actively promoting the concept of overcoming the division of Europe on the basis of "Western values." If this proposition is not only for propaganda but is intended to lay a foundation for a practical policy, then I will openly say it could be very foolish. At one time alarm was expressed in the West that the Soviet Union was planning to export revolution. But plans to export "Western values" sounds similar.

I would tell you that right now is a very difficult time and therefore an especially crucial one. At a time when Eastern Europe is changing in the direction of greater openness and democracy and drawing close to universal human values, creating a mechanism of compatibility with world economic progress, all this opens unprecedented opportunities to reach a new level of relations. Reaching it by a peaceful and calm means. And it is very dangerous here to artificially force and goad the processes which are taking place, especially to satisfy some unilateral interests.

The variations of European integration-at the cultural and political level-including unknown ones, can be quite diverse. And this will not happen painlessly. In certain places the situation will even become contentious. And this is natural since enormous and diverse social forces are involved in what is taking place.

I can make a judgment about this only as far as the Soviet Union is concerned. Our country is a genuine conglomeration of peoples. But they have differing traditions and historical peculiarities of evolution. We are frantically debating the future of the Soviet economy or, let us say, the issue of what political institutions are needed in conditions of deep democratization. The task of reforming our federation has arisen sharply in a new way. Not long ago we were sharing [our] experience on this issue with the Prime Minister of Canada [Brian Mulroney]. He is concerned about Quebec, which has been pursuing separatist goals for many years. By the way, the thought then came to me: why does the American Congress occupy itself with the Baltic countries and does not help the Canadians deal with Quebec?

Our own experience permits us to predict that the processes in Europe will not always come smoothly. Generally, this has already been confirmed. But as a whole we look on matters optimistically. When you think on the level of a simple reaction to what is happening then it actually could send a shiver down your spine and some people will give way to panic. But if you raise it to a political, philosophical levels then everything falls into place. For if the process is deep, affects fundamental matters, and involves millions of people and entire nations, then how could it proceed easily and simply?

It is necessary to proceed from an understanding of the enormous importance of the current changes. It is necessary to avoid a possible mistake and use the historic opportunities which are opening up to bring East and West together. Of course, differences will remain. We talked about this yesterday. Even in the Soviet Union, in one country, the differences between the republics and various regions are evident to the naked eye. I am confident that such differences exist in the US. They should be present in the large continent of Europe all the more.

We favor a common understanding with the US of what is occurring in our country [unas]. I note that there is such a common understanding today. But the process will develop. And I want this understanding not to diminish but, on the contrary, to intensify.

I am in favor of our constantly cooperating on the basis of this understanding for this entire difficult transition period. Otherwise this process can break down and we will all end up in a chaotic situation which would give birth to many problems, halt the changes, and throw us back to the times of suspicion and mistrust.

I stress that a special responsibility rests on the Soviet Union and the United States at this historic moment.

G. Bush: I want to clarify one point. You expressed concern about Western values. It would be understandable if our devotion to certain ideals provoked difficulties in the USSR or Eastern Europe and interfered with the progressive processes developing there. But we have never pursued such goals. Any discussion of Western values in NATO or other Western organizations are completely natural and do not have destructive intent. But what are Western values? They are, if you will, 'glasnost', openness, and heated debates. At the economic level-incentives to progress and a free market. These values are not something new or expedient but long-shared by us and the West Europeans, and they unite the West. We greet the changes in the Soviet Union or in Poland but do not at all set Western values against them. Therefore I want to understand your point of view as much as possible in order to avoid any misunderstandings.

M. S. Gorbachev: The main principle which we have adopted and which we follow in our new thinking is the right of each country to free choice, including the right to reexamine and change their original choice. This is very painful, but it is a fundamental right. The right to choose without outside interference. The US is devoted to a certain social and economic system which the American people have chosen. Let other people decide themselves, figuratively speaking, what God to pray to.

It is important to me that the tendency toward renewal noted in Eastern and Western Europe is proceeding in the direction of drawing closer. The result will not be a copy of the Swedish, British, or Soviet model. No. Something will result which meets the needs of the present stage of development of human and European civilization.

It has been observed now that people have no fear of choosing one system or the other. They are looking for their unique version which provides them with the best living conditions. When this choice proceeds freely then one can say only one thing: go right ahead.

G. Bush: I do not think that we differ here. We approve of self-determination and the attendant debates. I want you to understand our approach on a positive level: Western values do not at all mean imposing our system on Romania, Czechoslovakia, or even the GDR.

M. S. Gorbachev: This is very important for us. Fundamental changes are occurring and peoples are drawing closer together. And this is the main thing. I see that several means of solving problems used by another system are taking root in Eastern Europe-in the fields of economics, technology, etc. This is natural.

If we and you have such a common understanding then all practical actions in changing conditions will be adequate and will begin to have a positive nature. [...]

J. Baker: I would like to clarify our approach to self-determination. We agree that each country should have the right of choice. But all of this makes sense only when the people in the country are actually in a position to choose freely. This is contained in the concept of "Western values," and is not at all the right to force their systems on others.

M. S. Gorbachev: If someone lays claim to the truth-expect disaster.

G. Bush: Absolutely right.

J. Baker: I've been talking about something else. Let's say, the question of the reunification of Germany, which is causing nervousness in both our countries, and even among Europeans. What do we say here about this? So that reunification takes place according the principles of openness, pluralism, and a free market. We do not at all want the reunification of Germany done on the model of 1937-1945 which, obviously, concerns you. The Germany of that time had nothing in common with Western values.

M. S. Gorbachev: This is what [longtime Gorbachev aide] A. N. Yakovlev asks: "why are democracy, openness, and a [free] market 'Western' values?"

G. Bush: It was not always so. You personally have laid the foundation for these changes, the movement toward democracy and openness. It is actually considerably clearer today that you and we share these values than, say, 20 years ago.

M. S. Gorbachev: We ought not be drawn into propaganda battles.

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

M. S. Gorbachev: That's it. And you see that ideological confrontations flare up again...

G. Bush: I understand you and agree. Let's avoid careless words and talk more about the substance of the values themselves. We welcome the changes which are occurring with all our hearts.

M. S. Gorbachev: This is very important since, as I have said, the main thing is that the changes lead to greater openness in our relations with one another. We are beginning to be organically integrated and liberated from everything which divided us. What will this be called in the final account? I think-a new level of relations. Therefore, for my part, I support your suggestion-let's not have a discussion on a theological level. Historically this has always led to religious wars.

J. Baker: Could we possibly say as a compromise that this positive process is proceeding on the basis of "democratic values"?...

[1] Section 402 of 1974 Trade Act. It denies normalized US commercial relations with communist countries who restrict free emigration of their citizens.

[2] Limit the credit (to a maximum exposure of \$300 million) that the US Export-Import Bank can lend to the Soviet Union. Passed in 1974 as an amendment to the Trade Act.

[3] General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was the precursor to the World Trade Organization and established as part of the Bretton Woods System. Unlike the WTO, it was not legally binding in international law.

[4] The talks in Vienna were comprised of several meetings including CSCE meetings (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe) with representatives of countries negotiating conventional arms control. Several CSBM (confidence-building measures) agreed upon in 1989 and early 1990 included Bush's revived Open Skies talks and a seminar on military doctrine at the Chiefs-of-staff level. Secretary of State Baker and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze agreed to call an international conference on Open Skies scheduled for February 1990 in Ottawa, Canada.

[5] Prime Minister of India and member of Indian National Congress 1984-1989.

[6] George P. Shultz was the Secretary of State from 1982 to 1988.

[7] Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, trading bloc between Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

[8] NATO agreement on 11 December 1986 for strengthening the stability and security of Europe through a balance of conventional forces, arms control, and nuclear reduction while continuing to maintain a deterrent posture.

[9] Soviet ambassador to USA 1962-1986, CPSU Central Committee 1971-1991.

[10] Translator's note: abbreviation unknown, but apparently nuclear-related.

[11] Strategic Arms (Limitation and) Reduction Talks.

[12] Anti-ballistic Missile Treaty signed in Moscow 26 May 1972 and ratified on 3 August 1972.

[13] See note 5.

[14] Formed in 1973 by private citizens in North America, Japan, and Europe (EU countries) to foster the international system especially through NGOs.

[15] Libya first obtained chemical agents from Iran which were used against Chad in 1987. Subsequently Libya opened its own production facility in Rabta in 1988. The Rabta facility may have produced as much as 100 tons of blister and nerve agents before a fire closed it down in 1990.