

ARMS CONTROL DIGEST *By Jane Boulden*



■ Geneva Negotiations on Nuclear and Space Arms

On 15 January 1986, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev revealed a new arms control proposal that offered to eliminate all nuclear weapons by the year 2000. The plan outlined three specific stages over a fifteen-year time frame.

Stage 1 would begin in 1986. The United States and Soviet Union would reduce the "arms that can reach each other's territory" by 50% and would agree to a mutual moratorium on nuclear testing. Both powers would also remove *all* medium-range missiles in the European zone, while France and Britain agree "not to build up" their nuclear arsenals. Most importantly, the United States and Soviet Union would agree to mutually renounce the development, testing and deployment of 'space-strike' arms.

Stage 2 begins in 1990 and calls for the other nuclear powers to join the reduction of arms, the ban on nuclear testing, and the ban on development, testing and deployment of 'space-strike' arms. The superpowers would complete their 50% reductions in this phase and *all* nuclear powers would eliminate their tactical nuclear weapons (those with a range of up to 1,000 km).

In Stage 3, beginning in 1995, all remaining nuclear weapons would be eliminated and a universal accord would be implemented to ensure nuclear weapons would not be built again.

There are a number of novel aspects to this proposal: a willingness to allow on-site inspec-

tions and to negotiate any other methods of verification; a new initiative on medium range missiles in Europe which comes very close to the American zero-option plan; and a willingness to have a medium-range missile pact *without* agreement on limiting SDI.

American officials have noted the above changes as positive steps but, as with previous offers, the overall Soviet proposal continues to hinge on stopping the American SDI program – a precondition the Americans still find unacceptable.

■ SALT II Compliance

On 23 December 1985 President Reagan sent a report to Congress detailing Soviet violations of arms control treaties. Of most concern are deployment of the mobile, single-warhead SS-25 missile and construction of a large phased array radar at Krasnoyarsk in the Soviet Union. The Americans charge that the SS-25 is a second "new" type of missile prohibited under SALT, and that the capabilities and location of the Krasnoyarsk radar violate the ABM Treaty. A decision on whether or not the U.S. will continue to comply with SALT limits will have to be made in May, when a new Trident submarine begins sea trials.

■ Disarmament Conference

The Conference on Disarmament in Geneva resumed negoti-

ations on 4 February 1986. The newest Soviet arms control proposal, outlined by Soviet leader Gorbachev in January, advocated the complete elimination of chemical weapons *and* their industrial bases. Gorbachev also stated that such a ban would be subject to international on-site inspections. Verification methods have previously been a major obstacle to success in this area: methods deemed essential by the United States were seen as too intrusive to the Soviet Union. Officials involved in the CD negotiations expressed hope that these significant changes in the Soviet position would open the way to progress on a chemical weapons accord. Little progress was reported in other areas of the CD.

■ Stockholm Conference

The Stockholm Conference (Conference on Confidence and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe or CDE) opened its ninth session on 28 January 1986. Again Gorbachev's January 15 arms proposal offered some interesting changes and thus the possibility for movement towards some form of agreement. Gorbachev backed off a previous demand that prior notification of naval exercises be given and implied that the Soviets would be more open to verification measures. The issues of prior notification of air exercises and the disclosure of the loca-

tions of military forces in Europe remain as possible sticking points.

■ MBFR

A new Western proposal was announced on 5 December 1985, the last day of the 37th Round of the MBFR negotiations in Vienna. It accepted the framework of the February 1985 Eastern proposal and, in a break from past Western positions, offered to go ahead with troop reductions *without* prior agreement on the current number of troops in the region. On that basis, the West suggested that there be an initial reduction of 5,000 American troops and 11,500 Soviet troops, within one year of the signing of an agreement. After initial reductions there would be a "collective no-increase" agreement which would last for three years, during which time negotiations would continue. Because of the lack of agreement on troop numbers before reductions, the West outlined comprehensive verification methods and suggested the establishment of a Consultative Commission to handle questions and interpretations of the agreement.

In his proposal of 15 January 1986, Soviet leader Gorbachev suggested that a framework for agreement was emerging in Vienna, and stated his willingness to agree to "reasonable verification" methods. The Eastern negotiating team has suggested initial reductions of 11,500 Soviet troops and 6,500 American troops, 1,500 more American troops than proposed in the Western plan. Although it is unlikely, after 13 years of negotiation, that agreement will be reached quickly, changes in positions on both sides suggest some form of agreement is more feasible than it has been in the past.

Early Warning

May 8	Fifth round of Geneva talks begins
May	Biological Weapons Convention Review Conference – Preparatory Committee meeting
June	Fifth round of Geneva talks end
June-August	Second half of the annual CD session
Summer/Fall	2nd Reagan-Gorbachev Summit, Washington, D.C.
September	Biological Weapons Convention Review Conference