

SYSTEM II  
90757

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON


UNCLASSIFIED with  
SECRET ATTACHMENT

July 2, 1984

ACTION

**SIGNED**

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: JOHN M. POINDEXTER 

SUBJECT: Letter to Chairman Chernenko

Attached is the proposed letter to Chairman Chernenko, along with the talking points that Secretary Shultz would use when he gives the letter to Ambassador Dobrynin this evening if you approve. The letter was prepared by Jack Matlock and cleared with State (Shultz), Defense (Ikle) and JCS (Moreau).

We recommend your signature.

Attachment

UNCLASSIFIED with  
SECRET ATTACHMENT  
DECLASSIFY: OADR

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

July 2, 1984

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Your letter of June 6 deals with a number of issues which I would like to pursue after careful deliberation, but I wish to take the opportunity provided by Ambassador Dobrynin's return to Moscow to give you my thoughts on the proposal your government made June 29 for a conference in Vienna in September regarding the "militarization of outer space."

First, let me say that I believe your proposal for a conference is an excellent idea. I am prepared to have a delegation in Vienna September 18. I would observe that the date and location is of less importance than our agreement to begin serious discussions of ways arms competition can be slowed and the risk of nuclear war reduced.

Let me describe my concept of the way a useful conference might be organized. I believe that each of our delegations should be free to raise questions of concern to its side which are relevant to the overall topic. However, these should not be raised merely for the sake of exposition and debate, but with a clear mandate to seek out and find mutually acceptable negotiating approaches which hold promise for concrete results.

I have studied the position you have taken regarding the resumption of negotiations on nuclear arms. Even though I cannot agree with your reasons, I am not asking you to change that position in order to start discussions. But inasmuch as strategic and intermediate-range nuclear weapons systems are the most lethal systems and are intimately associated with those other space weapons on which you propose to negotiate, it is clear that it will be difficult to move very far in solving some of the problems without addressing the others. It would,

DECLASSIFIED/RELEASED  
Authority NLS F97-028 #1  
BY dh, NARA, Date 2/4/95

therefore, be difficult to understand a refusal even to discuss ways that negotiations on nuclear systems might be resumed. As I have pointed out to you several times, I have a number of ideas as to how these problems might be resolved to the advantage of both our countries. I believe that it is in our mutual interest to resolve our current impasse on offensive nuclear weapons.

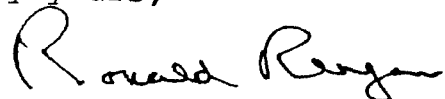
Regarding the other space weapons referred to in your proposal, I am optimistic that we can find significant aspects of anti-satellite weaponry which could be a fruitful object for negotiations. In sum, I am agreeable to a conference without preconditions of any sort, but one based on a commitment by both of us to find mutually acceptable negotiating approaches to the important questions before us.

You spoke in your last letter about the necessity of dealing with each other as equals. Naturally, I agree, and I believe the approach I have outlined for a conference embodies this principle in both form and spirit. As we have both often observed, it is time for deeds. Finding ways to make progress on the central issues I have outlined would be a deed for which the whole world would thank us.

Of course, we need not wait until a conference is organized to discuss the issues before us. I will be pleased to continue our discussion of these and related topics, on a confidential basis, both in our correspondence and through our respective representatives.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward to receiving your thoughts on these matters. It is my earnest hope that you will join me in seizing the opportunity we have to make a major step toward improving relations between our countries and creating a safer world for all.

Sincerely yours,



His Excellency  
Konstantin Ustinovich Chernenko  
Chairman of the Presidium of the  
Supreme Soviet of the Union of  
Soviet Socialist Republics  
Moscow