

~~SECRET~~

[Redacted]

Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

EO 13526 1.4(b)<25Yrs
EO 13526 1.4(c)<25Yrs
EO 13526 3.5(c)

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

10 September 1987

Gorbachev's Current Summit Calculations

Summary

General Secretary Gorbachev would welcome a summit meeting that finalized an INF agreement as a vindication of his policies for dealing with the United States and as a means of further enhancing his international image. One key motive for him is the contribution he believes such an event could make to his domestic agenda. Gorbachev probably calculates that the conclusion of such an agreement with a conservative US President would provide a basis for future agreements on strategic offensive and defensive forces and limit public support for increases in Western defense spending. Such agreements would constrain strategic competition with the United States and enable him to push for the increased investment levels necessary to revitalize the civilian economy.

[Redacted]

Gorbachev probably believes that an unsuccessful meeting would entail risks to his personal prestige and policies, and he almost certainly will give final agreement to a summit only when he is confident that all major differences have been worked out and a successful outcome assured. Soviet leaders regard the

This memorandum was prepared by [Redacted] the Office of Soviet Analysis [Redacted]

[Redacted]

Approved for Release by CIA
Date Feb 2011

SOV M 87-20079X

[Redacted]

~~SECRET~~

[Redacted]

~~SECRET~~ [redacted]

upcoming meeting between Secretary Shultz and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze as critical to resolving remaining substantive issues and working out details on agenda, format and timing. [redacted]

While progress on non-INF issues does not appear to be a Soviet precondition for a summit, numerous Soviet statements indicate Gorbachev will seriously explore such a possibility. The goal most frequently cited is a "framework" agreement on strategic offensive and defensive arms, but the Soviet objective will remain to make significant reductions in the former conditional upon US agreement to limit development of SDI. Gorbachev also may pursue the possibility of movement toward limiting nuclear testing and an agreement on chemical weapons. [redacted]

~~SECRET~~ [redacted]

Gorbachev's Political Standing

General Secretary Gorbachev's continued assertion of authority over the military, especially after the Cessna incident, reinforces earlier indications that he enjoys considerable latitude in defining Soviet national security policies. Moreover, he has improved his political position in recent months and currently enjoys the most personal support yet in the Politburo. The addition to that body in late June of three full members supportive of Gorbachev, along with the Central Committee's endorsement at that time of his agenda for comprehensive economic reform, demonstrate his strong influence within the ruling apparatus, which apparently gives him room for considerable initiative in foreign affairs. [redacted]

Gorbachev's political successes in June were followed by a series of foreign policy initiatives designed to further the Soviet arms control agenda and garner international public support. The summer-long public and diplomatic campaign against the exclusion from INF negotiations of US warheads for the West German Pershing-1A missile system, Gorbachev's acceptance of the so-called "global double zero" INF formula, the tabling in Geneva of a draft agreement on Defense and Space and of a draft START treaty, Soviet public proposals for multilateral nuclear test ban negotiations and nuclear testing verification measures, and the USSR's highly-publicized sponsorship of the UN Conference on Disarmament and Development appear designed to generate pressure on Washington for further movement on arms-related issues. Moreover, Moscow probably sought through some of these initiatives to shape the agenda for the meeting between Secretary Shultz and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze and delayed agreeing to a date for that meeting until they were on the table. [redacted]

[redacted]

Why Gorbachev Wants a Summit

While Gorbachev does not need a summit to buttress his political strength, he undoubtedly would welcome the enhancement of his image at home and abroad that would result from a meeting with the President. He would view a summit that finalized an INF agreement as vindication of his efforts to pursue progress on arms control with the Reagan administration, and of the greater flexibility he has introduced into Soviet foreign policy generally. [redacted]

The major reason Gorbachev wants a summit to finalize an INF agreement is probably the expectation that such an event would generate momentum in the United States and Western Europe for further negotiated arms reductions and

limits on defense spending. He has based much of his long-range plans for sustaining the USSR's superpower status on his economic agenda, and if at all possible he will seek to give the civilian economy the investment resources it needs. To do this, he will have to constrain the growth of military demands for these same investment resources. His preferred way of accomplishing this would be to reach an arms control accord that would give him some confidence that the pace of US weapons programs will be limited. The resource implications of an INF agreement alone are at best marginal. Gorbachev, however, probably believes the conclusion of such an agreement would impart momentum to the larger arms control process and create pressure for subsequent movement toward agreements on strategic offensive and defensive forces, pressure that could be compounded during an election year.

- In a May interview, Foreign Ministry spokesman Gennadiy Gerasimov said that an INF agreement "will be a pebble which will start an avalanche of nuclear disarmament."
- In a late June interview, Viktor Karpov, chief of the Arms Control Directorate of the Foreign Ministry, said that while in the near term Moscow would not "profit" directly from an INF treaty, an accord would later "benefit the economy and curb expenditures." [redacted]

Gorbachev may believe an arms control accord with the present US administration would be particularly conducive to future agreements.



Along with the prospective political gains, an INF agreement appears to recommend itself to the Soviets on military grounds as well. Moscow apparently calculates that Soviet security would be enhanced by the removal of US INF missiles from Europe, even at the cost of eliminating the SS-20 force and Soviet shorter-range INF systems. There is substantial evidence that Soviet strategic planners are highly concerned that the US missiles, particularly the Pershing IIs, threaten the survivability of the USSR's command, control and communications network and diminish available warning time. Other evidence suggests Moscow would see the elimination of both sides' INF forces as reinforcing the nuclear stalemate at the strategic level, thereby increasing the relative advantage the USSR enjoys through its preponderance of ground forces in Europe. The Soviets have other means of meeting their SS-20 targeting requirements using ICBMs, SLBMs, sea-launched cruise missiles and aircraft, and given the current size of their strategic

~~SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

arsenal, they may judge that they would be at least as well off today under a double global zero formula as they were in 1977 when SS-20 deployment began.

[REDACTED]

Similar logic would seem to apply even in the event of a strategic arms control agreement that reduced Moscow's and Washington's arsenals to 6,000 weapons each. Although such a strategic warhead level would involve deep reductions from today's forces, the USSR still would retain a larger and more effective force than it had in 1977. In view of reciprocal reductions on the US side and the modernization of the remaining Soviet forces, Soviet military leaders may well view a 6000-warhead strategic arsenal as capable of meeting Soviet combined theater and intercontinental targeting requirements. [REDACTED]

Minimizing Risk

While Gorbachev sees significant potential benefits in a summit, he also is aware that an unsuccessful meeting would have negative repercussions.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Gorbachev realizes it would damage both his political standing and his longterm objectives if he were to appear to have placed his prestige on the line and failed to achieve an arms control breakthrough. To minimize the risk, he almost certainly will avoid finally committing himself to a summit until all outstanding issues that could block an INF accord have been resolved and a successful outcome assured. [REDACTED]

Soviet leaders clearly are looking toward the upcoming meeting between Secretary Shultz and Shevardnadze to set the stage for a summit by ironing out remaining difficulties. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Deputy Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh admitted in a recent press conference that it was "conceivable" that not all INF issues would be resolved in the Shultz-Shevardnadze meeting. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] He affirmed in the press conference that a summit was "not possible" without an INF treaty. [REDACTED]

Soviet Views on a Summit Agenda

In recent months, there have been contradictory Soviet statements on Moscow's minimum requirements for a summit agenda. Some Soviet spokesmen have declared that it would be sufficient for the two leaders to announce an INF

~~SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

~~SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

agreement. These statements appear consistent with other signs that Gorbachev urgently desires such an accord and would be unwilling to jeopardize the prospect by attempting to impose additional conditions for a summit. [REDACTED]

Other Soviet statements, [REDACTED] have stressed that something more than an INF treaty is needed. Some Soviets even have asserted that prior US commitment to agreements in additional areas is a precondition for a summit. Although such assertions increased in frequency after Secretary Gorbachev announced his acceptance of the "global double zero" formula in July, it is unlikely that the Soviets will hold to them. Rather, Gorbachev will regard announcement of an INF agreement as sufficient reason to hold a summit, while using the meeting to explore possibilities in other areas. [REDACTED]

The most frequent Soviet proposal has been for a "framework" or "Valdivostok-like" agreement on future limits for strategic offensive and defensive weapons, and Gorbachev is likely at the very least to argue strongly for more rapid progress toward concluding agreements in those areas. He is unlikely to drop the linkage between the two, upon which the Soviets have insisted since the inception of the Nuclear and Space Talks in Geneva. He may hint at areas where the Soviets could show flexibility in their START positions in return for concessions on the US side, and he may argue that the Soviets already have shown some willingness to be flexible on Defense and Space issues, for example, by agreeing in their latest draft proposal to allow research outside closed laboratories. Nonetheless, the principle that significant reductions in offensive weapons must be conditioned upon US agreement to limit development of the Strategic Defense Initiative appears for the moment too firmly embedded in Soviet negotiating positions and public statements to be abandoned. [REDACTED]

Soviet spokesmen also have cited the possibility of adopting new constraints on nuclear testing. Gorbachev may offer to conclude an agreement allowing US and Soviet scientists to calibrate monitoring equipment by detonating their own nuclear devices at each other's test sites. By displaying readiness to resolve verification issues, he may attempt to undercut US arguments against ratifying the Threshold Test Ban Treaty and Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaty and resuming negotiations for a comprehensive test ban. [REDACTED]

Gorbachev also may seek to use a summit to encourage movement toward an agreement banning chemical weapons. His effort could include a new show of flexibility on challenge inspection, as well as alternatives to on-site verification of sensitive facilities. He may call for accelerating bilateral discussions as well as multilateral talks at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. He might propose that a treaty on chemical weapons be completed in time for a subsequent summit in Moscow. [REDACTED]

~~SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

Timing and Format

Once the Soviet leaders are confident that all necessary steps have been taken for a successful summit to announce an INF agreement, they will want it to take place quickly. There are indications Moscow would prefer to sign an INF treaty this fall due to the perceived time required for US Senate ratification. Soviet officials have intimated that they believe chances for INF ratification will be greatest under the present administration, and a Soviet [redacted] in August stated that, given the election year schedule, he believed March probably would be too late to submit the treaty to the Senate. Ideally, Gorbachev probably would prefer to hold the meeting as soon as possible after his address in early November on the 70th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] we believe it likely that Gorbachev would choose to travel to the United States to finalize an INF accord at a summit and would use the occasion to visit several parts of the country. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] It would appear consistent with his penchant for public diplomacy that he seek as wide an audience as possible for his personal appearances in hopes of carrying his views directly to the public while gaining firsthand knowledge of the United States. [redacted]