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UNITED STATES ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY

Washington, D.C. 20451

January 29, 1986

OFFICE OF
THE DIRECTOR

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Responding to Gorbachev's January Proposal

Gorbachev's plan is largely propaganda, using your vision of a nuclear-free world as bait to stop SDI. It contains no movement on START and Defense and Space (D&S), but does move a bit on INF. It has gathered little steam here or abroad. Our Allies, in particular, see that it is largely empty.

How should we respond? Not by standing pat (Option #1) -- which adds up to not negotiating at all -- and not by making major moves where the Soviets have made none (Option #3) -- which is essentially negotiating with ourselves.

Rather, I favor Option #2: (a) to move where the Soviets have moved (namely, INF); (b) to seek to pocket those parts of Gorbachev's statement that move (at least in word) toward goals you have espoused; (c) to not change our November 1 START and D&S proposals but press the Soviets to respond to them; and (d) to follow up on Gorbachev's nice words about verification to see if they are willing to deal seriously on it (and there is no better way than tabling our own INF verification elements this round).

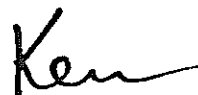
We would also make clear that eliminating nuclear weapons requires other conditions -- like correcting conventional force imbalances, moving to non-nuclear defenses, and resolving regional conflicts in a way that allows freedom of choice. This is similar to what you described as "the real report card on Geneva."

The changes proposed in our D&S position in Option #3 are most troublesome for me. If they would not affect SDI, they would not be seen as real movement. If they would constrict SDI, as I suspect they would politically, then we certainly should not do them.

Moreover, Option #3 appears to concede the Soviet point that SDI and arms reductions are incompatible. In contrast, our point has been that SDI and reductions are complementary and mutually reinforcing. SDI has, in fact, been the catalyst that brought the Soviets back to the table. If we ever need to move in this area, it is surely not now.

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Kenneth L. Adelman

BY CH DATE 12/19/05

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