

nation of nuclear weapons and, more particularly, the elimination of ballistic missiles, were linked to the maintenance of the ABM Treaty for a ten-year period, as discussed below in Section III.

II. INTERMEDIATE NUCLEAR FORCES (INF)

Introduction

It was suggested earlier that in SALT I the Soviets wished to count, within the 'strategic' balance, all systems which could attack the homeland of the other side. Specifically, they had in mind US land and carrier-based nuclear-capable aircraft in and around Europe, US submarines on patrol in European waters, and the British and French nuclear forces. The US resisted this interpretation, and won Soviet agreement for a definition of 'strategic' as intercontinental missiles with a range of over 5,500 kilometres. The intermediate-range missiles and bombers thus excluded from the strategic negotiations were to be left to the third stage of the SALT negotiations.

Within the Western alliance, this deferral was no doubt regretted in 1977, when the Soviets began to replace their SS-4s and -5s with SS-20s. The SS-4s and -5s are older missiles which lack mobility and are highly vulnerable. Their range of 2,000 km or less restricts their targets to areas in West Germany. The mobile SS-20, with a range of 5,000 km, is a qualitatively superior weapon which can cover targets in most of Western Europe. Its deployment persuaded leading European NATO members that the balance of

nuclear forces in Europe had been changed for the worse. Hence the decision was made to deploy the cruise and Pershing II missiles, unless the Soviets could be persuaded to dismantle the SS-20s, SS-4s and SS-5s. This was the position proposed by Reagan in November 1981, known as the 'zero option'.

When Soviet and American negotiators finally met in Geneva, in 1981 and 1982, there was little agreement about the nuclear systems to be included in the negotiations. Proposals and counter-proposals were made, including the famous 'walk in the woods', when Ambassadors Nitze and Kvitsinsky discussed a formula which placed limits on intermediate-range aircraft (the US F-111, the Soviet Backfire, Badger and Blinder), and on intermediate-range missile launchers (in Europe, 75 SS-20s, and 75 GLCM launchers, no Pershing IIs). The talks finally broke-off in 1983 when, as threatened, the Soviet delegation walked out in protest against the initial deployment of the GLCMs and Pershing IIs.

Soviet Proposals

In their opening position of 30 September 1985, the Soviets reverted to their preferred definition of 'strategic'. Their comprehensive proposal was based on the following logic. Under US 'strategic' systems, the Soviets listed all US carrier, submarine and land-based nuclear-capable launchers in and around Europe which could reach the Soviet Union. They did not include the SS-20s or other Soviet medium-range aircraft on the grounds that these could not normally reach the continental United States. The Soviets then proposed a 50% reduction from the aggregate of these systems. Effectively, this placed the US in the situation where it was required to choose between the retention of its 'strategic' forces and its European-based nuclear systems deployed in support of NATO. As in SALT I, the US rejected this approach.

However, early in November, prior to the Geneva summit meeting between Reagan and Gorbachev, the Soviets indicated that they were willing to forego their preferred definition of 'strategic', and to negotiate an INF agreement independent of other proposals in the strategic arms discussions. Furthermore, the Soviets conveyed the impression, later made explicit in an exchange between Gorbachev and Senator Edward Kennedy, that an INF agreement was **not** linked to an agreement about the limits of SDI research. Parallel to this development, in a visit to Paris, Mr. Gorbachev also invited the French and British to a 'direct dialogue' on Soviet, British and French forces in Europe, implying that these forces also need not be included in Soviet-US force reductions.

In his 15 January 1986 speech, Mr. Gorbachev set down the basic Soviet negotiating position on INF. Confirming the decoupling of an INF agreement from

Table 2 Intermediate-Range Missile Forces* Under Discussion at Geneva

Soviet Union	Missiles	Range (km)	Warheads	Total Warheads
SS-20s (Europe)	243**	5,000	3	729
SS-20s (Asia)	171	5,000	3	513
SS-4s	112	2,000	1	112
United States				
GLCMs	52	2,500	4	208
Pershing IIs	108	1,800	1	108

* The table does not include aircraft, US submarine-based missiles or British and French forces since these have not been central to the respective proposals. It also does not include missiles such as the SS-22, SS-23 and Pershing I which have ranges under 1,000 km.

** The US claims that the Soviet Union has 270, the difference being those which have been withdrawn but allegedly not destroyed.