

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

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October 30, 1987

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MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT

FROM: George P. Shultz *GPS*

SUBJECT: Gorbachev's letter

As expected, FM Shevardnadze provided us an advance copy of General Secretary Gorbachev's letter to you upon his arrival in Washington early this morning. It is a long letter, but fairly positive, and offers a December window for a summit. He has asked that we keep a tight lid on the contents until he hands the letter to you at one today.

In the letter, Gorbachev has proposed a summit meeting in the first ten days of December. Shevardnadze is empowered to work out all details today. At the summit the INF Treaty would be signed and START and Defense and Space would be discussed. Additionally, the letter notes that if the President's visit to the Soviet Union next year is to be "crowned" with a treaty on strategic arms, it will be necessary to reach "agreement in principle" on this score at the summit. Thus, a Moscow Summit is not explicitly conditioned to agreements in principle on START/D&S at the Washington Summit. What form this "agreement in principle" would take is "not too important." Key elements of a future treaty is cited as one possible way to go, but instructions to delegations would also be acceptable.

The letter also sees an INF Treaty finalized within 2-3 weeks, citing progress made in last week's Ministerial, and on START refers to Gorbachev's Moscow proposal on sublimits, hinting at a slight freedom to mix. On D&S, Gorbachev appears to be backing away from previous Soviet insistence that the ABM Treaty be "strengthened," insisting only that it be "observed." As to linkage with START, the letter asserts they want "nothing more" than a ten-year commitment not to withdraw from the ABM Treaty. Gorbachev proposes establishment of a channel to support and facilitate the negotiations, suggesting Foreign Ministers and Ambassadors "could be" used for this purpose.

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We are working with the Soviets this morning on a Joint Statement, which will be ready for possible release at the White House immediately following your meeting with Shevardnadze this afternoon. He also visualizes a second statement to the press at the end of the day's events. Shevardnadze is aware of your plans to depart Washington after his meeting with you and shares our desire to make this a one day affair. He seems confident we can work through matters by this evening.

I will brief you on this morning's sessions at 12:30, just prior to Shevardnadze's one o'clock meeting with you. We can go over the Joint Statement then if you like, and make any last minute changes.

ATTACHMENTS: Letter From General Secretary Gorbachev

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