

as strategic, since their recent deployment in East Germany and Czechoslovakia meant they too could reach Western European territory, notably West Germany. The Soviet Union had always argued that the SS-20 was a response to French and British nuclear forces, but these forces were "last-resort" weapons, not part of the NATO arsenal, and therefore had a different *raison d'être* from US nuclear weapons.

Denis Healey argued that the Soviet view, that the British and French nuclear forces should be counted along with the US arsenal, was a perfectly rational position. The Soviet proposal at Geneva suggested that, in order to maintain an overall balance, any increase in the French and British nuclear forces should be accompanied by equivalent reductions in the US nuclear arsenal.

Mr. Bykov made three points clarifying how the Soviet proposal would deal with this issue: 1) a fifty percent reduction in the Soviet and American arsenals would begin to change their lopsided relationship vis-a-vis the European forces; 2) the deep cuts proposed were viewed as the beginning, not the end, of a long-term reduction process which would eventually embrace other nuclear powers; but 3) for the time being, the Soviet Union was not urging a reduction in British and French forces but simply that, in assessing the overall strategic balance, those forces should be taken into account.

George Bell, of the Canadian Institute for Strategic Studies, pointed out that increased deployment of SS-20s in Asia would pose a threat to the northwest of North America.

Mr. Frye reminded the audience that the numbers of warheads were now so great that, even if both the United States and the Soviet Union eliminated all intermediate-range nuclear forces, every target previously covered by those warheads would still be covered by warheads from within the strategic arsenals. In other words, the total elimination of the SS-20s would not alter the threat to Western Europe. Similarly, an elimination of US INF weapons would not change the threat to Eastern Europe or to the Soviet Union.

For this reason, Mr. Frye said that he supported an integrated approach in which INF would be counted as part of an overall pool. If reductions were implemented, it would be more advantageous to retain strategic systems capable of covering the entire "target set" and to eliminate the less versatile medium-range missiles. There would be a stabilizing trend, Frye said, with the two sides relying more and more on fewer numbers of verifiable strategic systems.