

reductions in strategic weapons, Gorbachev indicated again that an INF agreement need not include British and French nuclear forces. However, there were conditions attached to this proposal. The first was that the US agree not to transfer INF systems to the British and French. Subsequently, Soviet spokesmen have made it clear that the 'no-transfer' condition includes not only Pershing II and cruise missiles, but also the Trident D-5, which the US has agreed to provide to the British, and which is the planned centrepiece of British nuclear modernization.

The second Soviet condition was that, in the period when the USSR and the US are reducing their INF deployments, the British and French agree not to 'build up' their forces.

The Soviets have not equated 'build up' with 'modernize' and have not stated what increases in British and French forces would constitute an unacceptable 'build up'.

Third, the Soviet proposal required the British and French to participate at a later date in the over-all reduction of nuclear weapons. In subsequent clarification, Soviet spokesmen have noted that this is an explicit recognition of longstanding British and French policy. Both have claimed that the disparity between their own 'minimal deterrent' forces and those of the superpowers is such that only after major reductions in the superpower arsenals is it reasonable to suppose that they could join in proportionate, or prorated, reductions. The Soviet proposal ostensibly recognizes this claim, and requires British and French participation only after major reductions by the US and the Soviet Union.

The US Response

Having rejected the initial Soviet proposal to count European-based American forces as 'strategic', the US response focussed on the trade-off between US intermediate-range missiles (the Pershing IIs and GLCMs) and Soviet SS-20s. Specifically, therefore, the US rejected the inclusion of nuclear-capable aircraft and submarines stationed in and around Europe. It also continued to insist that it cannot negotiate on behalf of the British and French, and that their forces cannot be included in a Soviet-US agreement on INF.

Second, the US response stressed the linkage between Euro-limits on INF missiles and 'global' limits. There appeared to be two main factors behind this. The first was the US view that mobile SS-20s based in Soviet Asia, either covertly or in time of crisis, could be targeted on Western Europe. (The Soviets have responded to this claim by noting that the Asian-based SS-20s are to counter US deployments in the Pacific, and that in any case it would be just as easy for the US to transport GLCMs and Pershing IIs from North America to Europe in time of crisis.)

Intermediate Nuclear Forces: Negotiating Positions Since 1980

- November 1981** Reagan offers 'zero option': no GLCMs and PIIs if Soviets dismantle SS-20s
- July 1982** 'Walk in the woods' proposes limit of 225 on intermediate-range forces, sublimit of 75 on European-based SS-20 launchers, GLCM launchers, and no Pershing IIs
- September 1985** Soviet package proposal includes all US INF, but not SS-20s or Soviet intermediate-range aircraft
- November 1985** Indication that Soviets will negotiate INF separately with no necessary link to SDI
- January 1986** Gorbachev confirms INF agreement can be separate, need not include British and French forces, but requires agreement that British and French not build up their forces
- February 1986** US seeks to include Asia-based SS-20s, calls for 'global' INF limits, offers options which include low ceilings on Euro-based missiles
- Reykjavik
October 1986** Prior expectation that agreement would allow each side to retain 200 INF warheads (100 each in Europe) but discussion proposed zero INF in Europe with each retaining 100 warheads on national territory
- Post Reykjavik** Soviets no longer willing to reach INF agreement separate from SDI and strategic force reductions
- February 1987** Soviets again propose zero INF in Europe with each retaining 100 warheads on national territory

The second influence on the Reagan Administration was the attitude of Japan, and possibly other Asian allies. In the round of consultation with allies that preceded the US response to Gorbachev, Japan firmly objected to the negotiation of an INF reduction in Europe which placed no constraints on deployments in Asia, and which might even, indeed, encourage such deployments.